

Message

We are committed to continuously improving the health of our community.

First, we will strengthen our monitoring capabilities over communicable diseases through enhanced health surveillance and improved infrastructure. These include, in particular, the setting up of a public health laboratory in 2002 to centralise and enhance existing services. These efforts will enable health authorities to give timely advice and initiate prompt preventive action and control measures. Meanwhile, we will continue to step up our food control and livestock surveillance programmes in order to ensure food safety. In addition, a territory-wide campaign has been launched to heighten public awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle through public participation in a wide range of public health education and community involvement programmes.

This booklet describes how we will work towards these objectives. Your personal participation in our public health programmes is essential if we are to raise hygiene standards and improve the health of our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Fok', written in a cursive style.

(Mrs Katherine Fok)
Secretary for Health and Welfare

Public Health Programmes

Our Policy Objective is to safeguard the health of the community through strengthening public health programmes.

Our targets in pursuing this Policy Objective are –

- to strengthen public health education and health awareness
- to ensure that the food available for human consumption is wholesome, hygienic, and safe
- to prevent and control the outbreak and spread of communicable diseases in Hong Kong

Key Result Areas (KRAs)

To ensure that this Policy Objective can be achieved, we must deliver results in a number of key areas, that is, we must –

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The following sections of this booklet explain the importance of these KRAs, describe the broad thrust of our efforts, and outline the indicators which we are using to assess progress. Each section lists the new key initiatives being taken to achieve our objectives and pinpoints the agency accountable for each initiative and the specific targets which we intend to meet.

I

Ensure that a supportive legislative and policy framework for public health is in place

To ensure that the public can have access to appropriate medical service provided by qualified personnel, and to properly controlled medication, a suitable legislative and policy framework is essential. In order to achieve this, we regularly review existing legislation on the control of pharmaceutical products, and shall shortly introduce new legislation to register Chinese Medicine practitioners, and to control the use, trading and manufacture of Chinese Medicines.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the speed with which we can establish an appropriate statutory framework for the registration of Chinese Medicine practitioners, and for regulating the use, trading and manufacture of Chinese Medicines
- the timing of a review of the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance, and other drug-related ordinances

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To put in place a statutory framework for regulation and control of Chinese Medicine <i>(Health and Welfare Bureau (HWB))*</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To introduce a Bill into the Legislative Council in early 1999, and subject to the passage of the Bill, to establish a statutory Chinese Medicine Council before the end of 1999 ● To commence the registration of Chinese Medicine practitioners and to phase in controls over the use, trading and manufacture of Chinese Medicines in 2000
<p>To update drug-related legislation and make the relevant provisions easier to administer <i>(HWB)</i></p>	<p>To complete a review of the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance and Antibiotics Ordinance in 1999</p>

* the brackets denote the agency with lead responsibility for the initiative

II

Develop community awareness of public health obligations and personal responsibilities

Public awareness of hygienic practices plays a key role in promoting the health of the community. We see a strong need to raise the standards of public and environmental hygiene in Hong Kong to a substantially higher level through increased public awareness of the importance of food, personal and environmental hygiene.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the extent of public awareness about the importance of personal and environmental hygiene
- the ability of the Administration to strengthen inter-departmental and inter-sectoral co-ordination in improving the overall cleanliness and raising food hygiene standards
- the degree to which we can strengthen enforcement action in environmental hygiene matters

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To implement a territory-wide three-year “Healthy Living into the 21st Century” campaign, to instil a healthy life style concept in the community through promotion of healthy habits, proper hygiene practices and environmental improvement</p> <p><i>(Health and Welfare Bureau (HWB))</i></p>	<p>To conduct an attitude survey in 1999 to measure public awareness of the importance of personal and food hygiene and to use the findings as a benchmark for subsequent surveys</p>
<p>To sustain efforts to improve the standard of public health and hygiene through community participation and inter-sectoral collaboration</p> <p><i>(HWB)</i></p>	<p>To mobilise interested groups, food traders, hygiene service providers and the community at large to carry out 100 publicity, education and community involvement programmes in 1999</p>



Enhance preventive measures, programmes and capabilities

It is essential that swift action can be taken to identify outbreak of diseases and to contain their spread. We aim to strengthen our monitoring capabilities through enhanced local health surveillance programmes, improved laboratory support and increased networking with overseas health authorities. These efforts will enable the Department of Health to provide timely advice to the community and to introduce prompt preventive and control measures. We also aim to strengthen our ability to monitor food safety in a more proactive manner and to establish a food control system which can promptly respond to food hygiene issues.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the level to which we can enhance local surveillance through additional data collection programmes and surveillance tests to shorten tracking and response time
- the extent to which we can improve food and livestock inspection programmes through additional and timely sampling tests

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To strengthen further the ability of the Government to conduct disease surveillance and enhance control and prevention of infectious diseases</p> <p><i>(Department of Health (DH))</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To expand networks with established disease control centres overseas and on the Mainland by 50% in 1999 ● To set up a new Public Health Laboratory Centre in Shek Kip Mei by 2002
<p>To enhance the Government's information base by establishing and maintaining a Public Health Information System, which sets out the community's health status and disease patterns</p> <p><i>(DH)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To establish a Public Health Information System by 2003 ● To expand networks with other health care providers and medical institutions to enhance the level of disease information collection by 50% by 2000
<p>To strengthen the ability of the Government to monitor and ensure food safety</p> <p><i>(DH)</i></p>	<p>To introduce a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point System, which is a quality assurance approach to identify, assess and control potential food hazards so as to ensure food safety, to 20% of the food industry by 2002</p>

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To ensure that livestock intended for food is fit for human consumption</p> <p><i>(Agriculture and Fisheries Department)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To set up a branch veterinary laboratory at the Western Wholesale Market by 1999-2000 for prompt testing of H5 influenza virus on imported live ducks and geese ● To increase the number of inspections at local livestock farms by 50% by 1999 ● To extend in 1999, the labelling and tracing system (currently implemented for pigs) to cover cattle and goats ● To implement systematic surveillance for major animal diseases and drug residues in 1999