

MESSAGE

As Hong Kong moves into the 21st Century, our efforts to improve the health of our community will continue. After many years of careful consideration, we commenced in early 1999 to legislate for the control of Chinese medicine. The Chinese Medicine Ordinance, which sets out a regulatory framework for Chinese Medicine, was passed by the Legislative Council in July this year. This is an important milestone for the development of Chinese medicine in Hong Kong. In the coming year, we shall introduce subsidiary legislation to provide for the registration of Chinese medicine practitioners, licensing of Chinese medicine traders and manufacturers and registration of proprietary Chinese medicines. A sound regulatory system will help safeguard public health and increase public confidence in the use of Chinese medicine.

We shall enter into the second phase of the “Healthy Living into the 21st Century” campaign. We shall continue to promote inter-sectoral collaboration and encourage community participation in this important campaign. Only the combined efforts of all concerned will help achieve the campaign’s objective of instilling a healthy life style concept in the community. Apart from this campaign, we are also committed to continuously improving our surveillance on food safety and communicable diseases for the protection of public health. These efforts will continue.

This booklet describes how we will work towards these targets. I look forward to the community’s support and assistance in making Hong Kong a healthier place to live in.



(Dr E K Yeoh)

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 this year 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

Progress Made

In the past year, we made significant progress in pursuing our Policy Objective, as follows –

- We launched, in mid-1998, the territory-wide “Healthy Living into the 21st Century” campaign, to strengthen public health education and enhance health awareness among the community. Through a series of community involvement projects, key messages on healthy habits and proper hygiene practices have been highlighted and widely disseminated.
- To enhance food safety, we have been promoting among the food industry a quality assurance scheme called Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point System. In contrast to the traditional emphasis on end-product testing, this new approach focuses on prevention and control of hazards in the food production, preparation and distribution processes.
- We have strengthened our capacity in disease surveillance, enabling our health care staff to obtain timely information on disease trends and to give timely health advice to the community. Prompt investigations and control measures have been instituted, whenever necessary, to control the source and prevent secondary spread of communicable diseases.

KEY RESULT AREAS (KRAs)

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

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1

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

To ensure that the public have easy access to quality medical services provided by qualified health care professionals, and to properly control the use of medication, a suitable legislative and policy framework is essential. In the coming year, we shall formulate detailed regulatory measures for the control of the practice, use, trading and manufacture of Chinese medicine, and improve existing controls over pharmaceutical products.

Progress Made

In the past year, good progress has been made towards the establishment of a supportive legislative framework for the control of Chinese medicine and pharmaceutical products.

The Chinese Medicine Ordinance, which sets out a regulatory framework to control the practice, use and trading of Chinese medicine, was enacted in July 1999, followed by the establishment of the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong in September 1999. We aim to introduce subsidiary legislation in the coming year to provide for the registration of Chinese medicine practitioners, licensing of Chinese medicine traders and manufacturers and registration of proprietary Chinese medicines.

We have completed a review of the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance, Cap 138 and the Antibiotics Ordinance, Cap 137. We propose to replace the existing drug-related legislation by new ordinances. We aim to simplify and streamline the structure of the regulatory framework, provide more clarity and extend the coverage to include the control of medical gas.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in the past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative *	Target #	Present Position +
<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 <i>(1998 and 1997)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Chinese Medicine Ordinance was enacted in July 1999. The Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong was established in September 1999. <i>(Action Completed)</i> ● Implementation details for the registration of Chinese medicine practitioners and controls over the use, trading and manufacture of Chinese medicines are being worked out by the Chinese Medicine Council of Hong Kong. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
<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 <i>(1998 and 1997)</i></p>	<p>We have completed a review of the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance and the Antibiotics Ordinance. Relevant parties have been consulted on the major recommendations. <i>(Action Completed)</i></p>
<p>To bring the Dentists Registration Ordinance up-to-date <i>(HWB)</i></p>	<p>To review the Ordinance in 1998-1999 <i>(1997)</i></p>	<p>We have completed a review of the Dentists Registration Ordinance. The dental profession has been consulted on the major recommendations. <i>(Action Completed)</i></p>

* the bracketed information denotes the agency with lead responsibility for the initiative

the bracketed information denotes the year in which the target was set

+ the bracketed information denotes the status of the target

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To increase the transparency of the Nursing Board of Hong Kong and Midwives Board of Hong Kong (HWB)	To increase the transparency of the Nursing Board of Hong Kong and the Midwives Board of Hong Kong by introducing amendments to the Nurses Registration Ordinance and Midwives Registration Ordinance to expand the composition of the Boards (1996)	The Nursing Board of Hong Kong and the Midwives Board of Hong Kong were replaced respectively by the Nursing Council of Hong Kong in May 1999 and the Midwives Council of Hong Kong in September 1999. The compositions of the two regulatory bodies were expanded. (Action Completed)
To prevent abuse of controlled substances by stepping up investigation and prosecution of the illegal sale of controlled medicines (Department of Health (DH))	To increase the number of inspections from 700 to 800 licensed premises per month by recruiting additional staff (1996)	We have recruited 10 additional pharmacists. The number of inspections have been increased to 800 licensed premises per month. (Action Completed)

Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicators –

Indicator	1999 Target
Effective control for the registration of Chinese medicine practitioners, and for regulating the use, trading and manufacture of Chinese medicines	To introduce subsidiary legislation into the Legislative Council in 1999-2000
Timely review of the existing drug-related ordinances	To prepare the necessary legislation in 2000

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
<p>To facilitate the development of international standards for Chinese medicine-based products <i>(DH)</i></p>	<p>To collaborate with the World Health Organization (WHO) in organising a meeting on methodologies for research and evaluation of traditional medicine in April 2000</p>
<p>To replace the existing drug-related ordinances by new legislation <i>(HWB)</i></p>	<p>To prepare the necessary legislation in 2000</p>
<p>To organise the Tenth International Conference of Drug Regulatory Authorities in Hong Kong in 2001 in collaboration with WHO <i>(DH)</i></p>	<p>To work with WHO representatives in preparation for the conference which aims at exchanging drug information, fostering consensus on contemporaneous issues, and harmonisation of standards of drug approval</p>
<p>To make a new regulation under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance, Cap 139, to regulate the use of chemicals to feed livestock <i>(Agriculture and Fisheries Department (AFD))</i></p>	<p>To prepare the subsidiary legislation in 2000-2001</p>
<p>To review the existing pesticide control system, devise new control scheme and conduct consultation with the trade <i>(AFD)</i></p>	<p>To complete the review and consultation by 2000</p>

2

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. We will also maintain our campaign of public education on AIDS and ensure that AIDS patients continue to have access to a full range of government and community based services.

Progress Made

We have made satisfactory progress in enhancing public awareness of the importance of proper hygienic practices. We have brought together the combined efforts of government departments, public organisations, private establishments and the community at large to work towards a cleaner and healthier Hong Kong. In the coming year, we shall maintain these educational and promotional efforts. We are also working on a proposal to introduce a fixed penalty system to deter littering offences.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in the past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
<p>To continue the health promotion programme and 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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 <i>(1998)</i> ● To enhance health promotion programmes in 1998-1999 to advocate self-care and a healthy lifestyle so as to delay on-set of chronic illnesses <i>(1997)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have conducted two surveys. The findings of the surveys indicated that the message of the campaign generally had a positive effect on public awareness of and their attitude towards the importance of personal, public and food hygiene. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i> ● We have conducted a series of health promotion programmes to advocate self-care and healthy lifestyles. These include on-going programmes such as Health Ambassador Training Programmes, and publicity programmes such as the radio programme “Health One Minute”. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>

Initiative	Target	Present Position
To sustain efforts to improve the standard of public health and hygiene through community participation and inter-sectoral collaboration (HWB)	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 (1998)	Useful links have been built up with more than 100 Non-Governmental Organisations. These links will help foster further inter-sectoral collaboration. As at September 1999, about 70 major publicity, education and community involvement programmes have taken place. (Action in Progress: On Schedule)
To enhance anti-smoking efforts through legislative and educational measures (HWB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement in 1998-1999 the new anti-smoking measures which have been provided by legislation (1997) To improve by encouraging, through the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health, private organisations and employers to follow Government's example and make their workplaces smoke-free (1996) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the new measures have been put into effect by July 1999, other than the ban on tobacco advertising in publications which will come into force on 31 December 1999. (Action in Progress: On Schedule) As at July 1999, a total of 170 companies have signed the "Smoke-free Workplace Charter". (Action in Progress: On Schedule)

Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicators –

Indicator	1999 Target
Extent of public awareness of the importance of personal and environmental hygiene as measured by the results of attitude surveys	To raise public awareness of the importance of personal and environmental hygiene by at least 10 percentage points as measured by the surveys

Indicator	1999 Target
Ability of the Administration to strengthen inter-departmental and inter-sectoral collaboration for the purpose of improving overall cleanliness, raising food hygiene standards in the city	To enhance effectiveness of the Government's functions in keeping the HKSAR clean by redefining inter-departmental responsibilities and to further develop inter-sectoral collaboration in promoting environmental and food hygiene
Degree to which we can strengthen enforcement action on environmental hygiene matters	To step up enforcement action and introduce new legislative measures

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
To strengthen public education on patients' rights and responsibilities through exhibitions, publications, enquiry hotlines, etc. <i>(Department of Health)</i>	To develop new materials and new channels on public education
To sustain efforts to improve the standard of public health and hygiene through community participation, inter-sectoral collaboration, and legislative measures <i>(HWB)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To eliminate hygiene blackspots reported by the public and to further mobilise the community to participate in various related activities ● To introduce a fixed penalty system to deter littering offences

3

Enhance preventive measures, programmes and capabilities

It is essential that swift action can be taken to identify outbreak of diseases or food safety crisis and to contain their spread. We shall continue to strengthen our monitoring capacity through enhanced health and food 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.

Progress Made

In the past year, we made good progress in strengthening our capacity to monitor communicable diseases and food safety.

We have strengthened our health surveillance efforts, targeted at both the patients and infectious agents, so that we can quickly detect any change in disease patterns or emergence of new pathogens. The existing sentinel surveillance system involving private doctors and public clinics for influenza and enterovirus infection has been further extended to cover the important area of antibiotic resistance of bacteria.

Networking with established authorities on the Mainland and overseas has been further enhanced for prompt exchange and sharing of information. These efforts have enabled us to take part in global surveillance of diseases, follow closely disease trends and food safety issues, give timely health advice to the public and implement promptly any necessary control measures.

In order to help prevent the occurrence of food safety incidents, we have been promoting to the food industry the importance of quality assurance, and helping them assess and identify potential food hazards during the food preparation and distribution processes.

To achieve results in this area, various initiatives have been undertaken in the past years. Details are set out below –

Initiative	Target	Present Position
<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 networking with established disease control centres overseas and on the Mainland by 50% in 1999 <i>(1998)</i> ● To set up a new Public Health Laboratory Centre in Shek Kip Mei by 2002 <i>(1998)</i> ● To strengthen in 1998-1999 our team of expert staff for the prevention and control of communicable diseases and take a more active role in global surveillance and monitoring of disease patterns. These efforts will enable the Department of Health to obtain more timely information on seasonal disease trends and to give timely health advice to the community <i>(1997)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have expanded our networking with established authorities overseas and on the Mainland by more than 50%. <i>(Action Completed)</i> ● The piling work was completed and the contract for the main superstructure commenced in July 1999 for target completion in 2001. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i> ● We have strengthened the expert team. This has enabled the Department of Health to take a more active role in disease surveillance and control of communicable diseases. <i>(Action Completed)</i>

Initiative	Target	Present Position
<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 (DH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To establish a Public Health Information System by 2003 ● To expand networking with other health care providers and medical institutions to enhance the level of disease information collection by 50% by 2000 <p>(1998)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have formulated a development plan. The detailed user requirements are being defined to pave the way for the feasibility study. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i> ● We have expanded our networking with other health care providers and medical institutions. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
<p>To strengthen the ability of the Government to monitor and ensure food safety (DH)</p>	<p>To introduce the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) 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> <p>(1998)</p>	<p>We have organised 24 seminars to introduce and promote the HACCP System to the food industry. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i></p>

Initiative	Target	Present Position
<p>To ensure that livestock intended for food is fit for human consumption <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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An office in the Western Wholesale Market is being converted to a branch veterinary laboratory. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase the number of inspections at local livestock farms by 50% by 1999 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to September 1999, the number of inspections has increased by more than 35%. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To extend in 1999, the labelling and tracing system (currently implemented for pigs) to cover cattle and goats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have developed the protocols for labelling and tracing system and remain on target to implement the system in 1999. <i>(Action in Progress: On Schedule)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement systematic surveillance for major animal diseases and drug residues in 1999 <i>(1998)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have devised and implemented the testing protocols for major animal diseases and drug residues. <i>(Action Completed)</i>

Looking Forward

In the next 12 months, we will assess our performance in respect of this KRA against the following indicators –

Indicator	1999 Target
Level to which we can enhance local disease surveillance	To enhance local disease surveillance through more efficient data collection and testing programmes
Extent to which we can improve food and livestock inspection programmes	To improve food and livestock inspection programmes through timely sampling tests
Extent to which we can arouse the public's attention to preventive primary health care	To advocate efficient utilisation of our preventive health care services

We will undertake the following initiatives to deliver results in this area –

Initiative	1999 Target
<p>To extend the Woman Health Service (DH)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To maximise the utilisation of the existing three woman health centres ● To increase the quota for new annual enrolment and revisit cases ● To extend the age coverage of the service
<p>To set up a Hong Kong Travellers' Health Service comprising –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preventive services for travellers; and ● Advice on travel-related health risks <p>(DH)</p>	<p>To commence the service in 2000</p>