

Caring and Just Society

Preamble

Our vision is to foster a Caring and Just Society. We will endeavour to imbue the community with a sense of harmony; safeguard values such as freedom, equality, rule of law and the fight against corruption; protect human rights and other fundamental rights which Hong Kong citizens are entitled to enjoy; enforce the role of the Government as an agent and guardian of Hong Kong's overall and long-term interests with regard to the principles of equality and impartiality, and ensure equal opportunities; engender a social environment that promotes harmony within the community, safeguard the heterogeneity of our community and promote tolerance, develop new opportunities and provide more choices for personal development. Warm, supportive and stable families are what count most in nurturing the healthy development of individuals. We will reinforce the importance of family, engender a family-friendly society and community, support and strengthen families, and foster mutual care and support in the community, so that all individuals are embedded in a network of care, trust, support and reciprocity. We will enhance public health and improve quality of life. We will introduce health, social and housing policies and initiatives that enable individuals to enhance their community involvement. We will protect labour rights, care for the elderly, sick and underprivileged, ensure that there is a safety net so that those in need will also participate in economic and social life with dignity and self-reliance. We will build partnerships with organisations

representing different segments of the community on the basis of shared responsibility, working hand in hand with them for the social development of Hong Kong.

New Initiatives

We will:

- Promote legislation to implement the Law Reform Commission's Report on the Rules For Determining Domicile.
- Launch a Wage Protection Movement for employees in the cleansing and guarding services sectors through a multi-pronged strategy involving employer groups.
- Familiarise stakeholders with the new medical functions of registered Chinese medicine practitioners in relation to employee benefits under labour laws.
- Strengthen the district-based approach and measures to help the disadvantaged through implementing the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme and other district co-ordination work.
- Encourage work, including promoting more people-oriented employment support, as well as social enterprise development in collaboration with academia, small and medium enterprises, and business sector on training, mentorship and business support.
- Explore ways to better promote healthy and balanced child development.
- Introduce a new mechanism for the determination of domestic rents for public housing.

- Explore how to co-operate with the Mainland authorities on using latest information technology application to ensure effective tracing of food along the production chain and achieve better food safety management through control at source.
- Enhance community mental health support and outreach to raise general awareness of mental health and to promote early intervention of mental health problems.
- Provide additional subsidised residential care places for the elderly through the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme, in addition to those made available in new contract homes under the premises-led programme.
- Enhance the care for infirm and demented elders in residential care homes for the elderly.
- Enhance the service capacity of subsidised home-based services for vulnerable elders in the community.
- Provide more flexible day care services for children coming from needy families, particularly families with crisis.
- Prepare legislative amendments to the Domestic Violence Ordinance to enhance the prevention of domestic violence and to render better protection for victims of domestic violence.
- Further strengthen the specialised services and support for victims of domestic violence, including additional manpower resources, more shelter service for women, and clinical psychological support.
- Develop an organ donation computer database in consultation with relevant organisations.

- Consult stakeholders on the statutory framework in respect of regulating medical devices.
- Explore the feasibility of setting up multi-partite medical centres of excellence, which would become focal points for experts, provide training opportunities and further entrench Hong Kong's position as an outstanding professional medical treatment centre in the Region.

Ongoing Initiatives

We are:

- Collecting public views on the population policy through the engagement process conducted by the Council for Sustainable Development. We will be reviewing the population policy in the light of advice from the Commission on Strategic Development and the outcome of the above engagement process.
- Stepping up enforcement action and publicity to combat illegal employment.
- Stepping up enforcement action against wage offences, with particular emphasis on the catering and construction sectors.
- Strengthening tripartite co-operation among the Government, employers and employees to maintain harmonious labour relations and help resolve employment issues.
- Reviewing the existing policies and measures to assist the unemployed to move from welfare to self-reliance, and to reduce the risks of intergenerational poverty.
- Promoting a more inclusive society marked by rich social capital and a balance between societal care and personal responsibility.
- Together with relevant stakeholders, encouraging further development of social enterprises to help enhance the employability of the able-bodied unemployed.

- Reinforcing the district-based approach in preventing and alleviating poverty by providing districts with additional resources and support.
- Enhancing our network at district level, which has proved invaluable in implementing Team Clean initiatives.
- Working closely with the Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee on the use of the Ping Wo Fund to finance public education to prevent gambling-related problems, to provide counselling and support services to pathological gamblers, and to conduct research on studies on gambling-related issues.
- Continuing our work on the promotion of human rights, including (among others) children's rights, racial harmony, and the rights of the sexual minorities.
- Introducing specific legislation to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race.
- Implementing the improvement measures for the Pre-Sale Consent Scheme, following completion of a review.
- Maintaining supply of public rental housing for needy applicants with an average waiting time of around three years.
- Ensuring effective and rational use of housing resources by promoting sustainable public housing development.
- Updating and enhancing our legislative framework for prevention and control of infectious diseases through amending the Quarantine and Prevention of Disease Ordinance.
- Further enhancing our infectious disease emergency responsiveness by seeking continuous improvement to our infectious disease surveillance, control and notification system.

- Developing a multi-pronged strategy to minimise the risk of avian influenza outbreaks, including the development of a poultry slaughtering and processing plant.
- Continuing our efforts in tobacco control through public education and legislation banning smoking in indoor work places and other public places and imposing more restrictions on tobacco advertisement.
- Promoting healthy eating habit among school children to protect the public from life-style diseases.
- Adopting a proactive and co-ordinated approach in poison prevention and control through strengthening toxicovigilance, analysis as well as poison information and treatment services.
- Enhancing the cancer surveillance regime.
- Conducting studies into various health care financing options. We are also mapping out a strategy for health care services reforms which were recommended in the consultation document “Building a Healthy Tomorrow” and supported by the public.
- Working out a sustainable long-term funding arrangement for the Hospital Authority to ensure the provision of quality public health care services.
- Conducting an Electronic Patient Record Sharing Pilot Project whereby the Hospital Authority permits participating private medical institutions and doctors, with patients’ consent, to obtain through the Internet their patients’ records kept in the Hospital Authority to facilitate timely follow up treatment.

- Enhancing primary medical care for the public through the introduction of family medicine in public General Out-patient clinics.
- Preparing for the establishment of at least two more public Chinese Medicine clinics in 2007.
- Reviewing the regulatory framework for poultry and animals for the purpose of enhancing public health and food safety.
- Improving overall food safety and control on agricultural and fisheries operations that have an impact on public health or the environment.
- Formulating measures to promote sustainable development of the fishing industry and to conserve fisheries resources in Hong Kong waters.
- Drawing up legislative proposals to prohibit the abstraction of seawater from specified areas along the coast for keeping live seafood to enhance the quality of fish tank water for food safety.
- Drawing up legislative proposals to regulate restricted dining places to safeguard public health.
- Formulating measures to streamline food business licensing.
- Reviewing the policies related to the provision of cemeteries, columbaria and crematoria facilities and striving to provide more facilities to meet future demand.
- Continuing to strengthen district welfare planning and co-ordination.

- Implementing a Family Support Programme to increase connection with vulnerable families, which are unmotivated, so that their problems can be tackled early and appropriate services provided.
- Continuing to strengthen services and staff training relating to the handling of family crises and violence, and suicide.
- Implementing two batterers intervention pilot projects.
- Implementing the pilot Comprehensive Child Development Service in four communities, and subject to the review of the pilot, extending the pilot to other communities in phases.
- Providing fee-waiving places of After School Care Programme to help members of low income families to work. Also, schools are encouraged to collaborate with non-governmental organisations in providing school-based after school learning and other support services for needy students.
- Operating the \$300 million Community Investment and Inclusion Fund and the \$200 million Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged to encourage mutual concern and aid, and to promote the development of partnership between the business community, the welfare sector and the Government in helping the needy.
- Enhancing transport services for people with disabilities through improvements to rebus service, and examining ways of improving accessibility of transport services.

- Providing transitional residential services to the severely disabled persons, including tetraplegic patients, as well as convalescent and continuing rehabilitation day services to discharged patients with mental, neurological or physical impairment to facilitate their early reintegration into the community.
- Continuing to improve IT and communication support for people with severe disabilities.
- Strengthening training and support services for family members and carers of people with disabilities.
- Launching an International Festival of Inclusive Arts in December 2006 for integrating people with disabilities and challenges into the community through co-operation and exchange of arts experiences.
- Promoting active ageing.
- Continuing to strengthen the manpower of the Licensing Office of the Residential Care Homes for the Elderly to enhance the inspection and monitoring of residential care homes for the elderly.
- Continuing to convert subvented residential care places into long-term care places for frail elders to meet the growing care needs of elders.
- Further studying a sustainable financial support system that better targets resources at caring of elders most in need.
- Continuing to train additional Enrolled Nurses for the welfare sector.

- Reviewing measures under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme to encourage and help able-bodied CSSA recipients to move into work.
- Overseeing the operation of the Trust Fund for SARS.
- Providing support to the Women's Commission in promoting the interests and well-being of women through the provision of an enabling environment, empowerment of women, including continuing the Capacity Building Mileage Programme, and public education.
- Continuing to progressively introduce the use of the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist in different policy areas, and work with the Women's Commission to further promote gender mainstreaming.
- Studying the feasibility of long-term options for better meeting demands for emergency ambulance service.