





Chapter VIII

Caring Society



From Belief to Implementation

“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.”

Timely investment can reduce colossal expenses which may have to be incurred if action is delayed. Guided by this belief, the current-term Government has been bold and visionary in introducing new policy initiatives with recurrent implications to enhance primary health care, elderly support and employment support. Recurrent government expenditure on social welfare and healthcare have increased from \$65.3 billion and \$62.6 billion in 2017–18 to \$105.7 billion and \$95.9 billion in 2021–22 respectively, representing a significant increase of 62% and 53%.

To monitor the effectiveness of the Government’s poverty alleviation programmes, annual reports on Hong Kong’s poverty situation were published. To enhance support to working families, the eligibility for the Working Family Allowance has been considerably relaxed, with about 61 900 families receiving the allowance.

For the elderly, 75% of persons aged 65 or above are receiving some form of cash allowance from the Government, with the Higher Old Age Living Allowance launched in 2018 being the mainstream with 570 000 recipients

as at end-August 2021. The Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (commonly known as \$2 Scheme) would be extended to persons aged 60–64 and cover red mini buses, kaito and the tramways from February 2022. Yet we need to work harder to provide purpose-built premises for residential care homes: measures introduced include the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses and the provision of additional gross floor area for welfare purposes in public housing estates. We have also increased the service places of subsidised home care services and the number of Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly to promote ageing in place.

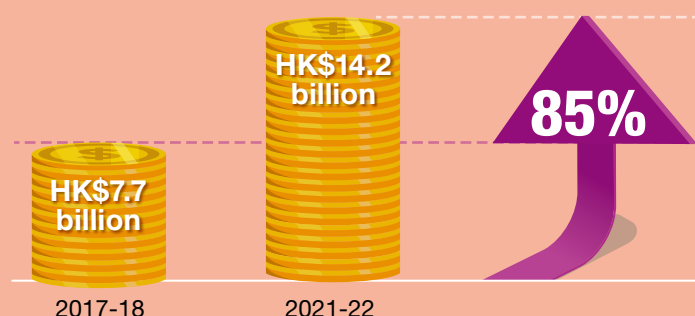
For labour welfare, the statutory paid maternity leave has been extended from 10 weeks to 14 weeks with Government reimbursing the pay of additional weeks; and five-day paid statutory paternity leave has been implemented. We have improved the employment terms of non-skilled workers of government service contractors with average hourly rate at \$45.5, well above the Statutory Minimum Wage of \$37.5 per hour; and enacted legislation to bring the number of statutory holidays (12 days at present) on par with that of general holidays (17 days) progressively. The non-means tested Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme was launched to relieve the burden of daily public transport commuters.

In respect of healthcare services, a new triennial funding arrangement is adopted to allow the Hospital Authority to plan ahead with longer timeframe. More healthcare resources would be deployed to cope with an ageing society, with an additional funding of \$470 billion set aside for improvement of hospital and healthcare facilities under the two Ten-Year Hospital Development Plans. District Health Centres are set up to support people to manage their health issues in the community to avoid unnecessary hospitalisation.

For young people having different aspirations, the Government is determined to creating an environment that enables them to grow healthily, build a stable home, pursue a good career and unleash their full potential. To broaden the scope for realising their dreams, we have been subsidising our young people to work and start up new businesses in the Mainland cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) under the GBA Youth Employment Scheme and Funding Scheme for Youth Entrepreneurship in GBA respectively. The Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth has also been well received with some 440 youth members appointed to different Government boards and committees so far. We achieved the target of 35% female members to Government boards and committees in June 2021.

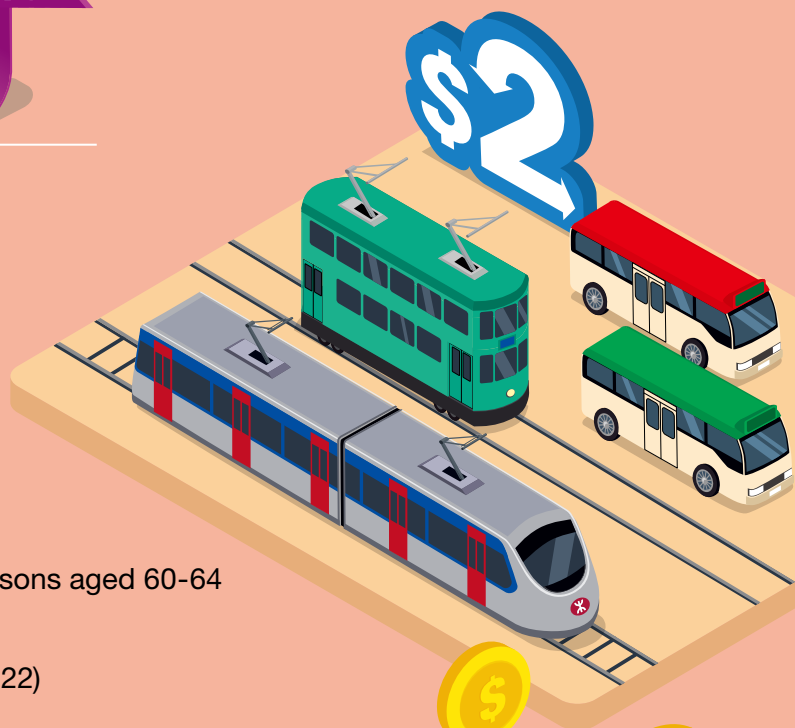
Elderly

Recurrent Expenditure on Elderly Services



Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme (HK\$2 Scheme)

- Starting from February 2022, extend to persons aged 60-64
- Beneficiaries: Increase from **1.22 million** (2017) to **2.14 million** (2022)



Monthly Cash Support

75% of persons aged 65 or above receiving government social security payments

Non-means-tested Schemes

- Old Age Allowance **HK\$1,475** per month
- Disability Allowance (DA)
(Higher DA: **HK\$3,770** per month / Normal DA: **HK\$1,885** per month)

Means-tested Schemes

- Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (**HK\$7,700** per month on average)
- Old Age Living Allowance (OALA)
(Higher OALA: **HK\$3,815** per month / Normal OALA: **HK\$2,845** per month)
* OALA being the mainstream (620 000 recipients, among which 92% receiving Higher OALA)



Non-cash Support

Health Care Voucher

- **1.41 million** users
(around 98% of eligible elderly)
- **10 400+** healthcare service providers,
with **27 800+** service locations

Technology Adoption in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care

- Approved HK\$380 million for **1 300** service units to procure or rent **9 600+** technology products

Home and Community Care Service

- Subsidised home care service places increased by **60%**, from 8 365 (July 2017) to **13 365** (April 2021)
- Community Care Service Vouchers increased by **167%**



Residential Care Service

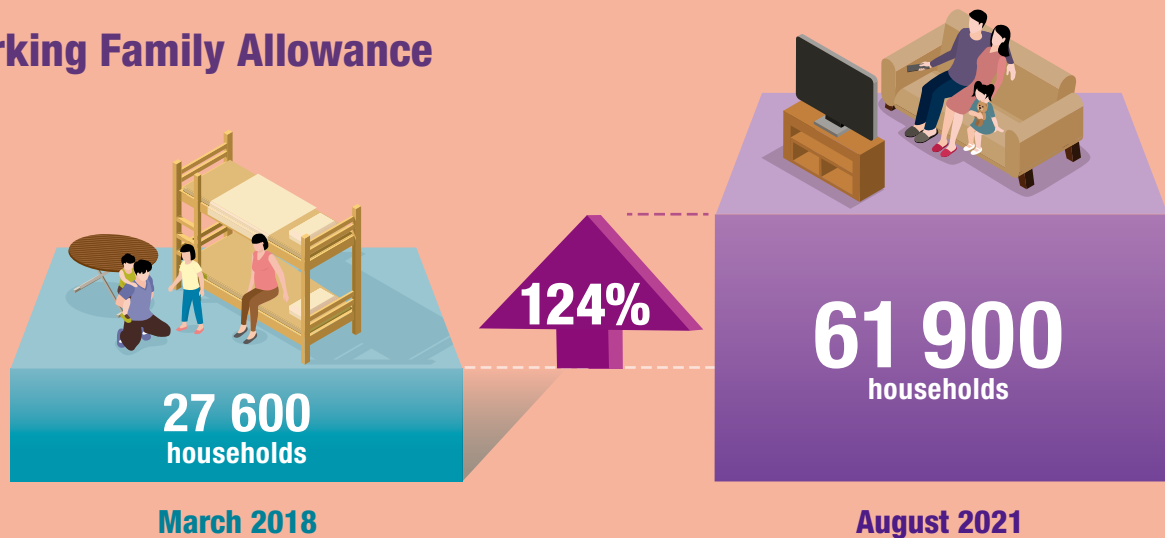
- Subsidised places increased to **29 841** (August 2021)
- Users of Residential Care Service Voucher increased to **2 155** (August 2021)
- 47 development projects in progress: provide about **8 800** residential care places



Families & Children

Families

Working Family Allowance



Maternity & Paternity Leave, and Statutory Holidays

Maternity Leave

10 weeks ► **14 weeks** (since December 2020)

Reimbursement of 4-week pay:
up to **HK\$80,000** per employee

- **HK\$56 million** reimbursed
- Over **2 500** working mothers benefited (as at end-August 2021)

Paternity Leave

5 days (since January 2019)

Align Statutory Holidays with General Holidays Progressively

12 days ► **17 days**



Breastfeeding

Enhanced Protection from Discrimination and Harassment

- Discrimination Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2020
- Sex Discrimination (Amendment) Ordinance 2021



Other Family Well-being Matters

Family Impact Assessment

- **400+** policy measures and programmes assessed since 2017

Thematic Sponsorship Scheme

- Approved HK\$9 million for 12 projects, benefited **120 000+** people

Children

Pre-school Rehabilitation Services

- On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (OPRS), Early Education and Training Centre, Integrated Programme in Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centre and Special Child Care Centre places:
Increased by **62%**, from 9 938 (2016-17) to 16 112 (2020-21)
- Regularised the OPRS in October 2018:
Number of service places:



3 000 (pilot scheme)  **8 000** (2020/21 school year)  **10 000** (by 2022/23 school year)



Pre-primary Social Work Service

- **57** social work teams
- **725** pre-primary institutions
- **130 000** children and their families can benefit




Child Care

Child Care Centres (CCC)

- Subsidised places in aided standalone CCC increased by **15%**, from 744 (2017) to 852 (2021)
- Enhanced child care workers manning ratios in 2019:
1:8  **1:6** for children aged 0 to below 2
1:14  **1:11** for children aged 2 to below 3

After School Care Programme

- Regularised the arrangement allowing more low-income families to have access to fee-waiving places
- Full fee-waiving places:
2 100 (2019)  Over **3 400** (March 2021)

Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project

- **44 000+** children benefited (from 2017-18 to 2020-21)

Child Development

Child Development Fund

- Injected HK\$300 million (2018-19)
- **240** projects approved to benefit **21 000+** children

Funding Scheme for Children's Well-being and Development

- Approved HK\$18 million for **60+** projects (2019-20 and 2020-21)



Youth



Life Planning

Funding Scheme for Youth Life Planning Activities

- HK\$112 million allocated
- 360 secondary schools + 24 NGO partners
- **318 000** persons benefited
- **620+** e-learning activities organised to promote youth well-being during epidemic

Individual Study and Career Support Service for Secondary School Students and Leavers

- HK\$7.2 million allocated
- **400+** persons benefited

Exchange and Internship

In past 5 years, relevant funding schemes cover:

- 31 Mainland provinces or municipalities
- 41 countries and regions in the world
- Over **70 000** young people benefited per year



Outdoor Adventure Training Activities

- Pilot scheme expected to benefit about **2 600** persons

Pilot Scheme
rolled out in
July 2021



Youth Ambassadors Programme

- **200** Ambassadors

Employment and Entrepreneurship

GBA Youth Employment Scheme

- HK\$376 million allocated
- Launched in January 2021 with 3 494 vacancies and over 20 000 job applications

Youth Development Fund

First Round of Funding

- HK\$24 million granted to 9 entrepreneurship projects
- **100** youth start-ups supported
- >95% survived by end of funding period



Funding Scheme for Youth Entrepreneurship in the GBA

- HK\$130 million for 16 NGOs
- 230 youth start-ups to be supported, involving 800+ Hong Kong young entrepreneurs
- **4 000** young people to be benefited



Funding Scheme for Experiential Programmes at Innovation and Entrepreneurial Bases in the GBA

- HK\$5 million for 15 NGOs
- **700** young people to be benefited

Space Sharing Scheme for Youth

- 12 projects providing floor area of 150 000+ square feet
- Three properties contributed by property owners at nil or nominal rent
- Benefited **5 000+** young entrepreneurs and artists

Participation in Public Affairs

Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth

- **6 800+** applications received
- 270 young people appointed in Advisory and Statutory Bodies (ASBs), holding 440 posts
- Overall ratio of youth members in ASBs
7.8% (2017) ➡ **14.8%** (mid-2021)

Youth Hostel Scheme

- Two projects providing **1 760** places by mid-2022, including the first hostel with 80 places in Tai Po (operated since 2020)
- **1 600** places through 5 other projects in progress



Disadvantaged Groups

Persons in Poverty and the Unemployed

Short-term Food Assistance Service Projects

- **139 800** persons benefited since 2018



Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme

- Substantially increased the rent allowance and relaxed the eligibility criteria for a supplement and special grants
- As additional relief during epidemic, relaxed the asset limits of able-bodied persons by **100%** from June 2020 to May 2021, and disregarded the cash value of insurance policies of able-bodied applicants as assets from April to September 2021 for a grace period of one year

12 600
unemployment cases
(January 2020)

19 200
unemployment cases
(August 2021)

One-off Living Subsidy for Low-income Households Not Living in Public Housing and Not Receiving CSSA

- Two rounds in 2020-21
- First round benefited **115 000** households



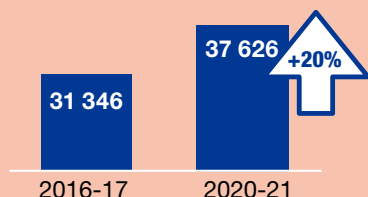
Love Upgrading Special Scheme

- Training and allowance to **60 000** trainees since 2019
- **84%** trainees completed full-time vocational skills courses are in employment (end-June 2021)



Persons with Disabilities

Subsidised day rehabilitation, respite and residential care service places



Work Orientation and Placement Scheme

- **3 729** persons with disabilities employed (from July 2017 to August 2021)



Parents / Relatives Resource Centre

6 ▶ 19

Support Centres for Persons with Autism

3 ▶ 5

Special Needs Trust

- Launched in March 2019

Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities

- Launched in March 2019
- Approved HK\$36 million for **59** projects



Ethnic Minorities

Additional subsidy to kindergartens (KGs) admitting non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students

• **486 KGs**

- HK\$341 million in total since 2017/18 school year



Enhanced additional funding for schools admitting a relatively small number of NCS students

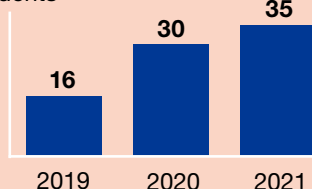
- **1 363** students benefited
- HK\$53.4 million in total since 2020/21 school year

Grant for supporting NCS students with special educational needs

- **1 153** students benefited
- HK\$67 million in total since 2019/20 school year

Government internship programme for non-ethnic Chinese students

Students



Racial Diversity Employment Programme

- **481** job seekers served since November 2020

Strengthened welfare support through outreaching

- **2 869** persons benefited since March 2020

Strengthened services at support service centres

- **19 550** persons benefited since 2019

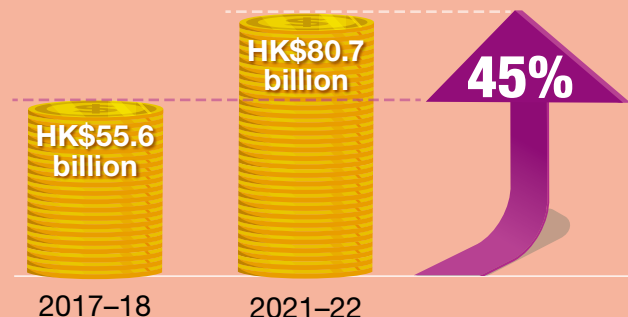
Strengthened translation services at the CHEER Centre

- 5 500 cases (2018-19)
- ▶ 9 200 cases (2020-21)
- Introduced translation services in Vietnamese in June 2019



Healthcare Services

Recurrent Subvention to Hospital Authority



New Health-related Facilities

District Health Centres (DHCs)

Launched: Kwai Tsing and Sham Shui Po

Launch by 2022: Wong Tai Sin, Tuen Mun, Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long and Southern District

First DHC

- 14 400 members
- 73 400+ service attendances
- Conducted 15 100 basic health risk factors assessments

(as at 31 March 2021)



HK\$470 billion for Two Ten-year Hospital Development Plans (HDP)

First Ten-year HDP:

- 6 500+ additional beds
- 94 additional operating theatres
- Additional annual capacity:
 - 438 800 general outpatient clinic attendances
 - 2 857 800 specialist outpatient clinic attendances



Second Ten-year HDP:

- 9 000+ additional beds



Chinese Medicine

Chinese Medicine Hospital:

commence service in phases from Q2 2025

Government Chinese Medicines Testing Institute:

complete construction in 2025

Achievements

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 District Health Centres (DHCs) in Kwai Tsing and Sham Shui Po in September 2019 and June 2021 respectively. Operation service contracts for two more DHCs (Wong Tai Sin and Tuen Mun) have been awarded. (FHB)
- Earmarked sites for setting up DHCs in all other districts and secured the support of the relevant District Councils on the locations of 10 DHCs. (FHB)
- Awarded operation service contracts for “DHC Express” in 11 districts (namely Central and Western District, Wan Chai, Eastern District, Yau Tsim Mong, Kowloon City, Kwun Tong, North District, Tai Po, Sai Kung, Sha Tin and Islands). (FHB)
- Prepared for the launch of the Pilot Public-Private Partnership Programme for DHCs in the Sham Shui Po DHC in the second half of 2021 to provide subsidised medical consultation services to members newly diagnosed with diabetes or hypertension. (FHB)
- Expanded 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, increasing the seasonal influenza vaccination uptake rate by 46% when compared with the 2017/18 season. Regularised the School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme to cover primary schools, and kindergartens (KGs) and child care centres (CCCs) starting from the 2019/20 and 2020/21 season respectively. (FHB)
- Provided human papillomavirus vaccination to Primary Five female students since the 2019/20 school year. Provided pertussis vaccinations for pregnant women since July 2020. (FHB)
- Launched the Hong Kong Cancer Strategy in July 2019. Launched an online resource hub in July 2020 to provide health information related to cancer. (FHB)
- Adopted a risk-based approach for breast cancer screening, with screening service provided to eligible women aged between 44 and 69 starting from September 2021. (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)
- 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)

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. (FHB)

- Designated 11 bus interchange facilities located at tunnel portal areas or leading to expressways or tunnels as no smoking areas. (FHB)

Mental Health

- Supported the Advisory Committee on Mental Health to invite proposals on strengthening mental health support in July 2021 with funding from the Beat Drugs Fund. (FHB)
- Expanded the Student Mental Health Support Scheme from 17 schools in the 2017/18 school year to 210 schools in the 2021/22 school year. (FHB)
- Regularised and expanded the Dementia Community Support Scheme to cover all district elderly community centres in 2019. From 2017 to 2020, benefited about 4 700 elderly persons and their carers. (FHB)
- Commenced territory-wide mental health prevalence surveys for completion within 2023 covering children, adolescents and elderly persons to gather mental health related data to facilitate the development of relevant services. (FHB)
- Launched the on-going mental health promotion and public education initiative named “Shall We Talk” since July 2020 to raise public understanding and awareness about mental wellness. (FHB)
- Strengthened multi-disciplinary support for patients with common mental disorder in psychiatric specialist outpatient clinics in five clusters of the Hospital Authority (HA). (FHB)

- Piloted the collaborative care model between paediatrics and child & adolescent (C&A) psychiatry departments by the HA to provide better care management and timely treatment for patients with mild and stable Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder and strengthened the allied health support services to C&A psychiatric patients. (FHB)
- Increased the capacity of the C&A psychiatric specialist outpatient clinics to provide 1 500 additional new case attendances and provided more personalised and timely multi-disciplinary support services. (FHB)

Development and Positioning of Chinese Medicine

- Established the positioning of Chinese medicine (CM) in the public medical system in Hong Kong and provided subsidies to in-patient and out-patient services offered by the future Chinese Medicine Hospital (CMH); out-patient services offered by the 18 Chinese Medicine Clinics cum Training and Research Centres (CMCTRs); and in-patient services providing Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine treatment in defined public hospitals of the HA. (FHB)
- Established the Chinese Medicine Unit under the Food and Health Bureau for maintaining liaison with the CM sector, as well as co-ordinating and implementing strategies and measures to promote the development of CM. (FHB)

- Allocated resources to construct two flagship infrastructure projects, the CMH and the Government Chinese Medicines Testing Institute (GCMTI): the contracts for operation and construction of the CMH were awarded in June 2021, with a view to launching services in phases from the second quarter of 2025; while the operation of the temporary GCMTI commenced in March 2017, with the permanent GCMTI expected to be completed in 2025. (FHB)
- Provided an annual quota of around 620 000 for subsidised out-patient services (\$120 per visit) in 18 CMCTRs starting from March 2020. (FHB)
- Increased the participating hospitals in the HA's Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine Pilot Programme to eight, covering all seven clusters of the HA. (FHB)
- Rolled out various funding schemes under the \$500 million Chinese Medicine Development Fund, which benefited different segments of the industry, non-profit-making organisations and academic institutions, with around 3 000 applications approved. (FHB)
- Facilitated the implementation of the streamlined approval procedures to allow Hong Kong registered proprietary CM for external use to be registered and sold in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), and the arrangement for recruiting Hong Kong CM practitioners by certain GBA public healthcare institutions, as announced in August 2021. (FHB)

Hospital Authority

- Introduced since 2018–19 a triennium funding arrangement to increase the HA's recurrent funding progressively, having regard to population growth and demographic changes. Provided recurrent funding of \$80.7 billion to the HA in 2021–22, representing an increase of 45% over the provision in 2017–18. (FHB)
- Commenced planning for the Second Ten-year Hospital Development Plan at an estimated budget of about \$270 billion by the HA since 2018, with a view to commencing preparatory works gradually by 2026. (FHB)
- Implemented recommendations by the Special Task Group under the HA Board to enhance the HA's administrative efficiency, including streamlining the resource bidding and decision making processes. (FHB)
- Commenced in-patient services at Tin Shui Wai Hospital since November 2018, with 24-hour Accident and Emergency services. (FHB)

Support for Patients in Need

- Commenced services at the Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH) by phases since December 2018 to treat complex, serious and uncommon paediatric cases requiring multi-disciplinary management. (FHB)
- Increased the number of drugs or medical items covered by the Samaritan Fund and Community Care Fund Medical Assistance Programmes safety net, and enhanced the means test mechanisms twice in 2019 and 2021, thereby extending the group of beneficiary and lowering the level of co-payment by patients. (FHB)

- Strengthened support to patients with uncommon disorders through rolling out targeted measures in clinical diagnosis, multi-disciplinary care, introduction of drugs, drug subsidies, public awareness and scientific research and development (R&D). (FHB)
- Set up the Hong Kong Genome Institute in May 2020. The pilot phase of Hong Kong Genome Project commenced in July 2021, targeting participants with undiagnosed genetic diseases and hereditary cancers. (FHB)
- Implemented measures to enhance the HA's cancer diagnosis and treatment services, including recruiting 14 additional Cancer Case Managers (CCM) and expanding the CCM programme to cover gynaecological cancer and haematological cancer patients, serving additional 1 400 new cases; providing additional 6 000 attendances for radiography services; serving around 2 200 additional attendances in oncology at Specialist Outpatient Clinics and Nurse Clinics; and recruiting additional Medical Social Workers to offer psychosocial support to around 5 800 additional attendances, etc. in 2020–21. (FHB)
- Amended legislation in July 2018 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)
- Completed public consultation on legislative proposals on advance directives and dying in place in relation to end-of-life care services. Relevant law drafting work is underway. (FHB)

Dental Services

- Launched a three-year programme Healthy Teeth Collaboration in July 2018 and extended it for another three years to provide free dental services for adults aged 18 or above with intellectual disability. As at end-August 2021, about 3 200 persons have benefited. (FHB)
- Implemented an outreach dental programme in Special Child Care Centres (SCCCs) under the Social Welfare Department (SWD) to provide children aged under six with intellectual disability with free on-site dental check-up and oral health education. Up to end-July 2021, about 1 000 pre-school children have received dental check-up and about 200 of them were referred to the Special Oral Care Service at HKCH for follow up treatment. (FHB)
- Set up 23 outreach dental teams in ten non-governmental organisations (NGOs) under the Outreach Dental Care Programme for the Elderly to provide free outreach dental services for elders in residential care homes, day care centres and similar facilities. Up to end-August 2021, the number of attendances was about 281 200. (FHB)
- Expanded the Elderly Dental Assistance Programme to cover elderly persons aged 65 or above receiving the Old Age Living Allowance (OALA), and refined its service scope in February 2019. Implemented further enhancements from July 2021 to include more subsidised items, and to allow elderly persons aged 75 or above who received services under the programme at least five years ago to receive free removable dentures and other related dental services for a second time. Up to end-August 2021, about 46 200 elders have joined the programme. (FHB)

Sustainable Development of Healthcare System

- Employed all qualified local medical graduates by the HA and provided them with relevant specialist training. From 2017–18 to 2020–21, the HA employed around 1 700 local medical graduates. (FHB)
- Facilitated the continuation of specialist training (including Community Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Ophthalmology, Paediatrics, Pathology and Psychiatry) of non-locally trained doctors without full registration in Hong Kong through collaboration between the HA and the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine. (FHB)
- Introduced into the LegCo the Medical Registration (Amendment) Bill 2021 to create a new pathway to allow qualified non-locally trained doctors to practise in Hong Kong. Subject to the LegCo's passage of the Bill, a statutory Special Registration Committee will be set up to determine the list of recognised medical qualifications awarded by non-local medical schools. The target is to submit the list to the Registrar of Medical Practitioners (i.e. the Director of Health) for promulgation in the second half of 2022. (FHB)
- Commissioned the University of Hong Kong to conduct Healthcare Manpower Projection 2020 to update the demand and supply projections of 13 healthcare professions to facilitate formulation of relevant manpower policies. The results of the manpower projections of specialist doctors, specialist dentists, registered nurses and enrolled nurses are expected to be available in the fourth quarter of 2021. (FHB)
- Launched in early 2021 a voluntary registration scheme by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong for the development of nursing specialties to pave way for the eventual setting up of a statutory registration system. As at early-September 2021, applications have been open for 12 specialties, with the remaining four expected to be invited from October 2021. (FHB)
- Invited the Supplementary Medical Professions Council and its Boards to follow up on the recommendations of the Report of the Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development and profession-specific issues, with a view to submitting proposals after consulting their respective professions. The Optometrists Board has launched the mandatory Continuing Professional Development Scheme with effect from 1 July 2021. (FHB)
- Secured in the 2018–19 and 2019–20 legislative sessions the LegCo's approval for capital works project proposals of about \$2 billion, accounting for 10% of the \$20 billion earmarked for upgrading and improving the healthcare teaching facilities of the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Funding proposals for two new projects have been submitted within the 2020–21 legislative session, involving approximately \$113 million. (FHB)
- Implemented the Voluntary Health Insurance Scheme (VHIS) in April 2019. As at end-March 2021, the number of VHIS policies reached 791 000. As at end-May 2021, there were 78 Certified Plans, offering 296 products. (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. The licences for all private hospitals and the first batch of licences for day procedure centres took effect on 1 January 2021. (FHB)
- Provided a clear and dedicated regulatory framework on the use of advanced therapy products to safeguard public health and facilitate the relevant scientific development through the Pharmacy and Poisons (Amendment) Ordinance 2020, which came into operation in August 2021. (FHB)

Employees' Benefits and Support

Labour Protection

- 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. Wages in the contracts awarded increased by more than 24%. (LWB)

- Strengthened protection of the rights and benefits of employees injured at work, including enhancing provision of Claims Support Services, with 7 471 work injury dispute cases handled from January 2020 to August 2021; expeditiously concluded 388 cases under a pilot scheme on enhancing the follow-up procedures for sick leave relating to work injury since its implementation in December 2019 till August 2021; and strengthening the enforcement of the Employees' Compensation Ordinance (Cap. 282). (LWB)
- Prepared for the launch of a three-year Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work targeting the construction industry in 2022, under which a case management approach will be adopted to provide timely and well co-ordinated private out-patient treatment and rehabilitation services to facilitate early recovery. (LWB)
- Issued "Guidance Notes on Standing at Work and Service Counter Design" in December 2018. (LWB)
- Issued "Guidance Notes on Safety and Health of Hand-dug Tunnelling Work" in December 2017. (LWB)
- Launched an online occupational safety and health complaint platform in March 2019 to facilitate employees and members of the public to report unsafe working conditions. Up to August 2021, about 3 700 complaint cases were received. (LWB)
- Strengthened the referral mechanism for relatively risk-prone renovation and maintenance works in January 2020, enabling the Labour Department (LD) to conduct targeted safety inspection in a timely manner. Up to July 2021, some 11 200 works were notified through the mechanism. (LWB)

- Conducted more comprehensive and in-depth surprise inspections targeting work sites with high risk processes or poor safety performance, and stepped up participation in site safety management committee meetings of public works projects since 2018. Up to July 2021, LD conducted 107 such surprise inspections and participated in 1 349 site safety management meetings of public works projects. (LWB)
- Enacted legislation to adjust upwards with effect from 17 September 2021 the jurisdictional limit of the Minor Employment Claims Adjudication Board in respect of the claim amount to not exceeding \$15,000 per claimant. (LWB)
- Established a dedicated division under LD in September 2020 to enhance protection of foreign domestic helpers and provide better support to their employers. (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 to employers and extending the maximum period of allowance. (LWB)
- Extended in December 2018 the follow-up period of 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. (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 each year. (CSB)

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. ERB launched the third and fourth tranche of the Love Upgrading Special Scheme in January 2021 and July 2021 respectively, providing training and allowance to 40 000 trainees in total. (LWB)
- ERB adjusted the training and working hour arrangements under the “First-Hire-Then-Train” Scheme, and rolled out these arrangements in March 2021. (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)

Employees’ Welfare

- Implemented five-day statutory paternity leave with effect from 18 January 2019. (LWB)
- Secured the LegCo’s passage of the Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 on 7 July 2021. The number of statutory holidays will be progressively increased to 17 days, so that it will be on par with the number of general holidays. The first additional statutory holiday will be the Birthday of the Buddha in 2022. It is estimated that over one million employees will benefit. (LWB)
- Launched in March 2020 the Integrated Care Programme and Stable Drug Use pilot scheme in families clinics to enhance the medical services for civil service eligible persons (CSEPs) with chronic diseases. (CSB)

- Implemented in March 2020 a Pilot Scheme on Civil Service Chinese Medicine Clinics, under which about 63 000 discs of free CM general out-patient consultation and acupuncture service are provided to CSEPs annually. (CSB)

Retirement Protection

- Launched the HKMC Annuity Plan in July 2018. Lowered the minimum eligible age for the Plan from 65 to 60 since February 2020. As at end-August 2021, about 12 500 policies have been sold, with a total premium of over \$8.9 billion. (FSTB)
- Committed to putting in place the measure of the Government paying 5% Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) 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)

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 to increase the provision of much-needed welfare facilities. Six projects under Phase 1 of the Scheme have completed construction, providing about 260 additional elderly service places and about 1 020 additional rehabilitation service places. (LWB)
- Implemented new arrangement for the land premium policy for religious bodies to encourage the religious community to provide 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. SWD is assessing the suitability of potential premises. (LWB)
- Completed the review and made recommendations in July 2021 on ways to enhance the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System. (LWB)
- Formulated the planning ratios of rehabilitation services concerned for incorporating into the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines in 2021–22. (LWB)
- Pressed ahead with the initiative of providing additional gross floor area for welfare purposes in public housing projects to be completed from 2026–27 onwards. A broad-brush review on the feasibility of implementing this new initiative in individual projects has been completed. The initiative will be taken forward in most of the projects. (LWB, DEVB, THB)

Pro-child Policy Support

- Established the Commission on Children in June 2018 to address the diversified issues related to children. Measures included:
 - supported more than 60 promotional and public education projects through the Funding Scheme for Children's Well-being and Development since its launch in April 2019;
 - commissioned a consultant to conduct a feasibility study on development of a central databank on children in Hong Kong in late 2019; and
 - conducted public engagement sessions at quarterly intervals since January 2021 to gather views on child-related issues. (LWB)

- Injected \$300 million into the Child Development Fund in 2018–19 for launching more projects 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 240 projects, benefiting over 21 000 children. (LWB)
- Set up five specialised co-parenting support centres (SCSCs) since October 2019 to strengthen support for divorced/separated parents and their children. As at June 2021, the five SCSCs provided support services for a total of 685 cases and conducted about 5 600 child contacts/exchange sessions. (LWB)
- Enhanced the manning ratios for qualified child care workers serving in aided CCCs to 1:6 (for children aged 0 to under 2) and 1:11 (for children aged 2 to under 3) in September 2019. With reference to the manning ratios of day CCCs, the ratio of residential CCCs was also adjusted in September 2019. In addition, the supervisory support for subsidised CCCs has been strengthened since February 2021. (LWB)
- Implemented the Child Care Centre Parent Subsidy in February 2020 to partially subsidise the service fee. As at May 2021, over 4 700 children have benefited. Besides, the subsidy level of aided standalone CCCs had been raised from 20% to 40% in 2020–21. (LWB)

Child Care Services

- Provided additional resources since September 2017 for about 260 day/residential CCCs for enhancing the remuneration for qualified child care staff, so as to retain and attract them. (LWB)
- Completed the Consultancy Study on the Long-term Development of Child Care Services in November 2018, with a series of short-term and long-term measures to improve the quality and quantity of child care services. (LWB)
- Formulated an appropriate planning ratio for subsidised CCCs places on the basis of population and included it in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines in March 2020. (LWB)
- Included CCC as a type of social welfare services under the new phase of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses launched in April 2019. (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 introducing a one-third reduction of fees and strengthened after-school care services. As at June 2021, the number of beneficiaries was around 3 450. (LWB)
- Increased professional and supporting staff of the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project to strengthen training for home-based child carers commencing in January 2020, and increased the level of incentive payment to encourage more volunteers to serve as child carers. (LWB)
- 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. (LWB)

- Launched a three-year pilot scheme in the 2018/19 school year to provide social work service in phases for about 130 000 pre-primary children and their families in 725 subsidised/aided pre-primary institutions to identify early and provide assistance to children and their families with welfare needs. (LWB)
- Increased the number of residential child care places. From 2017–18 to 2020–21, 194 additional residential child care places, including 60 small group home places, ten places of emergency/short-term care in small group homes as well as 124 places in boys'/girls' homes/hostels were provided. (LWB)
- Enhanced care and support for children and youth receiving residential child care services through allocating additional recurrent resources from 2018–19 onwards to strengthen the manpower of over 130 residential child care service units. (LWB)
- Provided additional recurrent funding to cover the electricity charges of air-conditioning in all subsidised residential child care service units since 2017–18 and implemented the Environment Improvement Programme for 108 small group homes since 2019–20 to address needs in the daily living of children and youth in these units. (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 the Pilot Project on Tier 1 Support Services in Kindergartens/ Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres in the 2020/21 school year at KGs/KG-cum-CCCs participating in the OPRS to provide early intervention services for children awaiting assessment by Child Assessment Centres (CACs), or assessed by CACs to have borderline developmental problems, etc. (LWB)

Pro-family Policy Support

- 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 five Support Centres for Persons with Autism. (LWB)
- Streamlined the application and project management procedures of the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF) since November 2017 to encourage more organisations to apply for grants to implement social capital development projects. (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 to over 8 000 in the 2020/21 school year in phases. The number will be further increased to 10 000 by the 2022/23 school year. (LWB)

- Regularised the community support programme for residents of new public rental housing (PRH) estates through the CIIF in April 2019 to help new residents and families integrate into the community. Residents of 17 new PRH estates have been benefited since the regularisation. (LWB)
- Injected an additional \$500 million into the CIIF in 2020 to support social capital development projects and build mutual help networks in the community. The injection is expected to benefit more than 140 000 people. (LWB)
- Regularised the provision of student grant from the 2020/21 school year, with each secondary day school, primary school and KG student receiving an annual grant of \$2,500, benefiting about 900 000 students. (EDB)
- Published by the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong (SEHK) in 2018 a “Guidance for Boards and Directors” to give 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. SEHK published a consultation paper in April 2021 on new diversity requirements to prohibit single-gender boards among listed companies. (FSTB)
- Commissioned the first public facility for keeping abortuses in April 2019 at Wo Hop Shek Cemetery. A similar facility at Cape Collinson Columbarium was also commissioned in August 2021. (FHB)
- Increased the proportion of female non-official members in advisory and statutory bodies (ASBs) from 31% in 2015 to 35.2% as at end-June 2021, meeting the target of 35%. (LWB)

Women Affairs

- Extended statutory maternity leave from 10 weeks to 14 weeks with effect from 11 December 2020, with the Government fully reimbursing the additional statutory maternity leave pay paid by employers, subject to a cap of \$80,000 per employee. (LWB)
- Extended the full-pay maternity leave for all female employees of the Government to 14 weeks from 10 October 2018 onwards. As at 31 March 2021, over 4 000 government employees have benefited. (CSB)
- 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)

Poverty Alleviation and Social Security

- Launched in June 2018, the Higher OALA (currently at \$3,815 per month) is benefiting some 570 000 recipients. (LWB)
- Introduced the Fujian Scheme in April 2018 to provide Old Age Allowance for eligible elderly persons residing in Fujian. (LWB)
- Introduced OALA under the Guangdong Scheme and Fujian Scheme in January 2020. About 13 000 portable OALA recipients are now living in the two provinces. (LWB)
- Conducted the first major review of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme since 1999 and fully implemented a series of improvements in February 2021. (LWB)

- Implemented the time-limited “Special Scheme of Assistance to the Unemployed” under the CSSA Scheme, including relaxing the asset limits of able-bodied persons by 100% from June 2020 to May 2021, and disregarding the cash value of insurance policies of able-bodied applicants as assets from April to September 2021 for a grace period of one year. (LWB)
- Increased the rates of allowance and significantly relaxed the eligibility criteria of the Low-income Working Family Allowance (LIFA) Scheme in April 2018, and renamed it as the Working Family Allowance (WFA) Scheme. The rates of allowance were substantially raised starting from the claim month of July 2020. As at end-August 2021, there were about 61 900 active WFA beneficiary households, more than double the number for the then LIFA Scheme. (LWB)
- Provided a one-off special allowance under the Anti-epidemic Fund to eligible WFA beneficiary households and means-tested Student Financial Assistance for pre-primary, primary and secondary students in June 2020, benefiting about 200 000 households. (LWB)
- Reduced the working hour requirements for non-single-parent households under the WFA Scheme (from 144 to 72 hours per month for Basic Allowance) on a time-limited basis for the claim months from June 2021 to May 2022. It is estimated that about 24 000 additional households would benefit. (LWB)
- Allocated to the Short-term Food Assistance Service Projects a total of \$659 million since 2018 with 139 800 beneficiaries, and regularised the Projects from August 2021 with annual recurrent provision of \$415 million, which is expected to benefit 60 000 to 80 000 service users each year. (LWB)

Elderly Services

- Increased the service places of subsidised home care services by 5 000 (from 8 365 in July 2017 to 13 365 starting April 2021); and increased the number of vouchers under the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly from 3 000 in July 2017 to 8 000 starting October 2020. (LWB)
- Commenced the purchase of an additional 5 000 EA1 places through 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. About 2 900 EA1 places have been purchased, of which about 1 700 have commenced service by end-August 2021. (LWB)
- Launched the \$1 billion Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care in December 2018. About \$380 million have been approved, subsidising about 1 300 elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure or rent over 9 600 technology products. (LWB)
- Engaged an intermediary consortium of 10 organisations in January 2021 to develop and operate a one-stop Gerontechnology Platform under the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund to promote the use of gerontechnology in Hong Kong. (EffO/ITB)
- Provided a total of 1 200 additional training places under the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services for five years starting from 2020–21, and enhanced the scheme to encourage more young persons to join the elderly and rehabilitation care services. (LWB)

Support for Senior Citizens

- Announced in January 2021 the implementation of enhancement and anti-abuse measures under the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities (\$2 Scheme), including lowering the eligible age from 65 to 60 to benefit some 600 000 persons aged 60 to 64; and extending the \$2 Scheme to red mini buses, kaito and the tramways. The launch date for the enhancement and anti-abuse measures would be 27 February 2022. (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; and extended the services to cover secondary school students with mental health needs from October 2019. (LWB)

Supporting the Disadvantaged

- Injected \$400 million into the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged in 2018–19 to promote cross-sector collaboration in helping the disadvantaged. The injection was allocated to the regular portion 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. Around 33 000 persons have benefited since the enhancements. (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. The first round benefited around 115 000 households whereas disbursement of the second round of grants is in progress. (HAB)
- Injected \$50 million into the Trust Fund for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2018 to continue to provide support for SARS patients, benefiting more than 120 patients. (LWB)

Enhancing Support for Persons with Disabilities

- Provided home-based services for an additional 1 800 persons with disabilities living in the community from 2019–20. (LWB)
- Increased the number of places of day, residential rehabilitation and respite services, and those provided under the Bought Place Scheme for Private Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities (RCHDs) from 31 346 in 2016–17 to 37 626 in 2020–21. (LWB)
- Provided in 2021 an additional 45 designated residential respite places through the Bought Place Scheme for Private RCHDs. (LWB)
- Launched the Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities with \$250 million capital injection in March 2019. Approved about \$36 million to support 50 service units to implement 59 arts projects. (LWB)

- Made preparation to launch a pilot scheme to arrange 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. (LWB)
- Commenced discussion with special schools on providing residential respite service in boarding sections of special schools with vacant boarding places. (EDB)

Youth Development

Youth Development Commission

- Established the Youth Development Commission (YDC) under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) 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. (HAB)
- Arranged policy thematic meetings with relevant policy bureaux starting from 2020 to further enhance the operation of the YDC and communicate with young people in a more open, direct and interactive manner. (HAB)
- Launched the 20A Youth Ambassador (YA) Programme in 2017 and the YDC YA Programme in 2018 respectively, recruiting a total of around 200 YAs. A series of training sessions and activities, including thematic seminars and exchanges and training outside Hong Kong, have been organised. Arranged YAs to serve as volunteers in large-scale and international events organised by the Government. (HAB)
- Introduced a pilot scheme in July 2021 to provide local outdoor adventure training activities for young people, targeting to benefit around 2 600 young people. (HAB)

More Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities in the GBA

- Launched the Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme in January 2021, providing 2 000 jobs with a monthly salary of not less than HK\$18,000 for university graduates to work in the Mainland cities of the GBA. 417 enterprises have provided a total of 3 494 job vacancies, with about half being innovation and technology posts. More than 20 000 job applications have been received. (LWB, ITB)
- 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 to start their businesses in Hong Kong and the Mainland cities of the GBA. The Funding Scheme for Youth Entrepreneurship in the GBA funded a total of 16 NGOs to organise youth entrepreneurship projects, providing capital subsidy to about 230 youth start-ups (involving more than 800 Hong Kong young entrepreneurs) and rendering entrepreneurial support and incubation services to about 4 000 young people; whereas the Funding Scheme for Experiential Programmes at Innovation and Entrepreneurial Bases in the GBA funded a total of 15 NGOs to organise short-term experiential projects at the entrepreneurial bases in the Mainland cities of the GBA, which are estimated to benefit about 700 young people. (HAB)

Youth Hostels and Working Space

- Relieved the short-term accommodation needs of working youth under the Youth Hostel Scheme (YHS) through measures including relaxing the requirement to allow YHS tenants to apply for PRH, commencing the operation of the first youth hostel in Tai Po in 2020, and starting the construction of three youth hostels in Yuen Long, Sheung Wan and Jordan, with the largest one in Yuen Long to commence operation in 2022 to provide 1 680 places. All youth hostel projects will provide a total of around 3 300 places. (HAB)
- Pioneered the Space Sharing Scheme for Youth in 2017. So far, 12 projects have been rolled out to provide floor space of about 150 000 square feet in total to youth entrepreneurs and artists at concessionary rental with relevant ancillary support, benefiting more than 5 000 persons. (HAB)

Youth Exchange and Internship

- Enhanced 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; (HAB)
 - 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; (HAB)

- 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; (HAB) and
 - The Economic and Trade Office Programme for higher education students, through which over 500 overseas internship opportunities were arranged in the past five years. (CEDB)
- Signed Working Holiday Scheme arrangements with the Netherlands and Italy in 2018 and 2019 respectively, thereby expanding the scheme to cover 14 countries. So far, about 97 000 Hong Kong youngsters and over 14 000 overseas young people have benefited from the scheme. (LWB)

Participation in Public and Community Affairs

- Regularised the Member Self-recommendation Scheme for Youth (MSSY). So far, 50 ASBs have joined the MSSY providing a total of 101 seats. At present, around 440 posts are held by young people who have been appointed to ASBs directly or indirectly through MSSY. The overall ratio of youth members in ASBs has increased from 7.8% in 2017 to 14.8% as at mid-2021 and is gradually moving towards the target of 15% set by the current-term Government. (HAB)
- Increased the recurrent subvention for 13 subvented bodies, including 11 uniformed groups and two NGOs involved in youth development, by around \$10 million from 2019–20 onwards, to enhance support for their youth development work. (HAB)
- Increased the number of offers for the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship to 40 to promote the culture of multi-faceted excellence. (HAB)

Strengthening Support for Ethnic Minorities

- Set up in mid-2018 the Steering Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs, chaired by the CS. Under its supervision, around 30 new measures to enhance support for ethnic minorities (EMs) have been rolled out, covering areas such as education, employment, social welfare, healthcare and social integration. (CSO)

Education-related Support

- Provided tiered subsidy for KGs under the kindergarten education scheme admitting non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students, as well as public sector ordinary schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools admitting NCS students with special educational needs (SEN). In the 2020/21 school year, about 5 700 NCS KG students as well as about 1 000 NCS primary and secondary students with SEN benefited. (EDB)
- 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 starting from the 2020/21 school year. About 400 schools benefited in the 2020/21 school year. (EDB)

- Provided NCS students with support for Chinese language learning, including provision of teacher professional development programmes, school-based professional support services and learning and teaching resources to facilitate the implementation of the Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework; and provided different language learning opportunities for NCS students to boost their confidence in learning Chinese. A longitudinal study to gauge NCS students' progress in learning Chinese language has started. (EDB)
- Strengthened education for NCS parents and helped them understand the importance of enrolling their children as early as possible in KGs using Chinese as the medium of instruction, enhance their communication with schools, and make suitable arrangements to cater for their children's daily learning. Provided 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)

Social and Employment Support for Ethnic Minorities

- 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, expected to benefit some 400 EMs per year. (LWB)
- Commissioned NGOs to set up three outreaching teams with employment of EM staff in March 2020 to proactively reach out to EMs and connect those in need to mainstream welfare services. (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 and enhance the effectiveness of health education. (FHB)
- Enhanced the translation services for EMs in 2019–20, including addition of manpower and introduction of translation services in Vietnamese. The number of cases of translation services handled by the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents increased significantly from 5 500 cases in 2018–19 to over 9 200 cases in 2020–21. In respect of services for EM new arrivals and youths, the centre organised 692 orientation programmes and 514 youth programmes, which served about 12 800 and 6 700 EM new arrivals and youths respectively from April 2019 to June 2021. Since the launch of the District-based Programmes for Racial Harmony in 2019, NGOs have been funded to organise over 110 activities to encourage interaction and exchange between the EM and local communities, attracting more than 22 000 participants over the past two years. (HAB)

- Launched a three-year Ethnic Minority District Ambassador pilot scheme in nine districts with higher EM population in October 2020 to employ more EMs in the SWD and NGOs, enhance EM services of district centres/service units, and co-ordinate and deepen communication and co-operation with relevant stakeholders. (LWB)
- Commissioned two NGOs to implement the Racial Diversity Employment Programme since November 2020 to provide one-stop employment services for EM job seekers. As at end-August 2021, 481 EM job seekers have participated in the programme. (LWB)

Ethnic Minorities in the Civil Service

- Completed a comprehensive review of the Chinese language proficiency requirements for all civil service grades to provide more opportunities for EMs to seek employment in the Government. Launched an internship programme since 2019 for EM students. So far, about 80 EM post-secondary students have participated in the programme. (CSB)
- Enhanced the training on cultural sensitivity/equal opportunities for civil service new recruits and frontline staff. (CSB)

Eliminating Discrimination

- Enacted the Sex Discrimination (Amendment) Ordinance 2021 in March 2021 to enhance protection from harassment for breastfeeding women. (CMAB)
- Enacted the Discrimination Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2020 in June 2020 to enhance protection from discrimination and harassment under the four anti-discrimination ordinances. (CMAB)

- Supported the Equal Opportunities Commission in stepping up its sexual harassment prevention effort, including setting up a dedicated Anti-Sexual Harassment Unit, which is tasked with conducting a holistic review of related legal protection, raising public awareness about sexual harassment, and acting as a first port of call for victims. (CMAB)
- Improved the Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality to provide guidance to all government bureaux and departments as well as related organisations on equal access to public services by all Hong Kong residents, regardless of their race. (CMAB)

New Initiatives

Primary Healthcare

District Health Centre

- Take forward the development of DHCs in Wong Tai Sin, Tuen Mun, Southern District, Yuen Long and Tsuen Wan and “DHC Expresses” in the rest of the 11 districts so as to expedite the provision of district-based primary healthcare services. (FHB)

Primary Healthcare Blueprint

- Comprehensively review for better planning various aspects of primary healthcare development with a view to mapping out a blueprint for the sustainable development of primary healthcare services and launching a consultation exercise to listen to the views of stakeholders. (FHB)

Healthcare Services

Genomic Medicine

- Commence in 2022 the main phase of Hong Kong Genome Project, under which whole genome sequencing and analysis will be conducted for more patients having diseases with genetic predisposition and their family members. Around 50 000 whole genome sequencing will be conducted. Patients will benefit from more accurate diagnosis and more personalised treatment. In the long term, the Project will promote clinical application and innovative scientific research on genomic medicine locally. (FHB)

Antimicrobial Resistance Problem in Hong Kong

- Review the implementation experience of the first Hong Kong Strategy and Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (2017–2022) and draw up the second plan to map out response strategies for the next phase. (FHB)

Viral Hepatitis

- Implement the Hong Kong Viral Hepatitis Action Plan 2020–2024 to reduce the number of people suffering from the disease. (FHB)

Development of Chinese Medicine

Chinese Medicine Hospital

- Take forward the preparatory work for the commissioning of the CMH, including signing the service deed, drawing up detailed design, procuring necessary furniture and equipment, and establishing the information technology systems, with a view to commencing services by phases from the second quarter of 2025. (FHB)

Government Chinese Medicines Testing Institute

- Take forward the preparatory work for the setting up of the permanent GCMTI, which is expected to be commissioned in 2025. (FHB)

Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine In-patient Services

- Enhance Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine in-patient services at public hospitals by increasing the number of participating hospitals and disease areas, as well as regularising the services concerned to tie in with the policy direction of the long-term development of CM. (FHB)

Chinese Medicine Development Fund

- Conduct a review on the overall implementation of the \$500 million Chinese Medicine Development Fund with a view to further enhancing the funding schemes and utilisation of resources so as to support the CM sector in a more effective and targeted manner. (FHB)

Prescriptions by Chinese Medicine Practitioners

- Explore empowering CM practitioners to prescribe diagnostic imaging (such as X-ray) and laboratory tests for their patients, with a view to furthering the long-term development of the CM practice sector. (FHB)

Sharing of Healthcare Data

- Provide a dedicated structure in the HA to facilitate more institutions to explore the potential use of healthcare data for R&D collaboration with the HA, and make use of a wider network of the HA hospitals for research and clinical trial purposes. (FHB)

Professional Development and Regulation of Healthcare Professionals

- Follow up with the relevant statutory Boards and Councils on various recommendations in the Report of the Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development promulgated in 2017, and urge them to implement recommendations which have already been discussed at length, including patients' direct access to healthcare professionals (including physiotherapists and occupational therapists) without doctors' referral, and mandatory continuing professional education/continuing professional development. (FHB)
- Modernise the regulatory structure and enhance the professional standard of the relevant healthcare professions by, among others, updating the composition of the statutory regulatory bodies to achieve minimum lay membership of 25%. (FHB)

Social Welfare Planning and Administration

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

Family

- Construct a cremation facility and a Garden of Remembrance dedicated to abortuses near Kwai Chung Crematorium for completion by end of 2021 and commission the services in the first quarter of 2022. (FHB)

- Introduce legislation to implement procedural reforms to the family justice system to reduce time and costs for affected parties. (CSO)

Pro-child

Protecting Children

- Take forward legislative work on a mandatory reporting mechanism for child abuse cases, with the target of introducing a Bill into the LegCo in the first half of 2023. Practitioners in the relevant professions will receive appropriate training to enhance their capacity for early identification and handling of child abuse cases. (LWB)
- Take forward the Law Reform Commission recommendation published in September 2021 on causing or allowing the death of a child. (LWB)

On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services

- Explore the feasibility of integrating the Pilot Project on Tier 1 Support Services in KGs/KG-cum-CCCs with OPRS to provide more comprehensive, flexible and ongoing support to cater for the training needs of pre-school children with different levels of special needs. (LWB)

Elderly and Rehabilitation Services

- Merge the Normal and Higher OALA in the second half of 2022 so that the more lenient asset limits of the Normal OALA will be adopted across-the-board, and eligible applicants will receive payment at the Higher OALA rate. The initiative will benefit about 50 000 elderly persons who are receiving the Normal OALA. New applicants will also receive OALA payment at the higher rate. (LWB)

- Explore extending the Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong to cover other residential care homes for the elderly in Mainland cities within the GBA operated by non-governmental or private organisations of Hong Kong with a good track record in such services. (LWB)
- Explore relaxing the absence limit under the Social Security Allowance Scheme to provide greater flexibility for the elderly retiring in the Mainland who intend to apply for relevant allowances (including the Old Age Allowance and the OALA). (LWB)
- Complete the study on support for carers, and explore how government resources deployed could be consolidated (including the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly and other relevant services), with a view to providing more support for the carers of frail elderly persons and persons with disabilities. (LWB)
- Introduce amendment bill into the LegCo in 2022 to improve the quality of services provided by residential care homes for the elderly and persons with disabilities. (LWB)

Employees' Benefits and Support

Labour Protection

- Introduce relevant bills into the LegCo in the 2022–23 legislative year to take forward the abolition of the “offsetting” arrangement under the MPF System. Refine the Government subsidy scheme to provide more targeted assistance to employers (especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises) to adapt to the policy change. (LWB)

- Further strengthen protection of workers' occupational safety and health, including promoting the adoption of Construction Design and Management in construction works and amending the relevant legislation to raise penalties for committing occupational safety and health offences. (LWB)
- Launch a Pilot Rehabilitation Programme for Employees Injured at Work in 2022 to facilitate injured employees' early recovery and return to work. (LWB)
- Collaborate with the property management and construction industries to promote the use of light-duty working platforms for minor renovation and repair works carried out in residential units, in order to promote safety of above-ground work. (LWB)
- Collaborate with the concerned industries to implement health-friendly measures at workplace, in order to encourage property management employees and construction workers to properly manage their health and risks of contracting cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases. (LWB)
- Review the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies to examine its effectiveness and promote professionalism and service quality of employment agencies. (LWB)
- Review the continuous contract requirement under the Employment Ordinance (Cap. 57). (LWB)

Correct Understanding of Drug Harms

- Enhance efforts to impart correct information on drug harms, including fostering closer collaboration with medical professional bodies to explain drug harms more pervasively to members of the public, and revamping the Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre by mid-2022 to provide visitors with comprehensive anti-drug information. On school education, we will co-operate with schools to help students understand drug harms correctly and stay vigilant against the lure of taking drugs and taking part in illegal acts related to drugs. (SB, EDB)

Youth Development

Promotion of Young People's Positive Thinking and Well-being

- Invite the YDC to explore the introduction of a new funding scheme to subsidise eligible NGOs to organise projects that are conducive to nurturing young people's positive thinking, particularly those projects which involve cross-sectoral efforts or are youth-led and could drive community building. (HAB)
- Subject to the outcome of the pilot scheme launched in July 2021, roll out a brand-new thematic funding scheme on outdoor adventure training activities for more NGOs to provide systematic and quality outdoor adventure training activities for young people. (HAB)

Youth Entrepreneurship

- Establish an Alliance of Hong Kong Youth Innovative and Entrepreneurial Bases in the Greater Bay Area. Organisations from Guangdong and Hong Kong with proven track record, such as entrepreneurial hubs, universities, NGOs, scientific research institutes, professional bodies, venture funds, etc. will be invited to join the alliance and jointly set up a one-stop information, publicity and exchange platform to support Hong Kong youth entrepreneurs in the GBA. (HAB)

Broadening Young People's Horizons

- Further enhance the breadth and depth of our Mainland and overseas internship and exchange programmes, e.g. the Thematic Youth Internship Programmes to the Mainland in collaboration with scientific research and cultural institutions in the Mainland so as to help Hong Kong young people gain a better understanding of and seize the opportunities in our Motherland as well as participate in the overall development of the country. (HAB)