
Chapter 4

Optimising Our Demographic Structure And Attracting Talent

Preamble

Hong Kong faces the challenge of an ageing population. The proportion of elderly people in Hong Kong will rise rapidly over the next two decades, and at a rate much faster than most other advanced economies. This will have a far-reaching impact on the economy, healthcare, welfare, retirement protection, education and public finance. We need to prepare for this challenge.

We need to continue enhancing the quality and competitiveness of our population in order to meet the challenges of a knowledge-based economy. To this end, we will continue to devote substantial resources to education and vigorously develop retraining services.

To meet rising public expectations on healthcare services, the Government is progressively increasing resources to enhance public healthcare services which has always been a safety net for the whole population, and implement healthcare reforms covering primary care, electronic health records, healthcare infrastructure and the private healthcare sector. Based on the outcome of the two-stage public consultations on healthcare reform, we will embark on a three-pronged

action plan to take forward a Health Protection Scheme to enhance market transparency and competition, safeguard consumer interests with better choices, and provide relief to the public healthcare system.

New Initiatives

We will:

- Enhance the data collection and projection mechanism in respect of the return of children born in Hong Kong to Mainland women for settlement in Hong Kong.
- Inject \$5 billion into the Research Endowment Fund to provide additional research resources for tertiary education sector.
- Develop an international cuisine college under the Vocational Training Council as a centre of excellence in international cuisine to enhance Hong Kong's status as Gourmets' Paradise and regional education hub, and to improve education opportunities for young people.
- Strengthen support for students with diverse education needs by establishing a new youth college under the Vocational Training Council to provide alternative progression pathways for these students.
- Extend the case management programme to more districts to provide intensive community support for persons with severe mental illness.
- Further expand the coverage of the Hospital Authority Drug Formulary to enhance the efficacy of treating various diseases.

- Conduct a strategic review on healthcare manpower planning and professional development including regulatory framework, through a high-level steering committee, with a view to making recommendations in the first half of 2013 for meeting the community's future healthcare needs.
- Formulate legislative and institutional proposals for the Health Protection Scheme (HPS), under the auspices of the Health and Medical Development Advisory Committee, with a view to making recommendations in the first half of 2013, including supervisory framework for and financial incentives in support of the HPS.
- Facilitate the development of healthcare services in preparation for the implementation of the HPS through infrastructural support, enhanced market transparency, promotion of packaged services and charging, and purchasing of healthcare services to augment public services.

On-going Initiatives

We are:

- Continuing to encourage and promote public policy research in higher education institutions as a means to improve our policy-making capabilities, in particular the quality of policy research.
- Continuing to devote substantial resources in education to enhance the quality of our young generation, promote social mobility, and meet the needs and challenges of a changing economy.
- Implementing improvement measures for the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme and the Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme to provide enhanced support for family and to promote diversified development in pre-primary education.
- Planning with four remaining primary schools to turn into whole-day schooling.
- Continuing to implement the fine-tuning of medium of instruction for secondary schools starting from Secondary 1 in the 2010-11 school year.
- Continuing to provide a broad range of school-based professional support services for kindergartens, primary and secondary schools to help them take forward education reform initiatives.

- Continuing to implement the new academic structure (NAS) through professional capacity building and supporting secondary schools and tertiary institutions, as well as to conduct evaluation studies on NAS to collect feedback from different stakeholders and inform future planning.
- Implementing the Qualifications Framework by phases through the formation of industry training advisory committees to develop competency-based qualifications for individual industries, and developing a quality assurance mechanism to underpin the Qualifications Framework.
- Continuing to implement measures to enhance the learning and teaching of English in primary schools including attracting talent to the teaching profession, enhancing the professionalism of serving teachers, and providing additional resources for primary schools to develop school-based enhancement measures and to enrich the English language environment in schools.
- Promoting overseas exchange programmes to nurture students' global perspective and encouraging their participation in international events and activities.
- Continuing to implement small class teaching in public sector primary schools starting from Primary 1 in the 2009-10 school year.

- Continuing to implement measures to develop Hong Kong as a regional education hub to attract and retain non-local students. These include awarding government scholarships to outstanding students from the HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund, relaxing employment and immigration restrictions for non-local students, and stepping up promotion in the region.
- Continuing to organise curriculum-related Mainland study trips and exchange programmes for teachers and students of both primary and secondary schools as well as to give support in the form of professional development programmes and provision of teaching resources to empower teachers to promote national education through the school curricula.
- Reviewing the Post-Secondary Colleges Ordinance to provide a legal framework to facilitate the development of self-financing post-secondary education institutions with potential and capabilities.
- Continuing to explore the possibility of allowing more Mainland students to study in Hong Kong.
- Continuing to take forward the recommendations made by the Working Group on Textbooks and E-learning Resources Development, including the implementation of debundling in pricing of textbooks and teaching materials, implementing the pilot scheme on E-learning in schools launched in April 2011, and developing the online depository of curriculum-based learning and teaching resources, to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness.

- Putting forward proposals for gauging public views on how to improve the operation of non-means-tested loan schemes for students pursuing post-secondary and continuing and professional education, during the second phase of the review.
- Increasing publicly-funded first-year-first-degree places to 15,000 for each cohort and doubling progressively senior year intake places to 4,000 each year, from the 2012-13 academic year.
- Launching the \$2.5 billion Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund to provide scholarships and enhance quality of teaching and learning in support of the development of self-financing post-secondary sector.
- Launching a pilot study in some public sector schools in the 2011-12 school year with a view to strengthening schools' internal management and reducing teachers' administrative work.
- Participating in the work of the Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training to keep under review and make recommendations on the system and provision of legal education and training in Hong Kong, including the provision of vocational training of prospective legal practitioners.
- Continuing the promotion of various talent admission schemes and reviewing their application procedures from time to time with a view to streamlining the arrangements for the entry of talent and professionals.

- Continuing to refine our strategy for the long-term development of primary care in Hong Kong based on the recommendations of the Working Group on Primary Care, and co-ordinate, with the support of the Primary Care Office under the Department of Health, its implementation through engagement with the relevant professions and stakeholders, including the following initiatives –
 - (a) devise feasible service models to deliver enhanced primary care services in the community through appropriate pilot projects, including setting up community health centres and networks to provide more comprehensive and co-ordinated primary care services through cross-sectoral collaboration;
 - (b) promote the use among healthcare professionals and raise public awareness of the reference frameworks for the chronic conditions of diabetes mellitus and hypertension, and develop primary care conceptual models and reference frameworks for the elderly and children age groups;
 - (c) extend the Primary Care Directory through developing sub-directories for other primary care professionals to promote enhanced primary care through the family doctor concept, facilitate a multi-disciplinary approach in delivering primary care services, and encourage continuous training and education among primary care professionals;
 - (d) launch a pilot project in partnership with non-governmental organisations for a period of three years to provide elderly people residing in residential care homes or receiving services in day care centres with outreach primary dental care and oral health care services;

- (e) strengthen healthcare support for chronic diseases to facilitate early detection, prevention and treatment; raise the awareness of chronic disease patients and their carers and enhance their disease management ability; encourage need-based and risk-based proactive care for secondary prevention; and facilitate early prevention and intervention of complications to reduce the need for hospitalisation; and
 - (f) sustain the momentum of the Primary Care Campaign generated in April 2011 by a continuing and co-ordinated programme of health education and promotion activities, working with and soliciting support from various parties, with a view to reaching out to different population groups in the community and taking forward the territory-wide promotion campaign.
- Extending by another three years, and enhancing the three-year pilot scheme launched in early 2009 to provide ten health care vouchers per year of \$50 each to elderly people aged 70 or above as partial subsidy for using private primary care services in their neighbourhood community.
 - Building a hospital in Tin Shui Wai to strengthen medical services in the district.

- Preparing for the establishment of multi-partite medical centres of excellence in paediatrics and neuroscience to improve the quality of clinical services to patients suffering from complex and serious illnesses as well as to enhance the standards of research and training in the two respective medical disciplines. To contribute to the long-term development of paediatrics and neuroscience, the centres will bring together medical professionals in the public, private and academic sectors from both within and outside Hong Kong, and partner with major international medical centres in professional collaborations, research and training.
- Enhancing public healthcare services through public-private partnership to increase service volume, reduce waiting time, offer additional choices for patients, and enhance cost-effectiveness. Continuing to plan and implement pilot projects, including: subsidising specific groups of patients under the care of public general out-patient clinics to receive primary care services from the private sector in Tin Shui Wai; implementing Public-Private Chronic Disease Management Shared Care Programme; purchasing haemodialysis service from private centres for end stage renal disease patients currently under the care of public hospitals; purchasing radiological imaging services for specific groups of cancer patients; and extending the Cataract Surgeries Programme, etc.

- Under the Electronic Health Record Office, continuing to (a) develop a territory-wide patient-oriented electronic health record sharing system based on express and informed consent for sharing health records of patients among healthcare providers so as to provide a pivotal infrastructure for implementing healthcare reform, (b) formulate a legal, privacy and security framework for the protection of personal data privacy and system security, and (c) promote the partnership of public and private sectors in sharing health records of patients.
- With a view to promoting the sharing of patients' records, further expanding the "Electronic Patient Record Sharing Pilot Project" and "Radiological Image Sharing Pilot Project" of the Hospital Authority (HA) to allow more private healthcare providers, including those participating in public-private partnership projects, to access their patients' records kept at the HA and enter the patients' clinical information, including radiological images, upon the patients' consent.
- Conducting public consultation in 2011 on the legal, privacy and security framework for protecting the privacy of personal data in electronic health records.
- Enhancing professional training and facilitating professional development for medical and healthcare practitioners, and improving their working arrangements.
- Working out the funding arrangement for the HA for the coming three years.

- Formulating suitable land disposal arrangement for the four sites reserved for private hospital development at Wong Chuk Hang, Tseung Kwan O, Tai Po and Lantau, and plan for disposal of the four sites in phases starting from early 2012.
- Strengthening the regulation of Chinese medicine with the full implementation of the registration of proprietary Chinese medicines, including the provisions relating to label and package insert requirements.
- Preparing for the establishment of three public Chinese Medicine clinics, thereby increasing the number of clinics from 15 to 18, so as to enhance Chinese medicine service in our public healthcare system.
- Implementing the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance and continuing to improve our infectious disease surveillance, control and notification system.
- Implementing a multi-pronged strategy to minimise the risk of avian influenza outbreaks.
- Implementing the Strategic Framework for Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, which is a comprehensive strategy to co-ordinate multi-sectoral efforts in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.
- Enhancing cancer surveillance by improving case reporting.
- Continuing our progressive efforts in tobacco control through the multi-pronged approach of publicity, promotion, education, legislation, taxation and smoking cessation.

- Promoting healthy eating habit in schools and food premises and creating an environment conducive to making healthy choices of food to protect the public from life-style diseases.
- Developing a statutory regulatory proposal on medical devices, taking into account the findings of the business impact assessment and the views of the stakeholders.
- Continuing to promote registration for organ donation on the Central Organ Donation Register among the public through collaboration with relevant organizations.
- Continuing the subsidy scheme for elderly aged 65 and above to receive seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations to enhance primary care and disease prevention.
- Continuing to work in collaboration with the Mainland health authorities to promote and implement the liberalisation measures under CEPA to expand and open up the medical service market in the Mainland with a view to facilitating healthcare service providers in Hong Kong to provide diversified medical services in the Mainland.
- Supporting the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts to migrate to four-year undergraduate degree programmes from the 2012-13 school year, in line with the implementation of the new academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education academic system.