

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:

- Increase the maximum penalty for wage offences.
- Together with relevant stakeholders, encourage further development of social enterprises to help enhance the employability of the able-bodied unemployed.
- Reinforce the district-based approach in preventing and alleviating poverty by providing districts with additional resources and support.
- Establish a pilot “Children’s Rights Education Funding Scheme” to support public education projects for the promotion of children’s rights.
- Ensure effective and rational use of housing resources by promoting sustainable public housing development.
- 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.
- Train additional Enrolled Nurses for the welfare sector.
- Provide new transitional residential services, ambulatory day training, care and support services to the severely disabled including tetraplegic patients to facilitate their return to community living.

- Launch 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.
- Strengthen training and support services for family members and carers of people with disabilities.
- Provide convalescent and continuing rehabilitation day services to discharged patients with mental, neurological or physical impairment to facilitate their early reintegration into the community.
- Launch a Visiting Medical Practitioner Scheme for people with disabilities living in residential rehabilitation service centres.
- Launch two batterers intervention pilot projects.
- Provide support to the Women's Commission in taking forward their strategies to tackle domestic violence and proposals to nurture caring families.
- Launch 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.
- Adopt a proactive approach in poison prevention and control through the provision of information service support to the medical profession, enhanced training for health care professionals and systematic collection and analysis of data from poisoned patients.
- Formulate effective public health policies for cancer prevention and control through the establishment of a comprehensive cancer surveillance regime.

- Promote healthy eating habit among school children to protect the public from life-style diseases.
- Explore the feasibility of introducing an electronic medical record system in Hong Kong in consultation with the Hospital Authority and other relevant parties and professions.
- Establish a department dedicated to oversee food safety, animal inspection and quarantine matters.
- Formulate measures to streamline food business licensing.
- Review the policies related to the provision of cemeteries, columbaria and crematoria facilities and strive to provide more facilities to meet future demand.
- Study the feasibility of long-term options for better meeting demands for emergency ambulance service.

Ongoing Initiatives

We are:

- Examining the findings of studies on specific topics of Population Policy, with a view to consulting the public and publishing a review report in 2005-06.
- Strengthening tripartite co-operation among the Government, employers and employees to maintain harmonious labour relations and help resolve employment issues.
- Stepping up enforcement action against wage offences.
- Stepping up enforcement action and publicity to combat illegal employment.
- Discussing with the franchised bus companies to develop a more objective and transparent process for fare adjustment with a view to implementing the new mechanism in 2006.
- 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.
- Enhancing our network at district level, which has proved invaluable in implementing Team Clean initiatives.
- Providing continual researches, preventive education, remedial counselling and treatment services for addressing gambling-related problems.

- 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 legislation to extend the prohibition of racial discrimination to the private sector.
- Implementing the improvement measures for the Pre-Sale Consent Scheme, following completion of a review.
- Consulting Heung Yee Kuk on proposed measures to speed up the processing of application for small houses with a view to implementing them as soon as possible.
- Reviewing the mechanism for the determination of domestic rents for public housing.
- Maintaining supply of public rental housing for needy applicants with an average waiting time of around three years.
- Updating and enhancing our legislative framework for prevention and control of infectious diseases through revamping the Quarantine and Prevention of Disease Ordinance.
- Further enhancing our infectious disease emergency responsiveness by strengthening the work of the Centre for Health Protection.
- Examining the feasibility of developing a medium-sized poultry slaughtering plant to reduce the risk of human infection of avian influenza.
- Reviewing strategies on health care services development and health care financing options in consultation with the revamped Health and Medical Development Advisory Committee.

- Introducing legislation to ban smoking in indoor work places and other public places to safeguard public health.
- Establishing a statutory Specialist Register for dentists to facilitate development of specialist practice in dentistry profession through amendments to the Dentists Registration Ordinance.
- Drawing up legislative proposals to prohibit the abstraction of seawater from specified areas along the coast for keeping live seafood with a view to enhancing the quality of fish tank water for protection of public health.
- Drawing up legislative proposals to regulate restricted dining places to safeguard public health.
- Formulating measures to promote sustainable development of the fishing industry and to conserve fisheries resources in Hong Kong waters.
- Overseeing the administration of the \$200 million Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged to promote the development of partnership between the business community, the welfare sector and the Government in helping the disadvantaged.
- Reviewing the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme with a view to strengthening the assistance to able-bodied CSSA recipients to move into work. This includes reviewing the provision of disregarded earnings to encourage employment seeking.
- Delivering the preventive, supportive and counselling services for needy families through the transformed Integrated Family Service Centres.

- Strengthening district welfare planning and co-ordination, including the fine-tuning of the newly developed protocol for the district welfare planning mechanism, review of the District Co-ordinating Committee mechanism and continuous operation of the District Liaison Groups for handling domestic violence.
- Continuing to strengthen services and staff training relating to the handling of family crises and violence, and suicide; and to review the Domestic Violence Ordinance.
- Providing more residential care placements for vulnerable children and youth coming from problem families to meet the demand for such services.
- Continuing to provide psychological support for children and youth suffering abuse and other problems, and enhancing support for youth at risk and young offenders.
- Addressing the developmental needs of children and youth, especially targeting the learning, employment and social needs of children and youth of deprived circumstances at district level.
- Providing additional fee-waiving places of After School Care Programme to facilitate 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.
- Strengthening the assistance to young people with disabilities; providing vocational rehabilitation to those with employment difficulties; providing specialised support service to those with early sign of mental health problem.
- Strengthening the rehabus services through addition of new buses and rationalisation of service.

- Examining ways to improve accessibility of public transport to the disabled.
- Continuing to convert subvented residential care places into long-term care places for frail elders to meet the growing care needs of elders.
- Developing a multi-pronged strategy to minimise the risk of avian influenza outbreaks.
- Improving overall food safety and control on agricultural and fisheries operations that have an impact on public health or the environment.
- Promoting the continuous development of Chinese medicine.
- Enhancing primary medical care for the public to reduce reliance on hospital care through developing a pluralistic primary care mode and strengthening the community mode of health care delivery.
- Working out a sustainable long-term funding arrangement for the Hospital Authority to ensure the provision of quality public health care services.
- Reviewing the regulatory framework for animals, birds and fish for the purpose of enhancing public health and food safety.
- Operating the \$300 million Community Investment and Inclusion Fund to encourage mutual concern and aid, and encourage community participation.
- Overseeing the operation of the Trust Fund for SARS.
- Preparing the subsidiary legislation and the administrative procedures on child adoption under the amended Adoption Ordinance.

- Continuing to improve IT and communication support for people with severe disabilities.
- Continuing the three-year Capacity Building Mileage Programme to encourage and facilitate women to pursue continuous learning.
- Further studying the financing model for residential care of frail elders to allow them more choices and flexibility in using residential care services.
- Promoting active and healthy ageing.
- Conducting studies with a view to developing a sustainable financial support system that better targets resources at elders most in need.
- Implementing the pilot Comprehensive Child Development Service which aims to provide integrated health, education and social services to ensure early identification of the varied needs of young children and their families so that appropriate services can be made available to them in a timely manner.
- Continuing to gradually introduce the use of the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist in different policy areas, and work with the Women' s Commission to evaluate the mechanism and publish an experience sharing booklet to further promote gender mainstreaming within the Government. Continuing public education and publicity programmes.