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## Chapter 6

# Building a Caring, Inclusive Society, Improving People's Livelihood

## Preamble

Whilst developing our economy, we should also build a caring and inclusive society. Support for the disadvantaged is high on the Government's agenda. The new-term Government will continue to provide financial support for people and families in need through various measures, including the implementation of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme, and the enhancement of the Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme and Old Age Living Allowance.

The Government will sustain its efforts in poverty alleviation with the support of the Commission on Poverty (CoP). Apart from setting and updating the poverty line, the CoP also implements a number of assistance programmes through the Community Care Fund and the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund. A poverty line analysis shows that the poverty rate in 2015 was 14.3%, representing a significant drop of 5.4 percentage points subsequent to policy intervention, with the size of the poor population staying below 1 million for the third consecutive year.

The new-term Government will set up a Commission on Children with cross-bureau and departmental representation and engage the children concern groups in addressing the issues that children face while growing up.

Regarding elderly services, our objective is to enable our senior citizens to live in dignity and to provide the necessary support to promote their sense of belonging, security and worthiness. Drawing reference from the recommendations of the Elderly Services Programme Plan, we will implement a series of new measures to enhance the provision and planning of elderly services. We will also continue with the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly and the Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly to provide additional choices for the elderly.

Meanwhile, we will further strengthen the support for persons or families with special needs, including ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, persons with mental illness and ex-mentally ill persons, children with special needs as well as their parents and carers, and render better support for children and victims of domestic violence.

The family is the cornerstone of our society, and is key to maintaining social harmony and stability. The Family Council has a role to advise bureaux and departments on the impact of various government policies on families. The Government will continue to collaborate with various sectors in the community to create a family-friendly culture, including the launch of a new round of Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme to promote and encourage more diversified and flexible family-friendly employment practices.

The Government is engaging the business and labour sectors with a view to coming up with a proposal in the coming months for abolishing the arrangement for "offsetting" severance payment/long service payment with employers' Mandatory Provident Fund contributions. The proposal would take account of the interests of both sides. We will also further strengthen the protection of employees' occupational safety and health.

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In face of an ageing population, increasing prevalence of chronic and lifestyle-related diseases and rising healthcare cost, the Government will formulate long-term healthcare policies as early as possible and plan on future resources to safeguard the health and well-being of the public. In the coming five years, enhanced efforts and resources would be put in place to promote health education, primary care and community care so as to promote the public health and reduce the need for in-patient services. Apart from strengthening healthcare manpower, the Government will also advocate cross-sector (engaging the healthcare, social welfare and education sectors) and cross-profession collaboration to consolidate and enhance medical and healthcare services in a comprehensive manner. The practice of Chinese medicine in Hong Kong has a solid foundation. The Government will leverage on this advantage to actively promote the development of Chinese medicine on different fronts. Amidst the rapid development in medical technology, we will endeavour to promote medical research and innovation and facilitate their wider clinical application to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the local healthcare services.

## Policy Initiatives

### Poverty Alleviation, Elderly Care and Support for the Disadvantaged

#### Commission on Poverty

- Review the structure, work priorities and directions of the Commission on Poverty (CoP) to better support the current-term Government in preventing and alleviating poverty as well as providing assistance for different needy groups. (CSO) ([New Initiative](#))
- The Chief Executive will chair the annual CoP Summit to directly interact with stakeholders on the strategies and directions of poverty alleviation. The first CoP Summit under the current-term Government will be held in early 2018. (CSO) ([New Initiative](#))
- Update the poverty line annually to monitor Hong Kong's poverty situation on an on-going basis and provide scientific data for policy formulation and effectiveness evaluation with a view to facilitating review of the existing policies and exploration of new measures. (CSO)

#### Community Care Fund

- Continue to use the Community Care Fund (CCF) as a means to bridge the gaps in the system and draw up more new pilot schemes to better support the disadvantaged members of the community and low-income families. (HAB)

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- Invite the CCF to consider providing subsidy to needy primary and secondary students for purchasing tablet computers to facilitate the practice of e-learning. (EDB) (New Initiative)
  - Explore the continuous provision of subsidy through the CCF for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) households living in rented private housing and paying rents exceeding the maximum rent allowance under the CSSA Scheme. (LWB) (New Initiative)

### **Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund**

- Continue to engage intermediaries to provide social entrepreneurs with social innovation eco-system support, engage partners in formulating and implementing collective impact initiatives, promote the “Creating Shared Value” concept in the business sector and sustain public awareness of and support for social innovation. In addition, the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund will implement new measures, which include:
  - providing support to start-up social entrepreneurs and ventures through partnership with industry players offering co-working space; and
  - exploring new funding modes by making use of various financial vehicles, such as equity investment or loan guarantee, to meet different funding requirements of social entrepreneurs. (CSO)

## Poverty Alleviation

- Continue to implement the enhancement measures for the Old Age Living Allowance, including the implementation of Higher Old Age Living Allowance in mid-2018, and closely monitor the implementation of various social security schemes. (LWB) ([New Initiative](#))

## Helping Low-income Families

- Implement the enhancement measures for the Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme (to be renamed as Working Family Allowance Scheme). (LWB) ([New Initiative](#))
- Extend the short-term food assistance service for three years up to 2020-21 to continue to support individuals and families who have difficulties in coping with their daily food expenditure. (LWB) ([New Initiative](#))

## Enhancing Upward Mobility

- Inject \$300 million into the Child Development Fund to sustain its operation and promote the long-term development of children from a disadvantaged background, with a view to alleviating inter-generational poverty. (LWB) ([New Initiative](#))

## Supporting the Disadvantaged

### Supporting Families in Need

- Increase the number of residential child care places in phases to enhance support and protection for children and families in need. (LWB)

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- Launch an environment improvement programme for small group homes to meet the needs of children receiving residential care service. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Strengthen the manpower of small group homes, residential child care centres, children's homes and boys'/girls' homes/hostels to enhance care and support for children receiving residential care service. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Provide about 300 additional aided long full-day child care places in phases for children aged below three. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Launch a three-year CCF pilot scheme to relax the income limit for the low-income families under the Fee Waiving Subsidy Scheme for After School Care Programme and provide 2 000 additional fee-waiving and fee-reduction places, so as to strengthen the support for low-income families. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Inject \$400 million into the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged to continue to promote cross-sector collaboration in helping the disadvantaged. The injection will be evenly allocated to the regular portion of the fund and the dedicated portion for after-school learning and support programmes. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Increase the level of various foster care allowances, provide 240 additional foster care places in phases, and recruit more foster parents. (LWB)

- Increase the number of places and manpower of refuge centres for women and the Family Crisis Support Centre, and combat domestic violence through enhancing the provision of preventive, supportive and specialised services for victims and families in need, as well as making publicity and public education efforts. Counselling and psycho-educational services are also provided for batterers to change their abusive attitude and behaviour. (LWB)
- Monitor the implementation of the Domestic and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance. (LWB)
- Provide support services for victims of sexual violence. (LWB)
- Strengthen co-parenting support for divorced/separated parents and their children. (LWB) (New Initiative)
- Continue to implement a two-year Pilot Project on Children Contact Service to assist divorced/separated parents in rebuilding and maintaining satisfactory communication with their children, and enable the children to have safe and conflict-free contact with their parents. (LWB)
- Inject \$50 million into the Trust Fund on Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome to continue to provide support for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome patients and their families. (LWB) (New Initiative)
- Set up a medical social service unit at the newly commissioned Hong Kong Children's Hospital and strengthen the professional support provided by medical social workers in the Child Assessment Centres of the Department of Health (DH) and the general and psychiatric hospitals of the Hospital Authority (HA). (LWB) (New Initiative)

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- To promote a caring and volunteering culture, we will continue to strengthen our volunteer network and matching platform. (HAB)

## **Enhancing Services for Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Mental Illness**

- Prepare for the formulation of a new Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan for persons with disabilities. (LWB) ([New Initiative](#))
- Promote the spirit and core values enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in collaboration with the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, the rehabilitation sector and the public at large. (LWB)
- Improve rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities by increasing the number of places of pre-school rehabilitation service, day service and residential service, and places provided under the Bought Place Scheme for Private Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities. (LWB) ([New Initiative](#))
- Enhance support for children with special needs and their parents by:
  - continuing to implement the Pilot Scheme on On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating subvented pre-school rehabilitation services, to provide on-site rehabilitation services for children with special needs who are studying in kindergartens or kindergarten-cum-child care centres, converting the pilot scheme into a regular government subsidy programme upon completion of a comprehensive review, and providing 7 000 service places in phases under the programme;

- providing training subsidy for eligible pre-school children to obtain self-financing pre-school rehabilitation services run by NGOs while they are waiting for subvented services so as to facilitate their learning and development, and waiving the means test for children on the waiting list for special child care centre service; and
  - providing support for parents and relatives/carers of persons with disabilities and ex-mentally ill persons, including children or young persons with special needs, through subvented parents/relatives resource centres. (LWB)
- Provide home care service for persons with severe disabilities on a territory-wide basis. (LWB)
  - Set up a “special needs trust” to provide affordable trust services for parents of children with special needs. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Regularise the Pilot Project on Strengthening Support for Persons with Autism and their Parents/Carers. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Set up a new fund to foster arts development for persons with disabilities. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Provide cash subsidy for needy persons with severe physical disabilities who live in the community and require constant care to cover their expenses for renting respiratory support medical equipment and purchasing medical consumables, and provide them with one-stop support services (including casework counselling, occupational therapy/physiotherapy, nursing care service and financial support service) co-ordinated and arranged by case managers in accordance with their needs to enable them to continue living in the community and integrate into society. (LWB)

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- Provide additional day care service places, strengthen outreaching services and continue the implementation of case management service in district support centres for persons with disabilities to enhance support for ageing persons with disabilities in the community. (LWB)
  - Enhance support for the operation and development of self-help organisations through providing funding for the Financial Support Scheme for Self-help Organisations for Persons with Disabilities/Chronic Illnesses. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Enhance professional support for children of ex-mentally ill persons and hearing impaired persons through integrated community centres for mental wellness and multi-service centres for hearing impaired persons. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Continue to provide sign language interpretation services for persons with hearing impairment through multi-service centres for hearing impaired persons and relevant social and recreational centres for the disabled. (LWB)
  - Enhance support and training for persons with visual impairment through rehabilitation and training centres for visually impaired persons. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Provide clinical psychological service in integrated community centres for mental wellness to strengthen support for ex-mentally ill persons, and deploy mobile publicity vans to step up community education for early prevention of mental illness. (LWB) (New Initiative)

- Provide one-stop district-based community support services through integrated community centres for mental wellness for ex-mentally ill persons, persons with suspected mental health problems, their families/carers and local residents. (LWB)
- Continue to implement the Pilot Project on Peer Support Service in Community Psychiatric Service Units for trained ex-mentally ill persons to serve as peer supporters for other persons in rehabilitation and regularise the pilot project upon its completion. The project also aims to improve the employment opportunities of ex-mentally ill persons. (LWB)
- Continue to provide short-term day and residential care services for persons with disabilities to relieve the stress of their families/carers. (LWB)
- Enhance care and support services for ageing service users through: (i) providing additional places of Extended Care Programme and Work Extension Programme; (ii) providing speech therapy services in hostels for moderately mentally handicapped persons, hostels for severely mentally handicapped persons, hostels for severely physically handicapped persons with mental handicap and care and attention homes for severely disabled persons; and (iii) enhancing health care services in supported hostels. (LWB) (New Initiative)
- Implement the Bought Place Scheme for Private Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities to:
  - upgrade the service standards of private residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs);
  - help the market develop more service options for persons with disabilities; and

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- increase the supply of subsidised residential care places. (LWB)
  - Enhance care and support services for ageing service users in rehabilitation service units. (LWB)
  - Continue to enhance the primary medical service for ageing service users at residential care homes for persons with disabilities by providing subvention under the Visiting Medical Practitioner Scheme. (LWB)
  - Ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to government job opportunities by implementing measures to provide assistance and facilitation for them during the application process, and enhance internship programmes within the Government for students with disabilities to strengthen their competitiveness in job seeking. (CSB) (New Initiative)
  - Enhance the employment opportunities of job seekers with disabilities by increasing the allowance for employers under the Work Orientation and Placement Scheme to encourage them to hire and train job seekers with disabilities. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Enhance vocational rehabilitation support for persons with disabilities through: (i) providing job attachment allowance for trainees of supported employment service and wage subsidy for employers offering job trials to these trainees; and (ii) strengthening post-placement follow-up service in vocational rehabilitation service units. (LWB) (New Initiative)

- Promote the employment of persons with disabilities by:
  - providing job attachment allowance and wage subsidy under the On the Job Training Programme for People with Disabilities and the Sunnyway — On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities to create job attachment opportunities for persons with disabilities;
  - providing subsidy for employers for procurement of assistive devices and/or workplace modifications;
  - providing financial incentive for mentors rendering workplace assistance and guidance to employees with disabilities;
  - engaging a non-governmental welfare organisation under a pilot scheme to strengthen employment support of the Labour Department (LD) for job seekers with disabilities in need of counselling service; and
  - promoting the Talent-Wise Employment Charter and Inclusive Organisations Recognition Scheme to mobilise employers in the public and private sectors to employ more persons with disabilities. (LWB)
- Provide support for businesses funded under the Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise Project to create more employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. (LWB)
- Enhance transport services for persons with disabilities through improvement to rebus service, and examine ways to further improve the accessibility of transport services for persons with disabilities. (LWB/THB)

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- Provide bus service for the day activity centres cum hostels for severely mentally handicapped persons and community rehabilitation day centres. (LWB)
  - Continue to implement the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities to enable elderly people aged 65 or above and eligible persons with disabilities to travel on the MTR lines, franchised bus routes, ferry routes and green minibus routes covered by the scheme at a concessionary fare of \$2 per trip, with a view to building a caring and inclusive society by encouraging these people to participate more in community activities. (LWB)

## **Ageing in Place**

- Strengthen the provision and planning of elderly services by drawing reference from the Elderly Services Programme Plan. Measures include:
  - strengthening the community care and support services by providing an additional 1 000 vouchers (bringing the total to 6 000) under the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly to support ageing in place for elderly persons with moderate or severe impairment; (LWB)
  - organising territory-wide public education activities to enhance public understanding of dementia, and allocating more resources to service units providing community care and support services for the elderly to enhance the provision of dementia care service and related staff training; (LWB)

- allocating more resources to elderly centres and home care services teams to enhance outreaching services for supporting those needy carers living in the community and looking after frail elderly persons; (LWB)
  - planning to reinstate the population-based planning ratios for elderly services in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines; (LWB)
  - promoting the research of new technologies that improve the quality of living of the elderly and encouraging its application in residence, community and elderly homes. We will also earmark \$1 billion for setting up a fund to subsidise elderly service units to try and procure technology products; on the other hand, we will commission the Hong Kong Council of Social Service to promote the use of technology among social welfare organisations and carers. The initiatives will also cover rehabilitation service units; (LWB/ITB)
  - providing additional resources for subsidised elderly service units to increase the salaries of personal care workers and home helpers. The initiative will also cover similar posts in service units of subsidised rehabilitation services as well as family and child welfare services; (LWB) and
  - considering the possibility of allowing subsidised units of elderly and rehabilitation services greater flexibility in the importation of care workers. (LWB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
- Plan to implement a pilot scheme under the Lotteries Fund to enhance training for foreign domestic helpers in taking care of elderly persons. (LWB)

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- Plan to implement a pilot scheme under the Lotteries Fund to provide specialised residential care service for elderly persons with special needs at designated residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs). (LWB)
  - Continue to implement the Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly by adopting “money-following-the-user” approach with a view to offering elderly persons in need of residential care service with an additional choice and providing an incentive for RCHEs to improve their services. A total of 1 000 vouchers will be issued in 2018-19. (LWB)
  - Continue to build new contract RCHEs and day care centres for the elderly (DEs) to increase the number of places. Five new contract RCHEs/contract RCHEs with day care units for the elderly and three new or expanded DEs will commence service between 2017-18 and 2018-19, providing a total of 516 residential care places and 163 day care places for the elderly. (LWB)
  - Continue with the conversion of existing EA2 places of the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme to about 1 200 EA1 places which are of a higher quality. The conversion is expected to be completed in 2018-19. (LWB)
  - Continue to implement the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services to encourage more young people to join the care service profession in the welfare sector. (LWB)
  - Consider suitable sites and operating mode for setting up integrated elderly services centres on a pilot basis to provide one-stop, multi-disciplinary healthcare and social services for the elderly at the community level. (FHB/LWB)

## Service Quality of Residential Care Homes

- Implement a series of measures to continuously strengthen the monitoring of RCHEs and RCHDs and enhance their service quality. Measures include:
  - continuing to review the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance, the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance and related Codes of Practice;
  - launching a five-year scheme to provide full subsidies for home managers, health workers and care workers of all RCHEs and RCHDs in the territory to enrol in Qualifications Framework-based training courses;
  - launching a five-year scheme to provide full subsidies for all private RCHEs to join accreditation schemes;
  - setting up district-based professional teams under a four-year pilot scheme to provide outreach services for residents in private RCHEs and RCHDs, so as to support their social and rehabilitation needs;
  - conducting a consultancy study to review the existing licensing and regulatory regimes for RCHEs and RCHDs, including exploring the feasibility of formulating performance indicators for quality assurance; and
  - providing visiting medical practitioner services for residents of all RCHEs and RCHDs in the territory so as to take proactive measures against seasonal influenza and other episodic illnesses and improve their general health and reduce their reliance on the public healthcare system. (LWB) ([New Initiative](#))

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## Creating an Age-friendly Community

- Establish a web-based learning and sharing portal to help the elderly and persons with disabilities acquire life and digital skills in a fun and accessible manner, so that they can benefit from the advancement in digital technology in their daily lives. (ITB) ([New Initiative](#))
- Continue to install barrier-free facilities such as lifts at the existing public rental housing estates and continue to implement the “Universal Accessibility” Programme. This will allow people in need, including the elderly, to move around in the community with greater ease. (THB)
- Continue to upgrade the physical setting, facilities and equipment of some 230 elderly centres under the Improvement Programme of Elderly Centres. (LWB)
- Continue to take forward initiatives to build an age-friendly environment, including examining the application of information technologies to extend the pedestrian green time when the elderly and people with mobility difficulties cross signalised road junctions. (THB)
- Continue to implement the Opportunities for the Elderly Project and the Elder Academy Scheme to encourage elderly persons to actively take part in community affairs and pursue lifelong learning. (LWB)
- Continue to promote the building of age-friendly communities at the district level, including the participation of individual districts in the World Health Organization’s “age-friendly community” accreditation scheme. (LWB)

- Provide choices of service for the elderly and promote the development of the silver market through the Senior Citizen Residences Scheme and the Reverse Mortgage Programme, which are operated by the Hong Kong Housing Society and the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited respectively. (THB/FSTB)
- Continue to update the facilities in public libraries and organise activities to promote reading among senior citizens. (HAB)
- Continue to provide more fitness facilities for the elderly in government recreation and sports venues to encourage the elderly to participate regularly in health-building activities. (HAB)

## Social Security

- Facilitate elderly persons' retirement on the Mainland by:
  - continuing to implement the Guangdong Scheme, including the one-year special arrangement (i.e. once again exempting, on a one-off basis, from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, eligible elderly persons already residing in Guangdong from the requirement of having resided in Hong Kong continuously for at least one year immediately before the date of application); and
  - introducing the Fujian Scheme in the second quarter of 2018 to provide monthly Old Age Allowance for eligible elderly persons who choose to reside in Fujian. (LWB)

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## Social Welfare Planning and Administration

- Explore the feasibility of purchase of premises for the operation and provision of elderly and rehabilitation services so as to address the shortage of premises. (LWB) (New Initiative)
- Explore measures that would encourage private developers to provide various welfare facilities, including day child care centres, residential child care centres, DEs and RCHEs in their development projects. (LWB/DEVB) (New Initiative)
- Continue to implement the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses, under which targeted assistance is provided for participating social welfare organisations during the planning or development process. The scheme aims at providing diversified subvented and self-financing facilities, in particular additional places of elderly and rehabilitation services. (LWB)
- Continue to engage prospective operators in discussing and introducing revised approaches to non-Comprehensive Social Security Assistance schemes on a pilot basis. (CSO)

## Lump Sum Grant

- Discuss with the social welfare sector how to optimise the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System. (LWB) (New Initiative)

## Family Council

- Work with the Family Council to ensure that family perspectives are duly considered in the policy-making process, and develop a more elaborated checklist as the basis for assessing the impact of public policies on families. (HAB)

- Work with the Family Council to:
  - advocate a pro-family environment and further promote family core values of “Love and Care”, “Respect and Responsibility” and “Communication and Harmony” as well as the positive messages and values on family formation to encourage the community to attach importance to the family; and
  - foster a culture of loving families. (HAB)
- Introduce family education packages through the Family Council to:
  - address the needs of different types of families; and
  - further promote family education at the district level in collaboration with relevant bureaux and departments. (HAB)
- Building on the success of the previous three rounds of “Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme”, the Home Affairs Bureau and the Family Council will jointly organise the fourth Award Scheme in 2017-18 to continue their efforts in promoting family-friendly employment practices in the community. (HAB)

## Commission on Children

- Set up a Preparatory Committee, which is chaired by the Chief Executive with the participation of representatives from different sectors, to prepare for the establishment of a Commission on Children in mid 2018 to amalgamate the efforts made by relevant bureaux and departments and children concern groups to focus on addressing children's issues as they grow. (LWB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)

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## Providing Support to Ethnic Minorities

- Apart from educational measures to help non-Chinese speaking students learn Chinese (Note), we will also implement the following measures to enhance support for ethnic minorities in employment:
  - Seek to submit legislative amendment proposals to the Legislative Council in the 2017-18 legislative session for implementing nine prioritised recommendations (of which seven involve the Race Discrimination Ordinance) under the Discrimination Law Review as proposed by the Equal Opportunities Commission; (CMAB)
  - Continue to engage staff proficient in ethnic minority languages to provide services at selected job centres of the LD on a pilot basis; (LWB)
  - Continue to implement the Employment Services Ambassador Programme for Ethnic Minorities to engage trainees of the Youth Employment and Training Programme who can communicate in ethnic minority languages as Employment Services Ambassadors at job centres, industry-based recruitment centres and job fairs of the LD to provide employment services for ethnic minority job seekers; (LWB)
  - Systematically review the requirement on written Chinese proficiency for various grades of the civil service, with a view to increasing government job opportunities for ethnic minorities; (CSB)

- Continue to implement various measures for the ethnic minorities to facilitate their early integration into the community, including provision of language classes, adaptation courses and youth dedicated programmes for the ethnic minorities through six support service centres and two sub-centres; implementation of the Ambassador Scheme for ethnic minority youths, etc.; and continued employment of non-civil service contract staff who are familiar with the cultures and languages of the ethnic minorities to assist in the implementation of the relevant measures; (HAB) and
- Implement a cross-disciplined forces training programme targeting ethnic minority youths to provide them with discipline, physical and team building training, to support and assist them to integrate into the community, and to cultivate positive values. (SB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)

(Note): The relevant initiatives are set out in Chapter 4.

## Enhancing Healthcare Services

- Accord priority to boosting primary healthcare services and invest resources accordingly to enhance public health. We will set up a steering committee on primary health care development to prepare a development blueprint. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)

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- Set up a district health centre in Kwai Tsing as a pilot to provide a range of professional services (e.g. nursing service, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and counselling service on the use of medication). We seek to strengthen collaboration between the health and social sectors and public-private partnership in a district setting, with a view to enhancing public awareness in disease prevention and self-health management, offering greater support for patients of chronic disease, and relieving the pressure on specialist and hospital services. In the light of experience gained, we will develop by phases district health centres for other districts. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
  
  - Plan and implement initiatives to promote the development of primary care, formulate reference frameworks for specific population groups and chronic diseases, promote the Primary Care Directory, and co-ordinate and plan the works projects for the establishment of community health centres in various districts. (FHB)
  
  - Consider developing a Patient Portal in the development of the second stage of the Electronic Health Record Sharing System to enable the general public to better manage their health, further facilitate the implementation of public-private partnership and medical-social collaboration, and promote health education more effectively. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
  
  - Enhance the collaboration among healthcare professionals to deliver more comprehensive healthcare services by:
    - expanding the coverage of clinical pharmacy services (including oncology and paediatric services) to improve the pharmacy services for patients and help reduce the workload of doctors; and

- enhancing the services of nurse clinics in urology and rheumatology and expand perioperative nurse clinics so as to facilitate patients' early access to treatment and continuity of care. (FHB) (New Initiative)
- The Colorectal Cancer Screening Pilot Programme launched in September 2016 enables timely detection of persons more likely to develop colorectal cancer so as to initiate early treatment to prevent progression into cancer and improve the chance of cure, thus reducing the impact of the disease on the healthcare system. (FHB)
- Increase the manpower of the Social Hygiene Service of the DH so as to enhance clinical services for patients with severe dermatological conditions and psoriasis patients. (FHB) (New Initiative)
- Launch an on-going mental health educational and destigmatisation campaign when the territory-wide mental health promotional campaign named Joyful@HK is completed in March 2018. The new on-going campaign aims to reduce stigma towards persons with mental health needs, so as to build a mental-health friendly society and facilitate their re-integration into the community. The campaign seeks to promote higher acceptance of people with mental health needs and, in the long run, enhance their employment opportunities and generate economic, social and health benefits. (FHB) (New Initiative)
- Consider ways to provide appropriate support services for students with mental health needs with reference to the evaluation results of the Student Mental Health Support Scheme. (FHB) (New Initiative)

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- Expand the enhanced model of providing multi-disciplinary services in common mental disorder clinics to the New Territories West Cluster within 2018-19. The aim is to offer more personalised intervention service to target patients. (FHB) (New Initiative)
  - Regularise the Dementia Community Support Scheme and expand it to all 41 district elderly community centres to provide cross-sector and multi-disciplinary support services for elderly with mild or moderate dementia and their carers through a medical-social collaboration model at the district level. (FHB) (New Initiative)
  - Continue to allocate resources to provide dental services for persons with intellectual disabilities in need of such services. (FHB)
  - Increase the number of public hospital beds and operating theatre sessions, and enhance the endoscopic and diagnostic radiological services, so as to enhance the service capacity for addressing the ever rising healthcare needs. (FHB)
  - Increase the quota for general out-patient and the attendances in specialist out-patient clinics, enhance the Accident & Emergency services and shorten the waiting time for out-patient and emergency services. (FHB)
  - Widen the scope of the HA Drug Formulary to improve the drug treatment for patients in public hospitals. (FHB)
  - Strengthen the services for chronic diseases through, for example, enhancing the capacity of cancer and cardiac services and increasing the service quota of haemodialysis for renal service. (FHB)

- Enhance public healthcare services through public-private partnership to increase service volume and offer additional choices to patients. We are implementing the following projects:
  - procuring additional places for haemodialysis services from the private sector to provide treatment for eligible patients with end-stage renal disease;
  - providing outsourced radiological investigation services for selected groups of cancer patients;
  - subsidising patients to receive cataract operation in the private sector; and
  - enhancing the choices of infirmary care services for applicants on the Central Infirmary Waiting List managed by the HA through collaboration between the HA and NGOs. An Infirmary Service Public-Private Partnership Programme has been implemented on a pilot basis with an NGO providing infirmary services at the Wong Chuk Hang Hospital. (FHB)
- Study how to make better use of resources to improve pharmacy services for elderly persons living in elderly homes. (FHB) ([New Initiative](#))
- Continue to extend the coverage of the General Out-patient Clinic Public-Private Partnership Programme to more areas, with a view to covering all 18 districts of the territory by 2018. (FHB)

## **Healthcare Service Development and Infrastructure**

- Expedite delivery of the 10-year Hospital Development Plan, for which a provision of \$200 billion has been set aside, and liaise with the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre on its future development needs. (FHB)

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- Continue to utilise the \$13 billion one-off grant on minor works allocated to the HA in 2014 to improve facilities in public hospitals and clinics. (FHB)
  - Set up a Big Data Analytics Platform in the HA to identify useful information that helps develop healthcare policies, enhance clinical and healthcare services, improve healthcare quality and safety, and promote healthcare services innovation. (FHB) (New Initiative)
  - Continue to implement the recommendations of the Steering Committee on Review of Hospital Authority through measures like refining the delineation of cluster boundary, shortening waiting time and adopting a refined population-based resource allocation model to enable the HA to better meet the challenges of an ageing population, increasing prevalence of chronic diseases and rising healthcare cost due to advance in medical technology. (FHB)
  - The DH will re-engineer the resources for information technology development, staffing structure and operation workflow to comprehensively increase the application of information and communications technology, and strengthen the development of public health data. The DH will also put in place a comprehensive Clinical Information Management System and other related systems so as to enhance its capability in meeting various public health challenges and deliver higher quality services to the public. (FHB) (New Initiative)

- Set up a steering committee to study the strategies for developing genetic and genomic services in Hong Kong. The steering committee will look into key areas which include enhancing clinical, laboratory and public health genetic services, strengthening academic research and professional training, as well as examining ethics and regulatory issues. (FHB) (New Initiative)
- Consider formulating a more robust policy and legislative framework to facilitate end-of-life care planning and the provision of palliative care outside hospital settings. (FHB)
- Continue our efforts to facilitate further development of private hospitals with a view to ensuring the healthy development of a dual-track healthcare system in Hong Kong. (FHB)

### **Ensuring Long-term Sustainability of Healthcare System**

- Facilitate the enactment of the Private Healthcare Facilities Bill, with a view to ensuring patient safety and protecting consumer rights. (FHB)
- Implement the Voluntary Health Insurance Scheme to improve the quality and transparency of individual hospital insurance products, and provide tax deduction for purchase of regulated health insurance products to encourage the public to use private healthcare services. (FHB)

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## Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development

- Take forward the recommendations of the Strategic Review of Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development to ensure sufficient manpower in the healthcare system to meet service demand, foster professional development and improve the regulatory framework of healthcare professions. Measures include:
  - considering increasing the number of publicly-funded undergraduate places for training doctors, dentists, nurses and relevant allied health professionals;
  - employing all locally trained medical graduates and providing them with necessary specialist training through the HA;
  - putting in place a structured mechanism to ensure that there is sufficient training relief, protected time and minimum training hours available for the healthcare professionals, in particular frontline healthcare professionals;
  - planning for medical specialist training by taking into account operational service needs, specialty development, long-term service development and manpower situation; and
  - without affecting the employment and career prospects of locally trained doctors, proactively recruiting non-locally trained doctors under limited registration, rehiring retired doctors and engaging private doctors through the HA to serve in public hospitals in order to meet imminent service needs. (FHB) (New Initiative)

- Forge ahead with the Pilot Scheme of the Accredited Registers for Healthcare Professions by completing the accreditation process for speech therapists, clinical psychologists, educational psychologists, audiologists and dietitians to pave the way for setting up a statutory registration regime for these professions. (FHB) (New Initiative)

## The Medical Council of Hong Kong

- Facilitate the Legislative Council's scrutiny of the Medical Registration (Amendment) Bill 2017, submitted by the Government in June 2017, with a view to enhancing the operation of the Medical Council of Hong Kong (MCHK) as soon as possible by improving its complaint investigation and disciplinary inquiry mechanism, increasing lay participation in the MCHK, and extending the valid period of limited registration for non-locally trained doctors to be approved by the MCHK from not exceeding one year to not exceeding three years. (FHB) (New Initiative)
- Increase the manpower and resources of the MCHK Secretariat to increase its efficiency in handling complaints and provide more user-friendly services throughout the complaint handling process. (FHB) (New Initiative)

## Disease Prevention and Control

- Set up a steering committee to formulate strategies to effectively prevent and control viral hepatitis. The steering committee will review local and international trends and developments in the prevention and control of viral hepatitis; advise the Government on policies and cost-effective targeted strategies for prevention and control of viral hepatitis; and conduct and co-ordinate the surveillance and evaluation of viral hepatitis control and recommend appropriate response. (FHB) (New Initiative)

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- Implement the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance and improve our infectious disease surveillance, control and notification system. (FHB)
  - Implement a multi-pronged strategy to minimise the risk of influenza pandemic and enhance Hong Kong's preparedness for the pandemic. (FHB)
  - Continue to implement and improve the vaccination programme/vaccination subsidy scheme to provide free/subsidised seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations for eligible persons, with a view to enhancing primary care and disease prevention. Measures include providing free or subsidised 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine for the elderly group under the Government Vaccination Programme and Vaccination Subsidy Scheme respectively from 2017-18 onwards, with a view to strengthening elderly's immunity against pneumococcal infection. (FHB)
  - Continue to adopt a comprehensive preventive and surveillance programme to reduce the risk of avian influenza outbreaks and human infections in Hong Kong. We will keep the situation under review and update the relevant policies in a timely manner. (FHB)

- The High-level Steering Committee on Antimicrobial Resistance, which was set up in June 2016, comprises representatives from relevant government departments, public and private hospitals, healthcare organisations, academia and relevant professional bodies. The Government has accepted the recommendations put forward by the High-level Steering Committee under the “One health” framework and launched in July 2017 the Hong Kong Strategy and Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (2017-2022), which outlines key areas, objectives and actions to contain the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance in Hong Kong. (FHB)
- Progressively enhance the HA’s management and treatment of life-threatening diseases, including its stroke care and cardiac services, with a view to strengthening service quality and capacity. The 24-hour intravenous thrombolytic therapy for stroke patients will be made available in individual hospital clusters in phases. The HA will enhance its 24-hour intravenous thrombolytic therapy services for stroke patients as well as its cardiac catheterisation laboratory and cardiac care unit services. HA will also gradually strengthen its emergency percutaneous coronary intervention service. (FHB)
- As the Pilot Study on “Newborn Screening for Inborn Errors of Metabolism” implemented in Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Queen Mary Hospital since October 2015 has proven effective, the DH and the HA have regularised the screening service in the two public hospitals from 1 April 2017 and will extend the screening service to all public hospitals with maternity wards in phases from the second half of 2017-18. In this regard, Prince of Wales Hospital will provide the Inborn Errors of Metabolism screening service in late 2017. (FHB)

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## Elderly Healthcare Services

- Continue to promote the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme, which subsidises elderly persons aged 65 or above to use private primary care services. At the same time, the Government is reviewing the effectiveness of the scheme with a view to ensuring that the scheme will enhance the provision of primary care services for the elderly, including preventive care. (FHB)
- Continue to enhance the manpower of the Elderly Health Service of the DH, including strengthening the provision of health promotion activities, providing priority to the needy elders to use the services of the Elderly Health Centres, and allocating more first-time health assessment quotas to new members. (FHB)
- Strengthen support for elderly patients with fragility fractures by increasing the HA's operating theatre sessions in designated hospitals, and enhance physiotherapy service for elderly patients. (FHB)
- Enhance the services provided by the HA's Community Geriatric Assessment Teams for terminally ill patients living in RCHEs. (FHB)
- Continue to strengthen medical-social collaboration through the joint efforts of the HA and the Social Welfare Department with a view to providing a full range of transitional care services and the required assistance for those elderly patients discharged from public hospitals, enabling them to age at home after the transitional period. (FHB)
- Continue to implement the Outreach Dental Care Programme for the Elderly to provide dental care and treatment for elderly people in residential care homes and similar facilities. (FHB)

## Health Promotion and Regulation

- Study the extension of statutory no-smoking areas at public transport facilities. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
- Launch a smoking cessation public-private partnership pilot programme in the fourth quarter of 2017. (FHB)
- Formulate legislative proposal for the regulation of electronic cigarettes. (FHB)
- Formulate legislative proposals for the regulation of health products for advanced therapies. (FHB)
- Consider carefully the views of different stakeholders on the statutory regulation of medical devices, with a view to introducing as soon as possible the legislative proposal for “pre-market control” and “post-market control” of medical devices. (FHB)
- Strengthen collaboration with relevant organisations to promote organ donation and encourage the public to register their wish at the Centralised Organ Donation Register. The Government will also legislate for the paired organ donation scheme to be launched by the HA. (FHB)

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## Chinese Medicine

- The Food and Health Bureau will set up a dedicated unit to oversee the development of Chinese medicine in Hong Kong, including deciding the positioning of Chinese medicine in the public healthcare system, which will serve as the basis for formulating the mode of operation of the first Chinese medicine hospital, enhancing the current tripartite collaboration model adopted by the Chinese Medicine Centres for Training and Research in the 18 districts and fostering the professional development of Chinese medicine practitioners. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
- Study and promote the development of Chinese medicine in Hong Kong, and open up markets on the Mainland and nearby countries for Chinese medicine by fully leveraging Hong Kong's advantages on various fronts. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
- To cater for the development of Chinese medicine, we will include information of Chinese medicine in the sharable scope of the Electronic Health Record Sharing System, continue to standardise clinical and medical terminologies of Chinese medicine, and develop the Chinese Medicine Information System On-ramp so as to facilitate the access and sharing of patients' information by the Chinese medicine practitioners who choose to use the system in the future. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
- Review the remuneration and promotion arrangements for staff (including Chinese medicine practitioners) in the Chinese Medicine Centres for Training and Research in the 18 districts with a view to enhancing their career prospects. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)

- Continue to review the development of the Chinese medicine sector through the Chinese Medicine Development Committee to formulate a strategy to raise the professional standard and status of Chinese medicine practitioners, support research and development of Chinese medicine, promote treatment with integrated Chinese-Western medicine, expand the role of Chinese medicine in the public healthcare system, and examine the feasible mode of operation of the Chinese medicine hospital. (FHB)
- For the development of the Chinese medicine hospital, we will draw reference from the analysis report prepared by the international consultant based on the consultation with local stakeholders and overseas experts and further plan for the governance structure, business model, operation model, financial model and contract management model of the Chinese medicine hospital. We expect that the positioning and the framework of development in major areas of the Chinese medicine hospital will be announced in the first half of 2018. (FHB) (New Initiative)
- To provide the healthcare professionals required by the Chinese medicine hospital for the provision of integrated Chinese-Western medicine with Chinese medicine playing a predominant role, we will organise various training courses, including diploma courses on Chinese medicine specialty for registered Chinese medicine practitioners, basic Western pharmacy training for Chinese medicine pharmacists, and relevant Chinese medicine training courses for medical practitioners, nurses and healthcare professionals. (FHB) (New Initiative)

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- Implement the Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine Pilot Project to gather experience in the operation of integrated Chinese-Western medicine and Chinese medicine in-patient services, which will serve as the basis for formulating the mode of operation of the Chinese medicine hospital. Launched in September 2014, the pilot project provides treatment with integrated Chinese-Western medicine for three diseases, namely stroke, low back pain and cancer, in seven hospitals of the HA. (FHB)
  - The temporary Government Chinese Medicines Testing Institute set up at the Hong Kong Science Park has commenced operation in phases since March 2017. On this basis, we will speed up the establishment of the permanent Government Chinese Medicines Testing Institute. Through development of a set of internationally-recognised reference standards for Chinese medicines and related products and also transfer of technology, it will help empower the industry to strengthen quality control of their products and develop Hong Kong into an international hub for scientific research on Chinese medicines testing and quality control. (FHB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
  - Continue with the research work after completing the compilation of Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards for 275 Chinese materia medica commonly used in Hong Kong. Our target is to set reference standards for around 28 Chinese materia medica each year. A pilot study has also been launched on the standard setting for Chinese medicines decoction pieces under the Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards Project. (FHB)

## Retirement Protection and Labour Issues

### Retirement Protection

- Engage the business and labour sectors with a view to coming up with a proposal that takes account of the interests of both sides for abolishing the “offsetting” arrangement of severance payment/long service payment with employers’ mandatory provident fund contributions. (LWB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)
- The Government and the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority have commenced work to put in place the eMPF, a centralised electronic platform which will enhance the administrative efficiency of the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) schemes, thereby providing more room for fee reduction. A working group comprising all the 14 trustees who are operating MPF schemes has been formed to steer the development of the eMPF. (FSTB)
- The Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited is planning to introduce a life annuity scheme in mid 2018 to provide an additional financial planning option for the elderly to help them turn cash lump sums into lifelong streams of fixed monthly income, so that they can better enjoy the rest of their lives. (FSTB) [\(New Initiative\)](#)

### Labour

- Support the Minimum Wage Commission in reviewing the Statutory Minimum Wage rate. (LWB)
- Follow up on the outcome of the review of the implementation of statutory paternity leave in consultation with the Labour Advisory Board and the Legislative Council Panel on Manpower. (LWB)

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- Commence a study on improving statutory maternity leave. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Continue to promote the employment of elderly persons by enhancing the employment support services for elderly job seekers. We will continue to organise various publicity activities to raise public awareness of the part played by elderly persons in the potential labour force and encourage employers to adopt friendly employment practices for the elderly. (LWB)
  - Continue to provide on-the-job training allowance of up to \$3,000 per month for employers for a period of three to six months under the Employment Programme for the Middle-aged, so as to give employers a financial incentive to employ elderly persons in full-time or part-time jobs and provide them with on-the-job training. (LWB)
  - Strengthen the protection of foreign domestic helpers (FDH) and the regulation of employment agencies with a view to maintaining Hong Kong as an attractive place for FDHs to work and meeting the demands of local families. (LWB) (New Initiative)
  - Allow the importation of labour on an appropriate, limited and targeted basis to relieve the manpower shortage of individual sectors on the premise of according employment priority to local workers. (LWB)

## **Occupational Safety and Health**

- Formulate comprehensive measures to safeguard the safety and health of people at work in the construction industry through strengthening of inspection and enforcement, publicity and promotion, as well as education and training. (LWB) (New Initiative)

- Increase the penalties in the existing occupational safety and health legislation with a view to strengthening the deterrent effect, thus further safeguarding the occupational safety of workers. (LWB) (New Initiative)
- Issue safety guidelines on hand-dug tunnelling works in 2017 to specify that hand-dug tunnelling method can only be used in situations where all other safer alternatives are considered impracticable. The guidelines will also set out concrete safety precautionary measures for such works. (LWB) (New Initiative)
- Step up promotion of the existing complaint channels to encourage construction workers to lodge complaints about unsafe working conditions, so that the LD can conduct more targeted inspections. (LWB) (New Initiative)
- Continue to collaborate with trade associations, workers' unions, professional bodies, related organisations and other government departments to explore and promote measures to enhance work-at-height safety to further protect workers' safety while working at height. (LWB)
- Continue to launch large-scale promotional programmes to raise the occupational safety and health standard of the construction industry and food and beverage services sector, etc. and the occupational safety and health awareness of relevant stakeholders. (LWB)

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## Women

- Continue to implement gender mainstreaming in major government policies and initiatives across the board, collaborate with the Women’s Commission in encouraging NGOs in the welfare sector to apply gender mainstreaming when formulating policies and programmes, and extend the network of gender focal points. (LWB)
- Continue to provide support for the Women’s Commission in promoting the interests and well-being of women through:
  - provision of an enabling environment;
  - empowerment of women, including continued implementation of the Capacity Building Mileage Programme; and
  - public education. (LWB)
- Continue to promote women’s participation in the work of government advisory and statutory bodies. (LWB)

## Urban-rural Integration

- The Government would devote resources to nature and rural conservation; detailed measures are set out in Chapter 5 under “Environmental Protection”. (ENB) ([New Initiative](#))

## Religion

- Continue to liaise with various religious organisations and, having regard to their needs, play a co-ordinating role in local religious affairs. (HAB)

## District Economy

- Keep supporting the continuous development of social enterprises through various means including the provision of start-up funds and strengthening support platforms to promote cross-sector collaboration and build up the capacity of social enterprises. (HAB)
- Continue to implement the pier improvement programme to enhance the structural and facility standard of a number of public piers in remote areas in order to respond to public requests and improve the accessibility to some remote scenic spots and natural heritages. For the first phase of the programme, we have conducted district consultations for about 10 public piers in the New Territories and outlying islands, and are pursuing the consultancy studies for the engineering investigation and design of the improvement works, with a view to commencing them in 2019 if funds are available. (DEVB)