





Chapter VIII

Caring Society

My Belief

“Care for children, family support, patient care, poverty alleviation and elderly care are essential for building a compassionate and inclusive society.”

“Senior citizens in Hong Kong have contributed immensely to the prosperity of our city. The Government should continue to allocate resources and utilise innovation and technology so that our senior citizens can enjoy the golden period in their twilight years.”

“Our society has great respect for self-reliance and values Government efforts to provide education, training and retraining to help people adapt to new economy and trades. For those unable to support themselves, the Government has to put in place a sustainable welfare system to provide appropriate assistance.”

“We appreciate that young people have great hopes and aspirations for the future of Hong Kong and also understand that they have their own ideas and views on social issues. We should understand the feelings and needs of our young people as they learn to become independent and prepare themselves to contribute to society.”

To make better use of the resources, we should promote cross-sector and cross-profession collaboration as well as public-private partnership in adherence to the following principles:

- (1) pro-child;
- (2) pro-family;
- (3) pro-work;
- (4) pro-user; and
- (5) pro-health.

Primary Healthcare

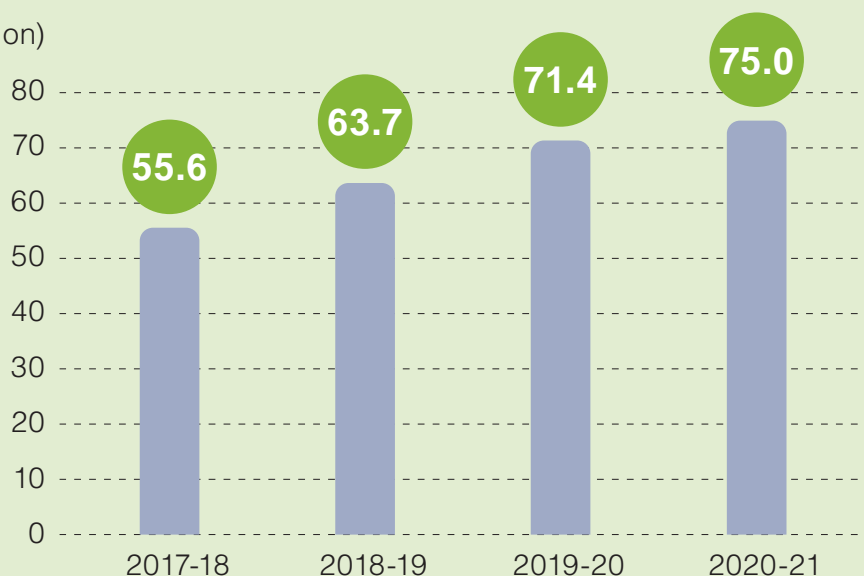
The first District Health Centre (DHC) at Kwai Tsing recorded **over 29 000** service attendances and conducted **5 800** health risk assessments.

- DHC established
- DHCs to be established by 2022



Total Recurrent Funding to Hospital Authority (HA)

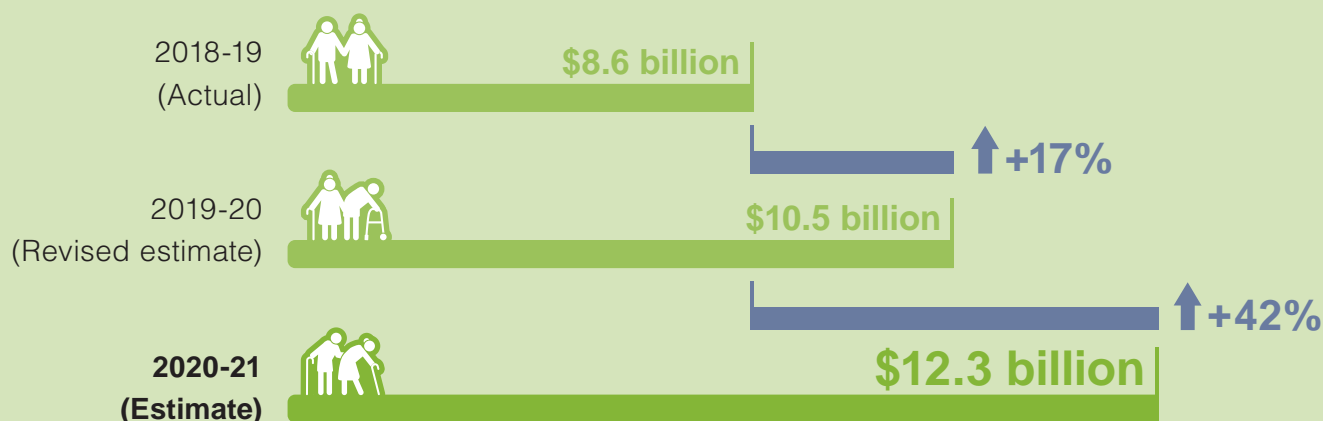
(\$ billion)



Cumulative increase
in total recurrent funding for HA from 2017-18 to 2020-21:
+35%

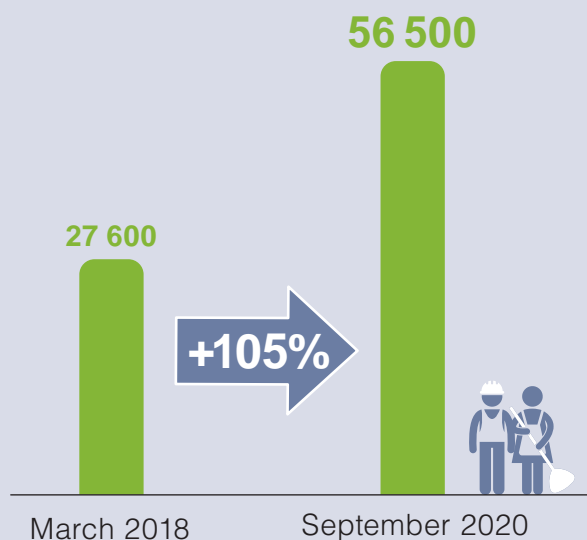
Elderly Services

Estimated recurrent expenditure in 2020-21 is **42% higher** than that in 2018-19

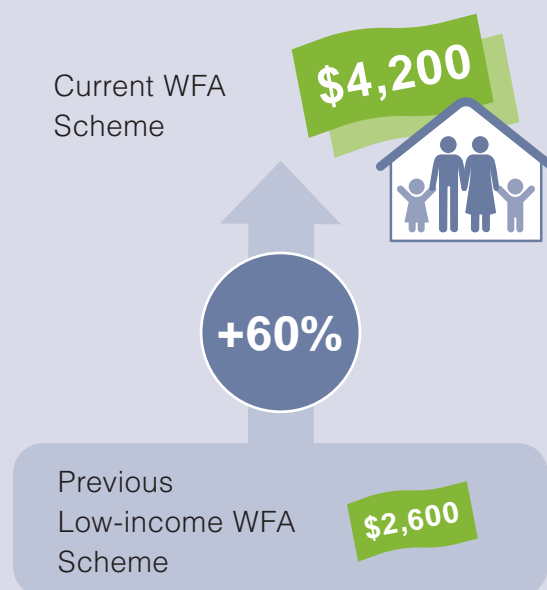


Pro-family

Number of households benefited from the Working Family Allowance (WFA) Scheme

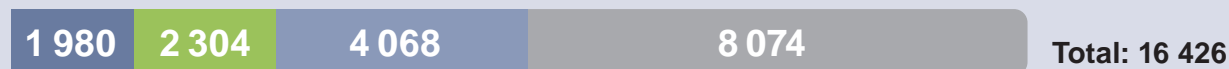


Maximum amount of allowance received by a 4-member household



Number of places for Pre-school Rehabilitation Services

2020-21 (Estimate)



2019-20



2018-19



2017-18



- Integrated Programme in Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centre
- Special Child Care Centre
- Early Education & Training Centre
- On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (increase to 10 000 by 2022/23 school year)

Progress Made

A total of 240 new initiatives were announced since July 2017 under “Improving People’s Livelihood” and “Connecting with Young People”, of which 235 have been completed or are progressing on schedule.

Key initiatives completed or major progress made are as follows:

Healthcare Services

Primary Healthcare

- Set up the Steering Committee on Primary Healthcare Development and the Primary Healthcare Office in November 2017 and March 2019 respectively to steer the development of primary healthcare services. (FHB)
- Commenced operation of the first District Health Centre (DHC) in Kwai Tsing District since September 2019, with satellite centres being set up in five sub-districts progressively. Operation service contracts for two more DHCs (Sham Shui Po and Wong Tai Sin) have been awarded. (FHB)
- Earmarked suitable sites for setting up DHCs in all other districts and secured the support of the relevant District Councils on the locations of nine DHCs. (FHB)

Prevention and Control of Diseases

- Launched “Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable Diseases in Hong Kong” in May 2018 to safeguard people’s health. (FHB)

- Expanded the eligible groups under the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme since the 2018/19 season to cover people aged between 50 and 64, and provided outreach vaccination services for primary school students, resulting in an increase in the overall seasonal influenza vaccination uptake rate by 46% when compared with that of the 2017/18 season. Regularised the School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme to cover primary schools, and kindergartens and child care centres (CCCs) starting from the 2019/20 and 2020/21 season respectively. Besides, starting from the 2019/20 school year, provided human papillomavirus vaccination to Primary Five female students. Provided pertussis vaccinations for pregnant women since July 2020. (FHB)
- Launched the Hong Kong Cancer Strategy in July 2019, covering directions, strategies and expected outcomes in areas ranging from cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, technology and support, research and surveillance activities. Launched an online resource hub in July 2020 to provide health information related to cancer. (FHB)
- Launched in October 2020 the “Hong Kong Viral Hepatitis Action Plan 2020–2024” with a view to reducing the number of people suffering from viral hepatitis. (FHB)
- Regularised the Dementia Community Support Scheme and expanded to cover all 41 district elderly community centres in Hong Kong since May 2019. (FHB)
- Extended the multi-disciplinary service model of the common mental disorder clinic to five hospital clusters. (FHB)

- Launched in 2019 three territory-wide mental health prevalence surveys covering children, adolescents and elderly persons. (FHB)
- Introduced the Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Bill 2019 into the Legislative Council (LegCo) in February 2019 to prohibit the import, manufacture, sale, distribution and advertisement of alternative smoking products, including e-cigarettes, heat-not-burn products and herbal cigarettes. (FHB)
- Designated 11 bus interchange facilities located at tunnel portal areas or leading to expressways or tunnels as no smoking areas. (FHB)

Development and Positioning of Chinese Medicine

- Allocated more resources to continue to develop Chinese medicine, including the construction of the Chinese Medicine Hospital and the Government Chinese Medicines Testing Institute. Commenced the tendering procedure for the operation of the Chinese Medicine Hospital in September 2019. (FHB)
- Provided an annual quota of around 620 000 for Government-subsidised Chinese medicine general consultation, tui-na and acupuncture services in 18 Chinese Medicine Clinics cum Training and Research Centres, with effect from March 2020. The fee for each consultation/treatment per visit is at \$120. (FHB)
- Rolled out various funding schemes under the \$500-million Chinese Medicine Development Fund, which benefited different levels of the Chinese medicine industry, non-profit-making organisations and academic institutions promoting the development of Chinese medicine in Hong Kong. (FHB)

Enhancing Healthcare Services

- Introduced since 2018–19 a triennium funding arrangement for the Hospital Authority (HA) to increase HA's recurrent funding progressively, having regard to population growth and demographic changes. Overall, a total recurrent funding of \$75 billion is provided to the HA in 2020–21, representing an increase of 35% over the provision in 2017–18. (FHB)
- Commenced inpatient services at Tin Shui Wai Hospital since November 2018, with 24-hour Accident and Emergency services. (FHB)
- Commenced services at the Hong Kong Children's Hospital by phases since December 2018 to treat complex, serious and uncommon paediatric cases requiring multi-disciplinary management. (FHB)
- The Steering Committee on Genomic Medicine has completed its work and published a report. The Hong Kong Genome Institute was set up in May 2020. (FHB)

- Enhanced cancer diagnosis and treatment services. Specific measures included recruiting 14 additional Cancer Case Managers (CCM) and expanding the CCM programme from currently covering colorectal cancer and breast cancer patients to gynaecological cancer and haematological cancer patients, serving additional 1 270 patients; providing additional 4 000 attendances for radiography services; increasing around 1 700 quotas for Specialist Outpatient Clinic and Nurse Clinic attendances in oncology; and recruiting additional Medical Social Workers to offer psychosocial support to around 5 600 additional attendances, etc., in 2020–21. (FHB)
- Relaxed the means test mechanism under the Samaritan Fund and Community Care Fund Medical Assistance Programmes since early 2019. The enhancement measures include modifying the calculation of annual disposable financial resources for drug subsidy application by counting only 50% of the patients' household net assets and refining the definition of "household" adopted in financial assessment. (FHB)
- Provided assistance for patients with uncommon diseases, including extending the scope of the assistance programme and providing patients with subsidies for specific drug treatments. (FHB)
- Formulated recommendations by the Special Task Group formed under the HA Board to enhance the HA's administrative efficiency, including simplifying the resource bidding process; streamlining meetings of Co-ordinating Committees, Central Committees and other management meetings at cluster and hospital levels; and streamlining the decision making processes of the HA Board and its committees. (FHB)
- Launched a three-year programme Healthy Teeth Collaboration in July 2018 to provide free oral checkups, dental treatments and oral health education for adults aged 18 or above with intellectual disabilities. (FHB)
- Implemented an outreach dental programme in Special Child Care Centres (SCCCs) under the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to provide children under age six with intellectual disabilities with free on-site dental check-up and oral health education. If necessary, children can be referred to the Special Oral Care Service at Hong Kong Children's Hospital for follow up treatment. (FHB)
- Under the Outreach Dental Care Programme for the Elderly, a total of 23 outreach dental teams have been set up in ten non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to provide free outreach dental services for elders in residential care homes, day care centres and similar facilities in the territory. The target group of the Elderly Dental Assistance Programme was expanded to cover elderly persons aged 65 or above receiving the Old Age Living Allowance (OALA), and the service scope of the programme was refined in February 2019. The programme has been extended for three years up to February 2022. (FHB)

Sustainable Development of Healthcare System

- The HA will employ all qualified local medical graduates and provide them with relevant specialist training. (FHB)
- Implemented the Voluntary Health Insurance Scheme (VHIS) in April 2019. As at end-March 2020, the number of VHIS policies reached 522 000. As at end-July 2020, 67 Certified Plans had been certified and were available in the market, offering 257 products for consumers. (FHB)
- Amended legislation to allow paired and pooled organ donations in Hong Kong. The HA launched a pilot Paired Kidney Donation Programme in the fourth quarter of 2018. (FHB)

Enhancing Public Health Regulation

- Passed the Private Healthcare Facilities Bill in November 2018 to implement a new regulatory regime for private hospitals, day procedure centres, clinics and health services establishments to ensure public safety and enhance consumer rights. (FHB)
- Passed the Pharmacy and Poisons (Amendment) Bill 2019 in July 2020 to provide a clear and dedicated regulatory framework on the use of advanced therapy products to safeguard public health and facilitate the relevant scientific development. (FHB)

Employees' Benefits and Support

Labour Protection

- Launched the HKMC Annuity Plan in July 2018. Lowered the minimum eligible age for the Plan from 65 to 60 since February 2020. About 8 900 policies have been sold, with a total premium of over \$5.6 billion, since the launch of the Plan. (FSTB)
- Strengthened the protection of the rights and benefits of employees injured at work, including enhancing Claims Support Services; establishing a platform with relevant stakeholders for implementing a pilot scheme on enhancing the follow-up procedures for sick leave relating to work injury; and strengthening the enforcement of the Employees' Compensation Ordinance (Cap. 282). (LWB)
- Actively preparing for the launch of a three-year Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work targeting injured employees from the construction industry, and preparing an Amendment Bill for introduction into the LegCo in the 2020–2021 legislative session to empower the Occupational Safety and Health Council to administer the Programme. (LWB)
- Strengthened the referral mechanism for relatively risk-prone renovation and maintenance works, and launched the Construction Safety Ambassador Pilot Scheme. (LWB)
- Drafting the enabling legislation for implementing the abolition of the arrangement of using employers' mandatory contributions under the Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) System to offset severance payment/long service payment. (LWB)

- Implemented new measures for enhancing the protection of non-skilled employees engaged by government service contractors since April 2019, which includes increasing the weighting of wage levels in tender assessments. As a result, such wages in contracts awarded since have increased by more than 24%. (LWB)

Employees Retraining

- Injected \$2.5 billion into the Employees Retraining Fund in 2020 for the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) to strengthen support to employees affected by economic downturn. (LWB)

Enhanced Employment Support

- Launched in September 2020 a pilot scheme on retention allowance to encourage the elderly, young people and persons with disabilities to undergo and complete on-the-job training. (LWB)
- Enhanced the Work Orientation and Placement Scheme in both 2018 and 2020 to encourage employers to hire and train job seekers with disabilities, including increasing the allowance payable to employers and extending the maximum period of allowance. (LWB)
- Extended the follow-up period for post-placement support for “On the Job Training Programme for People with Disabilities”, “Sunnyway – On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities” and supported employment service from 6 to 12 months from December 2018. (LWB)

- Published since 2018 the success rates of persons with disabilities as well as those for other candidates to enhance the transparency of civil service recruitment, and doubled the places under the Internship Scheme for Students with Disabilities from an average of 50 to 100. (CSB)

Employees' Welfare

- Implemented five-day statutory paternity leave with effect from 18 January 2019. (LWB)
- Set up the sixth families clinics and enhanced the clinical psychological services and specialised dental services for civil service eligible persons. (CSB)
- Implemented in March 2020 a Pilot Scheme on Civil Service Chinese Medicine Clinics, providing Chinese medicine services for civil service eligible persons as part of their medical benefits. (CSB)

Social Welfare Planning and Administration

- Launched a new phase of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses in April 2019 for NGOs to apply for the development or redevelopment of the sites they own, thereby increasing the provision of much-needed welfare facilities. (LWB)
- Implemented new arrangement for the land premium policy for religious bodies to encourage the religious community to provide different categories of social services and to optimise the use of land resources. (HAB)
- Earmarked \$20 billion with the target to purchase 120 premises for the provision of about 160 welfare facilities. (LWB)

- Set up a Task Force in November 2017 to conduct a comprehensive review on how to optimise the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System. It is expected that the review will be completed by the first quarter of 2021 the earliest. (LWB)

Pro-child

- Injected \$300 million into the Child Development Fund in 2018–19 for launching more projects which aim to boost the self-motivation and confidence of children from low-income families and help them plan for their future. So far, the Fund has supported 234 projects, and over 20 000 children have been benefited. (LWB)
- Established the Commission on Children in June 2018 to address the diversified issues related to children. Launched the Funding Scheme for Children's Well-being and Development in April 2019 to undertake promotional and public educational projects with the participation of children and stakeholders. (LWB)
- Formulated an appropriate planning ratio for subsidized CCC places on the basis of population and included in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines in March 2020 with a view to reserving suitable premises in housing development projects for CCC operations and meeting service demands in the new community. (LWB)
- Set up five specialised co-parenting support centres across the territory in October 2019 to strengthen support for the divorced/separated parents with parenting needs, enhance their children's ability in coping with family changes as well as to co-ordinate and arrange children contact. (LWB)

- Included CCC as one of the types of social welfare services required by the Government under the new phase of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses launched in April 2019. (LWB)
- Strengthened child care centre services, including improving its long-term planning and manning ratio as well as subsidy level. In addition, the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project was enhanced to strengthen the child care services provided by community nannies. The above measures are able to encourage women with small children to pursue or to continue their employment. (LWB)

Pre-school Rehabilitation Services

- Regularised the On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (OPRS) in October 2018 with the number of service places increased from about 3 000 under the pilot scheme to over 8 000 in the 2020/21 school year in phases. The plan is to further increase the number of service places to 10 000 by the 2022/23 school year. (LWB)
- Waived the means test for children on the waiting list of SCCCs (including residential SCCCs) applying for training subsidy and provided additional training subsidy places since October 2017. (LWB)
- Commenced implementation of a 20-month pilot project in the 2020/21 school year at kindergartens/ kindergarten-cum-child care centres participating in the OPRS to provide early intervention services for children with signs of special needs, awaiting assessment by Child Assessment Centres (CACs) or assessed by CACs to have borderline developmental problems. (LWB)

Pro-family

- Set up the Special Needs Trust in March 2019 to provide affordable trust services for parents of children with special needs. (LWB)
- Increased the number of Parents/Relatives Resource Centres for persons with disabilities progressively from 6 to 19 since March 2019. (LWB)
- Regularised the Pilot Project on Strengthening Support for Persons with Autism and their Parents/Carers and set up three Support Centres for Persons with Autism. In 2019–20, the number of these centres has been increased from three to five. (LWB)
- Streamlined the application and project management procedures of the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund since November 2017 to encourage more organisations, in particular those of a smaller scale, to apply for grants to implement diversified social capital development projects. (LWB)
- Regularised the community support programme for residents of new public rental housing (PRH) estates through the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund in April 2019 to help new residents and families integrate into the community as soon as possible. (LWB)
- Injected an additional \$500 million into the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund in 2020 to support social capital development projects (including community support projects for residents of new PRH estates) and build mutual help networks in the community through cross-sector collaboration. The funding injection should enable the continual operation of the Fund until 2024, for supporting about 140 projects benefiting more than 140 000 people. (LWB)

- Regularised the “Pilot Scheme on Relaxing the Household Income Limit of the Fee-waiving Subsidy Scheme under the After School Care Programme for Low-income Families and Increasing Fee-waiving Subsidy Places” under the Community Care Fund in October 2020 by inserting a one-third reduction of fees and strengthening after school care service with a host of enhancement measures. More than 5 700 students and their families are expected to benefit from these measures. (LWB)
- Regularised the provision of a student grant from the 2020/21 school year, with each secondary day school, primary school and kindergarten student receiving an annual grant of \$2,500, benefiting about 900 000 students in Hong Kong. (EDB)

Women Affairs

- Secured the passage of legislation to increase statutory maternity leave from 10 weeks to 14 weeks in July 2020, and advanced implementation to December 2020, a year ahead of the original schedule. The additional maternity leave pay paid by employers will be fully reimbursed by the Government, subject to a cap of \$80,000. About 27 000 female employees will benefit each year. (LWB)
- Extended the maternity leave for all female employees of the Government to 14 weeks from 10 October 2018 onwards. As at 30 September 2020, more than 3 200 government employees benefited from this initiative. (CSB)

- Completed the Consultancy Study on the Long-term Development of Child Care Services in November 2018, and put forward a series of short-term and long-term measures to improve the quality and quantity of child care services in Hong Kong. Completed a feasibility study in April 2020 on the provision of after-school care service for children aged three to six in suitable welfare facilities, and re-engineered the Mutual Help Child Care Centres in phases from 2020–21 onwards to provide after-school care service for pre-primary children through additional provision of social workers and supporting staff. (LWB)
- Enhanced the manning ratios for qualified child care workers serving in aided CCC to 1:6 (for children aged 0 to under 2) and 1:11 (for children aged 2 to under 3) in September 2019. By making reference to the enhanced manning ratios of day CCC, those of residential CCC were also adjusted accordingly in September 2019. (LWB)
- Imposed since 2018–19 the requirement for provision of babycare rooms and lactation rooms in the conditions of sale of all commercial land sale sites. (DEVB)
- The Stock Exchange of Hong Kong published in 2018 a “Guidance for Boards and Directors” to give practical advice to boards and directors on their roles to promote, among others, board diversity. With effect from 1 January 2019, listed companies are required to disclose the board’s policy on board diversity, including gender diversity. (FSTB)
- Completed district consultation for the establishment of a designated cremation facility and provided more spaces for keeping abortuses with a view to improving the handling of abortuses in a holistic manner. (FHB)

Poverty Alleviation and Social Security

- Launched in 2018, the Higher OALA (currently at \$3,715 per month) is benefiting some 530 000 recipients. (LWB)
- Introduced OALA under the Guangdong Scheme and Fujian Scheme in January 2020. Over 12 000 portable OALA recipients are now living in the Mainland. (LWB)
- Conducted the first major review of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme since 1999 and started implementing a series of improvements, involving additional recurrent expenditure of about \$1 billion. (LWB)
- Increased the rates of allowance and significantly relaxed the eligibility criteria of the Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme in April 2018, and renamed it as the Working Family Allowance (WFA) Scheme. As at end-September 2020, there were about 56 000 active beneficiary households under the WFA Scheme, doubling the number before the improvements. A further increase in the allowance rates took effect from the claim month of July 2020. (LWB)
- Allocated to the Short-term Food Assistance Service Projects a total of \$659 million since 2018. (LWB)
- Provided a one-off special allowance under the Anti-epidemic Fund to eligible beneficiary household under the WFA Scheme and means-tested Student Financial Assistance for pre-primary, primary and secondary students. The disbursement of the special allowance commenced in batches in June 2020, benefiting about 200 000 households, involving about \$900 million. (LWB)

Elderly Services

- Increased the number of service quotas of subsidised home care services by 3 500 (from 8 365 in July 2017 to 11 865 in October 2020), and will further increase by 1 500 in 2021; and increased the vouchers under the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly from 3 000 in July 2017 to 8 000 in October 2020. (LWB)
- Commenced the purchase of an additional 5 000 EA1 places under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme in 2019–20 to increase the supply of subsidised residential care places for the elderly and enhance the overall service quality of private residential care homes for the elderly. (LWB)
- Launched the \$1 billion Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care in December 2018. A total grant of about \$190 million have been approved, subsidising over 900 elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure or rent over 4 000 technology products. (LWB)

Providing Support for Persons in Recovery

- Created new clinical psychologist posts at Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness from October 2018 to enhance professional support for persons in recovery and persons with suspected mental health problems. (LWB)

Supporting the Disadvantaged

- Injected \$400 million into the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged in 2018–19 to continue to promote cross-sector collaboration in helping the disadvantaged. The injected fund was evenly allocated to the regular portion of the fund and the dedicated portion for after-school learning and support programmes, which will benefit some 130 000 grassroot students. (LWB)
- Provided subvention to NGOs for setting up five Cyber Youth Support Teams to reach out to at-risk and hidden youths to provide early intervention and support. The service commenced operation on 1 December 2018. (LWB)
- Raised the ceiling of cash assistance under the District Support Scheme for Children and Youth Development since 2018–19 to \$2,000 per person per year, and increased the annual quota to 10 000 to better cater for the development needs of deprived children and youths at the district level. (LWB)
- Injected \$50 million into the Trust Fund for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2018 to continue to provide support for SARS patients and their families. (LWB)
- Provided in 2020–21 two rounds of grants of the one-off living subsidy for low-income households not living in PRH and not receiving CSSA (first round already launched in July 2020). (HAB)

Enhancing Support for Persons with Disabilities

- Launched the Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities and earmarked \$250 million in March 2019 to provide funding support for arts programmes or activities for persons with disabilities with a view to enhancing their arts knowledge, fostering their interests in arts and developing their potentials. (LWB)
- Increased the number of places of pre-school rehabilitation services, day and residential rehabilitation services, and those provided under the Bought Place Scheme for Private Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities (RCHDs) from 37 945 to 42 619 from 2017 to 2020. (LWB)
- Provide in 2021 an additional 40 designated residential respite places through the Bought Place Scheme for Private RCHDs. (LWB)

Youth Development

- Established the Youth Development Commission (YDC) chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration in April 2018 to oversee the formulation and co-ordination of youth policies and steer bureaux and departments concerned to take forward the relevant initiatives. In March 2020, the Government announced the re-appointments of the Vice-chairman and 31 non-official members, as well as the appointments of eight new members. To further enhance youth participation and facilitate the YDC to listen to young people's views, the Government has appointed more young people to the YDC for the new term. The average age of the eight new members is 26. (HAB)

- Continue to arrange policy thematic meetings to invite relevant policy bureaux, with a view to further enhancing the operation of the YDC and communicate with young people in a more open, direct and interactive manner. During these meetings, YDC members and young people engage in focused discussion on specific policy issues, particularly those that are related to education, career pursuit and home ownership as well as young people's participation in politics, public policy discussion and debate. (HAB)
- Launched the YDC Youth Ambassadors (YA) Scheme in 2018 and recruited around 100 YAs. A series of training sessions and activities, including thematic seminars and exchanges and training outside Hong Kong have been organised for the YAs. Arrangements have also been made for them to serve as volunteers in large-scale and international events organised by the Government. (HAB)
- Pioneered the Space Sharing Scheme for Youth in 2017, which has met with enthusiastic response from property owners and NGO operators. So far, 12 projects have been rolled out to provide floor space to youth entrepreneurs at concessionary rental and relevant ancillary support to young entrepreneurs and artists. (HAB)

- Rolled out a pilot scheme on youth entrepreneurship in Shenzhen in 2018 and launched two brand-new funding schemes under the Youth Development Fund in 2019 to support youth start-ups who intend to start their businesses in Hong Kong and Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). Through the new funding schemes, more than \$100 million will be granted to support 16 NGOs in implementing youth entrepreneurship projects, under which subsidies will be provided for around 200 youth start-ups, while incubation services will be rendered to about 4 000 young people. (HAB)
- Continue to enhance the breadth and depth of youth exchange and internship programmes, benefiting over 70 000 participants each year. In particular,
 - Thematic Youth Internship Programmes to the Mainland were expanded from two programmes in 2017 to a total of seven in 2019, with five more in the pipeline;
 - United Nations Volunteers-Hong Kong Universities Volunteer Internship Programme was further expanded to sponsor 30 Hong Kong university students per cycle to take up short-term work assignments in United Nations agencies in more overseas destinations;
 - Scheme on Corporate Summer Internship on the Mainland and Overseas launched in 2018 provides quality internship opportunities outside Hong Kong to more than 200 students every year; and
 - on-going enhancement measures were introduced to our funding schemes for internship and exchange in order to better meet young people's needs. (HAB)
- Increased the number of offers for the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship to 40 to promote the culture of multi-faceted excellence. (HAB)
- Increased the recurrent subvention for 13 subvented bodies, including 11 uniformed groups and 2 NGOs involved in youth development, by a total of \$10 million from 2019–20, in order to enhance our support for their youth development work. (HAB)
- Regularised the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth (MSSY), under which young people aged between 18 and 35 with a commitment to serve the community are recruited regularly to participate in government advisory committees. So far, 35 committees have joined the Scheme covering a total of 71 seats and 50 members have been appointed. Given the positive feedback, starting from MSSY Phase IV, the number of participating committees in each phase will be increased from 10 to 15. At present, around 340 posts are held by young people who have been appointed to advisory and statutory bodies (ASBs) directly or indirectly through MSSY. The overall ratio of appointed youth members in ASBs has increased from 7.8% in 2017 to 13% as at mid-2020 and is gradually moving towards the target of 15% set by the current-term Government. (HAB)
- Recruited policy and project co-ordination officers to work in the Policy Innovation and Co-ordination Office to involve young people in policy research and project co-ordination. (PICO/CSO)

- Made considerable progress under the Youth Hostel Scheme (YHS) to relieve the short-term accommodation needs of working youth, including relaxing the requirement to allow YHS tenants to apply for PRH, commencing the operation of the first youth hostel in Tai Po, starting the construction of the largest youth hostel in Yuen Long, and launching a new project in Wan Chai. We will continue to take forward all youth hostel projects in collaboration with the NGOs concerned to provide a total of around 1 760 places within the next two years, as well as another 1 600 places through five other projects currently in progress. (HAB)
- Adjusted the additional funding models for schools admitting NCS students starting from the 2020/21 school year and stepped up monitoring and support. Provided all schools admitting a relatively small number of NCS students (i.e. ordinary schools admitting less than 10 NCS students and special schools admitting less than six NCS students) with a new two-tiered subsidy with additional funding. The amount of additional funding provided to schools admitting NCS students will be adjusted based on the annual change of the Composite Consumer Price Index and/or the annual Civil Service Pay Adjustment. (EDB)

Strengthening Support for Ethnic Minorities

- Set up in mid-2018 the Steering Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs, chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration. Under the supervision of the steering committee, around 30 new measures to enhance support for ethnic minorities (EMs) have been rolled out, covering areas such as education, employment, social welfare and social integration. (CSO)
- Provided tiered subsidy for kindergartens under the kindergarten education scheme admitting non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students, as well as public sector ordinary schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) schools admitting NCS students with special educational needs. (EDB)
- Continue to provide NCS students with the support for Chinese language learning, including the provision of teacher professional development programmes, school-based professional support services and learning and teaching resources, with a view to facilitating the implementation of the Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework; and providing different language learning opportunities for NCS students to boost their confidence in learning Chinese. We will also explore how to gauge their progress in learning Chinese language through longitudinal studies, and provide feedbacks to schools to further enhance support services. (EDB)

- Strengthened education for NCS parents and helped them understand the importance of enrolling their children as early as possible in kindergartens using Chinese as the medium of instruction, enhance their communication with schools, and make suitable arrangements to cater for their children's daily learning. Provide a series of parent education programmes for parents of NCS students starting from the 2020/21 school year to help them support their children's learning, encourage their children to master Chinese language, and gain better understanding of the multiple pathways available to their children. (EDB)
- Completed a comprehensive review of the Chinese language proficiency requirements for all civil service grades, with a view to providing more opportunities for EMs to seek employment in the Government. We also launched an internship programme in 2019 for EM university students on a pilot basis. (CSB)
- Enhanced the training on cultural sensitivity/equal opportunities for civil service new recruits and frontline staff. (CSB)
- Enhanced the training support for EMs by the ERB starting from 2019–20, including expanding the dedicated language and industry-specific training courses, and allowing more flexibility in the education attainment criteria for course enrolment. (LWB)
- Engaged an NGO in 2019–20 to raise EMs' awareness of domestic violence and sexual violence through community education programmes, and encourage victims to seek help. (LWB)
- Arranged translation and production of more publicity and educational materials to enable EMs to make better use of the services offered by the Department of Health (DH) and enhance the effectiveness of health education on communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases and mental health, etc. (FHB)
- Enhanced the translation services for EMs provided by the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents (CHEER Centre), including introduction of translation services in Vietnamese; enhanced the services of support service centres for EMs, particularly for EM new arrivals and youths; and implemented the District-based Programmes for Racial Harmony to encourage interaction and exchange between the EM and local communities. (HAB)

Eliminating Discrimination

- Formulated legislative proposal to amend the Sex Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 480) to provide protection from harassment for breastfeeding women. (CMAB)
- Enhanced protection from discrimination and harassment under the Sex Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 480), Disability Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 487), Family Status Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 527), and Race Discrimination Ordinance (Cap. 602), with legislative work completed following passage in June 2020 of the Discrimination Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2020. (CMAB)

- Improved the Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality to provide guidance to all government bureaux and departments as well as related organisations so that Hong Kong residents, regardless of their race, can enjoy equal access to public services. (CMAB)

New Initiatives

Support for Low-skilled Workers and Low-income and Unemployed Families

Increase the Number of Statutory Holidays

- Increase progressively the number of statutory holidays under the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57) from the existing 12 days to 17 days, so that it will be on a par with that of the general holidays, in consultation with the Labour Advisory Board. (LWB)

Pay MPF Contributions for the Low-income Group

- Put in place the measure of the Government paying the 5% contributions for low-income persons whose monthly income is less than the Minimum Relevant Income, upon full implementation of the eMPF Platform in around 2025. (FSTB)

Further Improve Government Service Contracts

- Complete the review on the effect of the measures implemented to improve the wages of low-skilled workers in Government contracts to identify room for further improvement. (LWB)

Employees Retraining

- Strengthen support to employees affected by economic downturn through the ERB's new tranche of the "Love Upgrading Special Scheme" to be implemented from January 2021 for six months until mid-2021. The new tranche will provide training and allowance for 20 000 trainees, doubling the number of the current tranche. (LWB)

- Step up the efforts in encouraging employers of sectors facing persistent manpower shortage (including the caring sector) to participate in ERB's "First-Hire-Then-Train" Scheme by exploring adjustment to the training and working hour arrangements under the Scheme to attract employees to enroll in frontline care posts in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly and arranging employers to join the "Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged" to apply for on-the-job training allowance. (LWB)

Improve Access to CSSA for Unemployed

- Provide a time-limited unemployment support special scheme through the CSSA system. The CSSA asset limits for able-bodied persons have been temporarily relaxed by 100% from 1 June 2020. The relevant arrangement has been extended to 31 May 2021, providing a 12-month special scheme in total. We will closely monitor the situation to provide appropriate assistance. (LWB)

Regularising Short-term Food Assistance Service Projects

- Regularise the Short-term Food Assistance Service Projects from August 2021 upon the completion of the existing service contracts. The Government will earmark \$415 million a year in recurrent expenditure for the service under the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System. (LWB)

Support for People with Disabilities

- Explore the provision of residential respite service in special schools with a boarding section (where vacant boarding places are available) for graduates who have such need during long holidays. (EDB)
- Examine the feasibility of arranging for residents of hostels for severely mentally handicapped persons who are in need of pairing Day Activity Centre services to receive the services at their hostels where physical space permits. (LWB)

Support for Senior Citizens

Combining the Normal and Higher Old Age Living Allowance

- In light of the financial implications of the merger of Normal and Higher OALA with higher payment rate adopted and with asset limits significantly relaxed, the timing of implementing this measure will be reassessed. (LWB)

Extending the Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (the \$2 Scheme)

- In light of the financial implications of the \$2 Scheme amid the aging population and further lowering the eligible age from 65 to 60, the timing of implementing this measure and other possible enhancement measures will be reassessed. (LWB)

Social Welfare Planning and Administration

- Incorporate the planning ratios of rehabilitation services concerned (including long-term residential care services, day rehabilitation services, pre-school rehabilitation services and community support services) into the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines in 2021–22 to ensure the sustainable development of the services. (LWB)

Healthcare Services

Gerontechnology Platform

- Design, develop and operate an inclusive “Gerontechnology Platform” under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to link up different stakeholders on the supply and demand sides and enhance synergy by way of engagement, cross-sector partnership and collaboration. The goal is to foster the development and application of gerontechnology as a means to enhancing the well-being, quality of life, independence and self-reliance of the elderly as well as providing support to their families, caregivers, healthcare staff and institutions, particularly under the “new normal”. (ITB)

Mental Health

- Provide targeted and relief support for persons with the most pressing mental health needs, subsequent to the launch of the “Shall We Talk” initiative in July 2020 to promote and educate the public on mental health. A sum of \$300 million will be earmarked under the Beat Drugs Fund to provide financial support for the initiative. The Advisory Committee on Mental Health will be responsible for co-ordinating the initiative (with an estimated annual funding of about \$100 million), and will work with the service providers and NGOs in the sector to identify needs and set priorities, with a view to facilitating or promoting projects as appropriate. (FHB, SB)
- Further strengthen child and adolescent psychiatric service, it is proposed that the Student Mental Health Support Scheme¹ will be gradually extended to cover all primary and secondary schools in the public sector and schools under the DSS across the territory in phases starting from the 2021/22 school year. (FHB)

Prevention and Control of Diseases

- Regularise the seasonal influenza vaccination school outreach service for kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and CCCs. (FHB)

Women Affairs

- Based on the latest recommendations of the Cancer Expert Working Group on Cancer Prevention and Screening of the Cancer Co-ordinating Committee on breast cancer screening, the Government will adopt a risk-based approach for breast cancer screening. DH will provide breast cancer screening for eligible women having regard to their risk of developing breast cancer. (FHB)

Youth Development

Subsidising and Promoting Youth Outdoor Adventure Training Activities

- Invite the YDC to introduce a new funding scheme under the Youth Development Fund to sponsor eligible NGOs in providing local outdoor adventure training activities for young people. (HAB)

Youth Entrepreneurship

- Invite the YDC to raise the funding of the current-round Funding Scheme for Youth Entrepreneurship in the GBA, with a view to supporting more youth start-ups to strengthen their corporate governance, adaptability and digital competence. Afterwards, the Government will establish the Alliance of Hong Kong Youth Innovative and Entrepreneurial Bases in the GBA to serve as a one-stop information, publicity and exchange platform to further support innovation and entrepreneurship by Hong Kong youth in the GBA. (HAB)

¹ The Food and Health Bureau has, in collaboration with the Education Bureau, the HA and the SWD, launched the Student Mental Health Support Scheme based on the medical-educational-social collaboration model since the 2016/17 school year. Interdisciplinary teams comprising psychiatric nurses from the HA, designated teachers and school social workers are formed in schools to provide support services for students with mental health needs.