

LegCo Panel on Health Services

Redevelopment of Caritas Medical Centre, Phase 2

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the phase 2 redevelopment of the Caritas Medical Centre (CMC).

Background

2. At present, the Hospital Authority (HA) provides public hospital services for Sham Shui Po, Mongkok, Wong Tai Sin, Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan and North Lantau districts through its Kowloon West (KW) hospital cluster, which comprises CMC, Kwong Wah Hospital, Our Lady of Maryknoll Hospital, Wong Tai Sin Hospital, Kwai Chung Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital and Yan Chai Hospital. The KW cluster has the second highest percentage of elderly population aged 65 or above (13.5%) among all clusters in the territory. About 65% of the patients of CMC live in the Sham Shui Po district, which has the highest percentage of elderly population aged 65 or above (16%) among all districts in the territory. According to the latest projections of the Census and Statistics Department, the elderly population aged 65 or above in the KW cluster will increase from 243 000 in 2002 to 290 000 in 2011, representing a 19.3% increase. For the Sham Shui Po district, the elderly population aged 65 or above is projected to increase by 19.3% from 57 000 in 2002 to 68 000 in 2011.

3. CMC was built in 1964. Prior to 2002, CMC had eight hospital blocks, namely, Wai Yan Block (built in 1964), Wai Lok Block (built in 1965), Wai On Block (built in 1965), Wai Tak Block (built in 1966), Wai Mon Block (built in 1968), Wai Ming Block (built in 1978),

Wai Oi Block (built in 1988) and Wai Yee Block (built in 1964 and renovated in 1993). In November 1997, the Finance Committee (FC) of the Legislative Council approved funding for project 7MA “Redevelopment of the Caritas Medical Centre” to redevelop Wai Lok Block and Wai Mon Block into a 14-storey acute block for housing all facilities for the provision of acute services (phase 1 redevelopment). The new acute block, Wai Shun Block, was completed in early 2002.

Justification

4. All buildings of CMC, except for Wai Shun Block (built in 2002), Wai Oi Block (built in 1988) and Wai Yee Block (renovated in 1993), are dilapidated, substandard and cannot meet present-day requirements of a modern acute general hospital providing a full range of acute, rehabilitation and ambulatory care services. Despite the phase 1 redevelopment, CMC still has insufficient space for clinical use and treatment facilities to cope with the increasing service demand.

5. The demand for specialist out-patient (SOP) consultation services in the KW cluster has grown tremendously over the years. The number of SOP attendances in CMC increased from 257 000 in 1996-97 to 345 000 in 2002-03, representing a 34.2% rise. There are serious overcrowding problems in the SOP departments in Wai Tak Block. Due to lack of space, doctors have to share consultation rooms, thus compromising patients’ privacy. The existing facilities are grossly inadequate in terms of space, provision and design to meet the high service demand and present-day service requirements, not to mention the future service demand. According to the latest projections of the Census and Statistics Department, the population in the KW cluster will increase from 1 805 000 in 2002 to 2 068 000 in 2011, representing a 14.6% rise. There is an urgent need to expand the facilities of the existing SOP departments in CMC to cope with service demand.

6. With an ageing population which is more prone to chronic illnesses and disabilities, there is increasing demand for rehabilitation services in the KW cluster. At present, CMC runs a geriatric day hospital which is operated by a multi-disciplinary team of health care professionals to provide comprehensive day care programmes for the treatment, rehabilitation and health maintenance of elderly patients. To

cope with the increasing demand for geriatric day services, we propose to expand the capacity of the geriatric day hospital from the existing 40 places to 60 places to cater for an increase in annual attendances from around 10 000 to 15 000.

7. In line with the international trend to provide surgical services on ambulatory rather than inpatient basis, we propose to set up an expanded day surgery centre with a pre-admission clinic and three designated operating theatres in CMC. By increasing the number of operating theatres in the day surgery centre from two to three, the number of operations the centre can handle each year will increase from 3 300 to 5 000. We shall also increase the number of day beds in CMC from 18 to 50. Some 42 of these day beds will be used for day procedures and post-operative recovery, and the remaining eight for day hospice care.

The Redevelopment Project

8. To enhance the operational efficiency of the entire hospital and to provide clinical space for expanded hospital services, we propose to demolish Wai Ming Block and to construct on the same site a new block to accommodate all ambulatory and rehabilitation services of CMC. The hospital services and facilities currently accommodated in Wai Ming Block (including allied health services, in-patient wards and stores) will be temporarily decanted to the other premises within CMC before eventual reprovisioning to the new ambulatory / rehabilitation block. HA will ensure that existing patient services will not be disrupted during the entire construction period. Upon completion of the new block, Wai On Block, Wai Tak Block and Wai Yan Block will be demolished to make way for a rehabilitation garden, and the services and facilities currently accommodated in these blocks will be reprovisioned to the new ambulatory / rehabilitation block.

9. At present, Wai Oi Block houses administrative offices and medical support and ancillary facilities. To enhance operational efficiency of the entire hospital, we propose to turn Wai Oi Block into an administration block and to reprovision those frontline medical support and ancillary facilities to other clinical blocks. As the first step, we have, under the phase 1 redevelopment, reprovisioned the hospital kitchen from Wai Oi Block to the new Wai Shun Block. Under the phase 2

redevelopment, we propose to relocate the in-patient pharmacy from Wai Oi Block to the new ambulatory / rehabilitation block, and to refurbish the vacated areas and the vacant staff quarters in Wai Oi Block to accommodate facilities that will be reprovisioned from Wai Ming Block, Wai On Block and Wai Yan Block, including tele-health service, nurse specialist office, community nursing office, in-patient records store, maintenance department, central domestic services, security and transport services, a training and conference centre, a library, Red Cross School and supporting facilities.

10. Upon completion of the phase 2 redevelopment, CMC will have a capacity of 1 276 in-patient beds, 50 day beds and 60 geriatric day places. CMC will be able to handle 596 000 outpatient attendances annually. The operational efficiency of the entire hospital will be enhanced through service realignment and improved connections among hospital buildings.

Preparatory Works

11. We propose to carry out the phase 2 redevelopment of CMC in two stages, namely, preparatory works and main works. Before we can embark on the main works, we need to conduct site investigation as well as develop detailed design and prepare tender documents for the main works. HA does not have the expertise to undertake such specialist tasks in-house. We therefore propose to engage professional consultants to carry out the preparatory works. The estimated cost of the preparatory works is about \$48 million (in money-of-the-day prices). A very rough estimate of the cost of the main works is in the region of \$1,200 million.

Public Consultation

12. HA consulted the Sham Shui Po District Council on 11 March 2003 on the proposed redevelopment of CMC. The Council fully supported the proposal and urged HA to expedite the project so as to improve the service provision of CMC.

Way Forward

13. We plan to seek FC's approval in July 2003 to fund the preparatory works at an estimated cost of about \$48 million in money-of-the-day prices. Subject to FC's approval, the preparatory works will commence in late 2003 for completion in mid-2006. We shall separately seek FC's approval to launch the main works at a later stage.

Advice Sought

14. Members are requested to note the content of this paper.

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