

**The Administration's response to the issues raised by
Legislative Council Panel on Public Service on
Five-day week in the Government
at the meeting held on 20 November 2006**

- (a) Defendants in criminal cases are given ample notice of court hearings and have ample time to apply for legal aid in advance of the hearings. Legal aid only covers criminal matters in the District Court or above where court hearings would not normally take place on Saturday. The Legal Aid Department (LAD) has not, in their experience, received any application for legal aid on Saturday in relation to proceedings taking place on the following working day.

In the unlikely event that a defendant has not been able to apply for or obtain legal aid before the hearing, he may seek an adjournment before the Court. LAD will arrange for notices to be displayed outside the office of the Crime Section, which will move to the five-day week with effect from 1 January 2007, to advise the public of this fact.

Proceedings in relation to deportation orders are civil proceedings and would not be affected by the implementation of the five-day week of the Crime Section. When considering whether to seek a deportation order against a person, the Director of Immigration will serve on the person a "Notice of Consideration of Deportation" and invite him to make representations on the intended deportation. The person will normally have not less than seven days to make his representations from the date he received the notice. The person would have ample time to make representations against the intended deportation and if he so wishes, to seek assistance from LAD before the execution of the deportation order.

- (b) Most of the primary school students who attend school dental clinics of the Department of Health (DH) do not require follow-up dental services after the annual dental check up. The nature of follow-up services is mainly basic treatment such as dental filling, scaling and oral hygiene instruction, which requires on average one to two visits.

DH's survey indicated that if the School Dental Care Service were moved to a five-day week, most parents would prefer to bring their children to attend follow-up appointments after school during weekdays or during school holidays such as the day after Sports Day, Teacher Retreat Day, etc. Upon implementation of the five-day week in the School Dental Care Service, the weekly service capacity will be increased as the school dental clinics can make more flexible use of the clinical sessions with extended service hours (i.e. until 5:45 p.m. on Monday, and until 5:30 p.m. from Tuesday to Friday). More choices of appointments after school during weekdays will be open to parents as compared to the existing schedule. The School Dental Care Service of DH will contact individual schools to obtain information on their school holidays, and reserve sufficient appointment slots on these days for follow-up appointments.

In case parents could not bring their children to the follow-up appointments, they may contact the School Dental Care Service for rescheduling. The School Dental Care Service will make special arrangements with the schools concerned to bring the children for follow-up appointments by chartered bus together with children of other grades and classes on annual check up. DH's clinical staff will record in the School Dental Care Service Handbook the treatment done on that day for parents' information, and will also take the initiative to contact the parents if there are any special concerns. Parents are welcome to contact the clinical staff to discuss the treatment received by their children.

DH will try its best to give the earliest possible appointments to those children who require follow-up appointments, or to arrange appointments which suit their preference as far as possible. DH will monitor the implementation of the five-day week closely.