

**Supplementary Information for Submission to
the LegCo Panel on Welfare Services**

The newly issued Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan (RPP) aims to set out clearly the directions of the development of rehabilitation services for reference by all sectors in the society. Therefore, it does not elaborate on service details, supply and demand data and expenditure estimates; and does not set out any implementation timetable or route map.

2. Nevertheless, relevant government departments have taken or planned a lot of concrete measures to implement the RPP. This document sets out the content of relevant measures in accordance with the programme areas of the RPP for Members' perusal.

Prevention and Identification

3. In line with directions recommended in the RPP, government departments concerned and the Hospital Authority (HA), together with their collaborative partners from other sectors including professional bodies, academic organisations, district councils, local dignitaries, community organisations, educational bodies, the media, trade associations and trade unions, are launching the following programmes:

- (a) measures for enhancing early identification and intervention of potential disabilities include:
 - (i) the Comprehensive Child Development Service (CCDS), aims to identify at an early stage children in need of the service and high-risk pregnant women and families, and to provide them with early intervention and assistance. The CCDS is jointly provided by the Department of Health (DH), HA, Social Welfare Department (SWD) and Education Bureau (EDB). It has been piloted in phases in Sham Shui Po, Tin Shui Wai, Tuen Mun and Tseung Kwan O since July 2005. The CCDS scheme was extended to Tung Chung and the whole Yuen Long district in the first half of 2007. The government will extend the CCDS to Kwun Tong in 2007-08. In addition, we plan to further extend the service to more districts in phases and to strengthen social services support, so as to reach out to vulnerable families in a more proactive way; and

- (ii) a series of programmes is launched by the HA, including “Fall Prevention Community Programme”, which aims at reducing the risk of fall incidents by promoting the practice of 10-movement simplified Tai Chi form to the elderly through community organisations with the provision of volunteer home screening. Another programme — “全港度度血壓大行動”¹ — was introduced by the HA to raise the public awareness of hypertension for early detection of such threat;
- (b) the DH will continue to provide a comprehensive range of health promotion and disease prevention services for children from birth to five years of age and for women aged 64 or below through its 31 Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) and three Woman Health Centers (WHCs) across the territory;
- (c) in respect of enhancing medical care and strengthening manpower training:
 - (i) the DH will properly step up its efforts to implement the exercise prescription project for doctors, place more emphasis on the hand care exercise of the health sector and put in place the Government Influenza Vaccination Programme (GIVP); and
 - (ii) the HA will produce internal video broadcasting programmes to enable frontline colleagues of various sectors to know more about the special needs in areas of communication, action and medical care of individual patients with disabilities. Sharing sessions with patients will also be held to help frontline colleagues of various sectors grasp the needs and feelings of the patients with disabilities from their points of view in order to show deep empathy for the patients. The websites of various community rehabilitation organisations will be linked to the intranet of the HA to enrich colleagues’ knowledge on the existing services for the interests of the patients;
- (d) in respect of public health education:
 - (i) the DH is seeking additional manpower and resources to improve the development of local liaison networks and will join hands with

¹ The HA does not have a Chinese title for this project.

local bodies to organise district health promotion activities for promoting healthy lifestyle;

- (ii) the DH will also continue to launch a series of health education and publicity programmes, including the “Stair Climbing to Health” project involving the use of point-of decision prompts; the Exercise Prescription Project to encourage physical exercises; the “2 Plus 3 A Day” programme to promote healthy diets; and the “EatSmart@school.hk” campaign to promote healthy eating among primary school students. DH’s programmes for the prevention of infectious diseases will include: the campaign on hand hygiene, the “Maintain Cough Manners” campaign, the enhanced health education and promotion activities related to influenza, avian influenza and influenza pandemic preparedness;
- (iii) the DH is taking part in the Healthy Cities projects at district level and providing professional input and technical support in the areas related to public health and health promotion. It is also producing “Building Healthy Cities – Guidelines for Implementing A Healthy Cities Project in Hong Kong” which outlines a model of practice relevant to the local context for participants of Healthy Cities projects in the territory. Also, the DH is publishing “Organization of District Health Promotion Activities - A Reference Guide” to facilitate community members and community groups to introduce health promotion activities; and advises them on the subject when they are planning such activities; and
- (iv) as the coordinating authority of the hospital clusters, the HA Head Office is mobilising community resources and introducing health promotion programmes in an attempt to enhance the public understanding of common major illnesses so as to facilitate prevention. Among the current programmes are the Quit (Tobacco Smoking) Campaign and the campaign of keeping a healthy body mass index to facilitate disease prevention, etc. At the same time, the HA is also tasked to design a wide spectrum of health education and promotional activities covering the common health problems such as obesity, coronary heart disease, high blood pressure and incidences of falls in order to familiarise the public with the knowledge and skills of disease prevention. Educational activities aimed at promoting awareness about disease are also arranged for the patients, their relatives and the public with a view to promoting the public awareness of disease management, thereby minimizing the deterioration of disease;

- (e) on cancer treatment, the HA has drawn up a set of guidelines on the services and treatment relating to the common types of cancer. A simplified version specially designed for patients will also be distributed to promote their awareness in these two areas. Concurrently, the HA is in the progress of setting the therapeutic goal for patients with diabetes and the service target for stroke patients. In addition, it will also strive to make the secondary prevention of disease an effective measure to enhance the therapeutic effectiveness through regular reports and reviews. On the prevention of heart disease, the HA will strive to prevent the recurrences of chronic ischemic heart disease among patients by increasing the use of cholesterol lowering medicine;
- (f) the Labour Department (LD) will continue to disseminate to the public messages on occupational safety and health through different media which include television and radio, public transport such as buses and trains as well as the LD website, with a view to improving safety and health at work in Hong Kong. The LD will also sustain its partnership with the Occupational Safety and Health Council, other government departments and different sectors to raise the awareness of work safety and instill the concept of self-regulation among the public through a range of education, promotion and publicity activities. These include the Catering Industry Safety Award Scheme, Construction Industry Safety Award Scheme, the promotion of the Occupational Safety Charter, Occupational Safety and Health Promotion Programme, Small and Medium Enterprises Sponsorship Scheme as well as various seminars, talks, exhibitions and publications. The purpose is to enhance the knowledge of employers and employees on health hazards and occupational diseases, and to educate them to take appropriate precautions against work injuries and occupational diseases; and
- (g) the Road Safety Publicity Strategy Working Group has been formed under the Road Safety Council of the Police Force (PF). It has incorporated the publicity work on “Wear Seat Belt on Public Light Buses” into its work plan for 2007.

Medical Rehabilitation

4. On medical rehabilitation, the initiatives taken or being put in the pipeline by the HA in collaboration with other government departments and organisations are as follows:

- (a) setting up a more established primary healthcare system of public family medicine and general out-patient clinics with a view to providing triage, follow-up and health promotion services in the community for the elderly and chronically ill in a holistic and seamless manner;
- (b) developing the general out-patient services in accordance with the way forward for the “treatment of the chronic illnesses”. Through collaboration with various medical specialties, the general out-patient clinics will focus on triaging/handling common illnesses or illnesses that pose heavy burden to the society. In future, the services will also cover early/minor mood disorder (e.g. depression) found in the community;
- (c) through provision of training on family medicine and promotion of shared care programme between public and private health care sectors, it is hoped that the concept and service provision model of “family doctor” could be widely promoted among the chronically ill;
- (d) introducing the services for psychosis in the Kowloon Central cluster so as to strengthen the service concerned in Kowloon;
- (e) setting up a multi-disciplinary coordinating committee on mental health for coordinating all the specialty services provided for the mentally ill patients; no efforts will be spared in developing modernised in-patient services, building community treatment service network and community partnerships; and
- (f) launching coordinated community mental health services by the HA and SWD in October 2007.

Pre-school Training

5. The government is very concerned about children with disabilities being provided with appropriate pre-school training. To achieve this, we strive for improving their opportunities for participating in ordinary schools and daily life activities. The SWD will continue to implement this policy objective by providing and enhancing the following services:

- (a) continuing to provide children with disabilities aged zero to five with appropriate pre-school services;
- (b) monitoring the waiting time for pre-school services in order to make full use of resources available; facilitating early placement for the

children in need of the services; and implementing in December 2006 a series of measures, including enhancing the computer system of the Central Referral System for Rehabilitation Services Sub-system for Disabled Pre-schoolers (CRSRehab-PS), simplifying application procedures and avoiding duplicated applications etc., to improve the waiting arrangement;

- (c) successfully acquired an annual additional funding of \$1.4 million in 2007/08 for providing 226 additional pre-school service places through constructing new and expanding existing Early Education and Training Centres and the Special Child Care Centres;
- (d) actively identifying new resources and suitable venues for additional pre-school service places in 2008/09;
- (e) starting to adopt the Special Child Care Centre cum Early Education and Training Centre mixed operational mode to facilitate service operators with greater flexibility in resource allocation in order to meet the specific requirements of different districts;
- (f) allocating recurrent funding to provide special child care worker training in the coming three years; and
- (g) planning to provide a new training program on Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) for pre-school rehabilitation personnel.

6. In addition, the EDB conducts briefings for parents of Pre-Primary children with special educational needs (SEN) annually for introduction of school choice information and support services available.

Education

7. On special education services, the EDB will step up the implementation of the following initiatives:

- (a) to align with the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Structure, the EDB is launching a research and development project from the 2006/07 to 2008/09 school years to gather expertise and practical experience for the updated NSS (Intellectual Disability (ID)) curriculum framework and learning outcomes. Starting from the 2006/07 school year, the EDB will work with course providers to pilot the adapted applied learning programmes (formerly known as career-oriented studies) suitable for

students with ID, so as to pave way for the introduction of the NSS curriculum from the 2009/10 school year onwards;

- (b) to continue to work closely with teacher training institutions. Starting from the 2007/08 school year, the EDB will launch a five-year teacher training framework. Tertiary institutions will be commissioned to conduct a series of basic, advanced and thematic courses for teachers in the current school year. The EDB has also undertaken to organise a two-day workshop on special education for heads and teaching assistants of primary and secondary schools in the public sector;
- (c) to continue to provide assistance for primary and secondary schools in implementing the Whole School Approach to Integrated Education through a three-tier support model and professional support;
- (d) to strengthen the support network by increasing the number of Special Schools cum Resource Centres (SSRC) to 18 and Resource Schools to eight in the 2007/08 school year; with the scope of their support service expanded (i.e. other than sharing experience and disseminating skills with ordinary schools, short-term attachment programme will be provided for students identified to be in need);
- (e) to continue to develop teaching resources on handling students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and SpLD. Training materials, including, among others, “Guide for teachers on supporting students with Specific Learning Difficulties” and a resource package on “Fun with Maths: A resource pack for primary school pupils”, will be published in the 2007/08 school year. In addition, EDB will further develop teaching materials on “Theory of Mind” and “Social Thinking Training”. These resources will soon be uploaded onto the EDB website for public access;
- (f) to issue a circular annually to remind secondary and primary schools to transfer the SEN data of their students upon their transfer of school and after they have sought parental consent. This is to ensure that the students concerned may timely and appropriately receive support in their new school. In parallel with such efforts, Student Guidance Officers in primary schools also advise Primary 6 students and their parents on secondary school choice and education in school so as to ensure smooth transition. In addition, EDB holds experience sharing sessions, workshops and seminars for principals and teachers regularly for their professional development and for disseminating good practices;

- (g) to issue a guide on Integrated Education for schools and parents respectively by the end of 2007;
- (h) to continue to collaborate closely with relevant organisations, inviting representatives of these organisations to be members of relevant working groups and attend meetings, and asking them to co-organise parents' talks and take part in pertinent research and development projects;
- (i) in collaboration with the DH and the HA to set up a regular mechanism for proper coordination of support assessment and information conveyance, so as to ensure appropriate support for students with SEN; and
- (j) to provide students with SEN with equal opportunities for pursuing ordinary curriculum as their counterparts in the access to post-secondary programmes. For students with ID who would pursue the NSS curriculum, the EDB will continue to work with parties concerned to review the existing pathways and to explore further opportunities with reference to the expected learning accomplishments of students after completion of NSS.

Employment and Vocational Rehabilitation Services

8. As for employment services, the Selective Placement Division (SPD) of the LD will continue to provide a personalised employment service to help persons with disabilities having suitable abilities in pursuing open employment. A placement officer will provide each job-seeker with disabilities registered with SPD with employment counselling, job matching and referral, preparation for job interviews beforehand and, where necessary, accompany them to attend such interviews. The placement officer will also provide a post-placement follow-up service to employees with disabilities and their employers to ensure smooth job settlement. The SPD will continue its strenuous efforts to put in place and reinforce the following measures:

- (a) Work Orientation and Placement Scheme: by means of wage subsidies, employers are encouraged to offer job vacancies to persons with disabilities through a three-month trial placement. SPD will also organise a short pre-employment training programme for job-seekers with disabilities to improve their job-searching skills;
- (b) Self Help Integrated Placement Services: group counselling sessions will be provided to job-seekers with disabilities to improve their job-

searching skills and interviewing techniques. Facilities, including, inter alia, computers, fax machines, information on job search, reference books, are also made available to them in the employment offices of SPD. Job-seekers with disabilities are encouraged to search and apply for suitable jobs on their own initiative;

- (c) Interactive Selective Placement Service web-site: to provide more convenient and efficient employment and recruitment services to job-seekers with disabilities and their prospective employers through the Internet; and
- (d) public education and publicity activities: to promote the community's acceptance of persons with disabilities so as to enhance their employment opportunities.

9. Regarding the employment of persons with disabilities by the government, the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) will continue with the prevailing policy of placing persons with disabilities in appropriate jobs whenever possible to help them integrate into the community and providing them on-the-job assistance and necessary equipment to facilitate their carrying out of their duties. With a view to ascertaining whether the prevailing policy and arrangements remain effective, CSB will continue to keep track of the changes in the number of persons with disabilities employed in the government.

10. In addition, in order to contribute to the provision of training opportunities for young people with disabilities, the Government has since June 2006 extended the job attachment service under the Sunnyway - On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities (Sunnyway) to government departments. In 2007, 115 job attachment places in related Government departments will be provided for the Sunnyway programme.

11. To facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities by more organisations, the Government has, for many years, committed to encouraging the adoption of the following measures among subvented organisations and statutory bodies to further promote the employment of persons with disabilities:

- (a) formulation of voluntary employment indicators for the employment of persons with disabilities;
- (b) developing policies and procedures for employing persons with disabilities by drawing on the experience of the civil service; and
- (c) publishing statistics on the employment of persons with disabilities in their annual reports.

The then Health, Welfare and Food Bureau conducted a tracking survey of the above measures in early 2004. The tracking survey conducted in early 2007, revealed that there was a real increase in the number of Government Subvented Organisations and Statutory Bodies adopting the measures. On the recommendation of the Sub-committee on Employment of the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) will conduct another survey in the end of 2007 to gauge the employment of persons with disabilities in various organisations. Also, the LWB will further urge the Subvented Organisations and Statutory Bodies to adopt measures to promote the employment of persons with disabilities.

12. As regards the vocational rehabilitation services, the SWD will continue its efforts to provide a wide range of training, vocational rehabilitation services and support to help persons with disabilities develop their potential, become self-reliant and contribute to the community. The measures put in place by the SWD include:

- (a) continuing to assist NGOs in the setting up of social enterprises under the “Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise” Project with a view to enhancing employment opportunities of persons with disabilities;
- (b) successfully acquired additional resources of over \$7 million each year for additional provision of 303 vocational rehabilitation and training places in 2007/08 so as to strengthen the vocational rehabilitation services that meet the market requirements;
- (c) actively identifying further resources for additional training places and relevant services in the Integrated Vocational Training Centre (IVTC) in 2008/09 for the provision of more practical and diversified vocational training for persons with disabilities; and
- (d) revamping service strategies of the Marketing Consultancy Office (Rehabilitation) to further promote public awareness, acceptance and support of the work abilities of persons with disabilities and of the social enterprises for enhancing their employment.

13. Besides, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) is offering about 1,000 training places of various retraining courses each year to help persons with disabilities. The types of retraining programmes being offered include courses on waiters, office assistants, shop assistants, couriers and cleaning workers. Initiatives being taken or put in the pipeline by the ERB are as follows:

- (a) in 2008/09, more funding resources will be devoted to offer more training places to serve persons with disabilities and the industrial accident victims;
- (b) starting from 1 April 2007, introducing two financial subsidies, namely, “Course Development Subsidy” and “Training Facilities Subsidy” to encourage its training bodies to apply for developing new retraining courses on different trades and in different forms for its various target groups, including persons with disabilities;
- (c) continuing its efforts in keeping close liaison with employers of different trades for joint development of tailor-made programmes which are specifically designed to suit the needs of individual employers. Through these courses, the retrainees, including persons with disabilities, will be offered opportunities for retraining and re-employment;
- (d) supporting the development and establishment of social enterprises with a view to enhancing the employment opportunities for its retrainees, including persons with disabilities. Besides, trial work placement can be arranged in such social enterprises for the retrainees;
- (e) introducing the “Work Experience Scheme” for graduates with disabilities of pre-service training, helping them to gain practical workplace experience for a period of one to two weeks’ time, while they are entitled to retraining allowances. The Scheme aims to encourage those participating employers to take on the retrainees upon completion of the work experience period; and
- (f) further strengthening its networking with various trade associations or employer groups, encouraging employers to offer job vacancies for provision of tailor-made programmes with “On-the-job Training (OJT)”. During the OJT period, the retrainees will be entitled to retraining allowances. In order to enhance their employment opportunities and their retention abilities of the retrainees with disabilities, the ERB will consider extending its post-training follow-up service period and to visit those retrainees being placed into employment so as to help them adapt to new working environment.

14. Details of the future development plan devised to upgrade the skills of persons with disabilities seeking employment in the open job market by the Vocational Training for People with Disabilities Section under the Vocational Training Council (VTC) are as follows:

- (a) striving to ensure that the courses delivered by the Skills Centres of the VTC match with the market needs. Endeavours have been made to strengthen and expand collaboration with industries/institutions and the social capital. The related measures include:
- (i) appointing Honourable Advisors from various occupational fields to serve as the bridge between the Skills Centres and the commerce/industry sectors for the continuous updating of courses of skills centres to match with the market needs; and
 - (ii) continuously strengthening and expanding collaboration with industries and institutions, particularly in out-reaching projects, so as to enhance the employability and independence of trainees. Out-reaching projects such as car cleaning service training at IVE (Kwai Chung) and Kowloon Cricket Club are mounted to provide real-life work experience for trainees;
- (b) in expanding the partnership and collaboration with special schools and NGOs, the Skills Centres of the VTC will:
- (i) maintain close contact with special schools and NGOs and have been organizing joint publicity projects with these organizations such as Digital Photo Exhibition, Road Show and Information Day, to promote skills training and the abilities of persons with disabilities in the community; and
 - (ii) strengthen its partnership with special schools by offering more opportunities to special school students in exploring vocational training in skills centres through the Vocational Exposure Programme (VEP) run by the centres. In 2006/07, 237 students from 23 schools attended the VEP;
- (c) continuously updating its courses with input from commerce/industry sectors and greater sharing of physical and staff resources among the three Skills Centres to enhance the attractiveness of Skills Centres courses to potential trainees;
- (d) maintaining regular contacts with government departments, public bodies and relevant organizations such as the EDB, LD and SWD, Equal Opportunities Commission, etc. in planning and organizing the activities of the skills centres and in promoting the employability of people with disabilities; and

- (e) setting up a task force on Provision of Training Programme and Services for People with SpLD and AD/HD to cater for their training and service needs.

Residential Care

15. The LWB and the SWD have adopted a three-prong-approach as suggested in the RPP in planning and implementing a series of measures, so as to encourage participation from different sectors and to provide diversified residential care services for persons with disabilities with genuine needs. The related measures include:

- (a) the LWB and the SWD have been granted an addition of \$3.3 million in 2007/08 for providing 490 additional residential places; in parallel, we are bidding for more resources and identifying suitable venues for additional residential places for 2008/09;
- (b) the LWB and the SWD have liaised with the related authorities of town planning and housing to strive for suitable medium-term and long-term venues for hostels and rehabilitation facilities for persons with disabilities;
- (c) a Registration Office has been set up by the SWD to enhance service quality of private hostels for persons with disabilities through the implementation of a Voluntary Registration Scheme;
- (d) introducing a licensing system by the SWD to regulate hostels for persons with disabilities and the draft ordinance is planned to be submitted to the LegCo in 2008/09;
- (e) the SWD will continue to support the development of the “self-financing” homes operated by the non-government organisations, including assisting them to rent vacated quarters of hospital staff or flats in public housing at nominal or low rates and to apply for Lotteries Fund or other funds for alteration, renovation and buying of furniture;
- (f) setting up a transitional care centre for providing integrated services of residential care and living skill trainings for persons with severe disabilities, including tetraplegic patients, and training for their carers, which will be opened in early 2008;

- (g) the SWD will continue to arrange certificate training courses for the rehabilitation personnel serving for persons with mental handicap, so as to develop human resources and improve the service quality; and
- (h) regarding the boarding service for special school students, the EDB has reviewed the related demands and two boarding sections will be built, with one in Tai Po District and one in Tuen Mun District. Works are scheduled for completion in 2010/11 and 2012/13 school years respectively. Sufficient boarding places for special schools are expected in the future.

Day Care and Community Support

16. Day care and community support are integral parts for assisting persons with disability to live and integrate fully into the community. The SWD will continue to develop its professional and client based services as well as to strengthen the support for carers. Related measures include:

- (a) studying the reintegration and strengthening of community support service to cope with the needs of persons with disabilities with greater flexibility;
- (b) successfully acquired in 2007/08, an extra annual grant estimated to \$7 million has been obtained to provide an addition of 121 day care places;
- (c) seeking more resources and suitable venues to further enhance community support service and to provide additional day care places in 2008/09;
- (d) an integrated rehabilitation support centre for persons with severe disabilities and five community rehabilitation day centres have gradually commenced operation since 2006. Day training and nursing service are provided for discharged patients of mental illness, impairment of mental functioning and physical disabilities. Training and support for their carers are also enhanced to assist persons with disabilities to reintegrate into the community;
- (e) an extra amount of \$20 million has been granted annually for the Community Mental Health Intervention Project. The 11 project teams under it will commence service in October 2007 to provide early social work intervention, mental health support and outreaching service for persons in the community with suspected mental health problems. It is expected that over 1,300 persons will be provided with the adequate

services annually;

- (f) continuing to enhance understandings of various community support services for the community, persons with disabilities and their carers through different channels, including publications such as “Handbook on Community Support Resources on Rehabilitation” and “Community Support Projects for People with Disabilities”, in order to facilitate adequate use of these services; and
- (g) continuing to liaise and consult persons and organisations concerned to better understand their views and demands on community support services.

Development of Self-help Organisations

17. The Government has long been in strong support of the development of self-help organisations. Persons with disabilities and their families/carers in these organisations provide views and comments which are important for the development of rehabilitation services. Moreover, they promote a spirit of helping others to help themselves among persons with disabilities and their families/carers by converting their abilities into “social capitals”, which is a key for the implementation of the “Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan”. As such, government departments and public authorities, including the LWB, the SWD and the HA, will work together with different sectors to facilitate the future development of self-help organisations. Relevant measures include:

- (a) the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (RAC) will take the lead to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration and to provide platforms for partnership matching for self-help organisations with other sectors, including the business sector and non-government organisations;
- (b) related government departments will maintain liaison with the self-help organisations in order to have better understandings on their development needs and obtain their views on related policies and services;
- (c) SWD will continue to provide financial support to the self-help organisations and assist them in identifying venues as well as providing consultancy services. It will also continue to promote trilateral collaboration by measures of encouragement such as holding commendation ceremonies for public and private institutions supporting self-help organisations. A new version of “Directory of Self-help

Organisations” and its “Directory of Parents Groups” will be published to enhance public understandings towards self-help organisations; and

- (d) The Health InfoWorld of the HA and the Patient Resource Centres of the public hospitals cooperate smoothly with the self-help organisations of patients. They co-organise activities frequently with a view to facilitating the development of self-help organisations and to enhancing the caring skills of the patients and their families. Health care professionals of the HA also frequently assist the development and growth of these self-help organisations of patients by taking up consultancy roles.

Access and Transport Services

18. Regarding the construction of barrier-free facilities, the government departments concerned are working on and planning to implement the following measures:

- (a) the Buildings Department (BD) has reviewed the requirements of the *Design Manual: Barrier Free Access* on access and facilities in buildings. Legislative amendments would be pursued to bring the Manual into effect;
- (b) the BD will select some private shopping arcades and commercial buildings for focused inspections each year, in order to ascertain whether the access and facilities provided for the persons with disabilities under the legal requirements are removed, altered, or obstructed by illegal building works. In case such illegal building works are identified, the BD will take enforcement actions under the Buildings Ordinance. Since 2004, BD has increased the number of buildings for such inspections from five to 15 per year;
- (c) in 2007, the BD is conducting large-scale operations to remove unauthorised building works. About 140 of the target buildings were constructed with facilities for the persons with disabilities as required under the law. The BD will pay attention to whether such facilities have been removed, altered or obstructed by any illegal building works, and take appropriate enforcement actions;
- (d) the BD will conduct investigations upon receipt of complaints. If it is confirmed that the legally required facilities for the PWDs have been removed, altered or obstructed by illegal building works, the BD will take enforcement actions. Also, the BD will keep in touch with some

non-government organisations (NGOs) (such as the Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong, the Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Disabled Hong Kong and Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped Youth, etc.) and conduct investigation and release reports on the matters concerned;

- (e) the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD) will continue to raise awareness on the design and construction of accessible facilities. A research study on “Universal Accessibility – Best Practices and Guidelines” had been promulgated to various government departments, construction industry, and other stakeholders in Hong Kong. The department also participates in local and international conferences for knowledge sharing and to keep abreast of the latest developments and technologies in accessibility;
- (f) all new public building projects are designed and constructed to meet the statutory barrier free requirements, and wherever practicable, to achieve standards beyond those that are legally required;
- (g) the ArchSD will continue to implement current and upcoming barrier free access improvement projects as follows:
 - (i) carrying out improvement projects for targeted government buildings on the recommendations of the Sub-committee on Access of the RAC on yearly basis;
 - (ii) carrying out modification projects to improve accessibility of public clinics in collaboration with the DH; and
 - (iii) carrying out modification projects to improve accessibility of major tourist spots in collaboration with the Tourism Commission;
- (h) apart from the above listed projects, the ArchSD would initiate other barrier free access improvement projects, study and carry out access improvement works as far as practicable during renovation and alteration/addition projects as an on-going improvement measure.

19. To further promote and implement the policy of “Transport for All”, the Transport Department (TD) will take forward relevant measures as follows:

- (a) continuing to collect views of persons with disabilities and rehabilitation agencies on “Transport for All” and the provision of transport facilities through regular meetings with groups of persons with disabilities;

- (b) preparing draft standards on the provision of push bell device in green minibuses and facilities for persons with disabilities for frontage access with heavy vehicular traffic;
- (c) having produced a new series of radio APIs on “Transport for All” which will be broadcasted in all major local radio stations, with a view to raising the awareness of “Transport for All” among members of the public and various sectors of the community;
- (d) apart from staging an exhibition on “Transport for All” in 2007, continuing to render support and assistance to rehabilitation agencies to produce education materials on “Transport for All” and to conduct school visits, so as to further increase the awareness of “Transport for All” and its importance among the young generation;
- (e) in August 2007, a taxi operator introduced a type of wheelchair-accessible taxi driven by petrol-electric hybrid. The TD will make continuous efforts in facilitating automobile agents and taxi trade to further introduce other types of vehicles suitable for use as wheelchair-accessible taxi for persons with disabilities in Hong Kong;
- (f) it is envisaged that a total of 90 low-floor buses will be acquired by the franchised bus companies in the coming five years;
- (g) sustained efforts are made to encourage public transport operators to take initiatives to enhance their access-free facilities for persons with disabilities. Among these initiatives are the feasibility study on retrofitting automatic platform gates at its at-grade stations conducted by the MTR Corporation and a system of “Intelligent Platform Extension System” to be piloted at Lo Wu station by the KCRC in 2008 for resolving the problems concerning platform gaps;
- (h) apart from the provision of access-free facilities at the newly-built public transport interchanges (PTIs), facilities enhancement works are also to be conducted in 2007 to 2008 at 50 earlier-built PTIs for the convenience of the persons with disabilities; and
- (i) it is envisaged that the installation of warning tiles at the traffic centre islands will be completed before 2009.

Application of Information and Communication Technology

20. The Government is committed to building a digitally inclusive society in Hong Kong so that different sectors of the community can enjoy the benefits brought about by the advancement of information and communication technology (ICT). The government aims to help citizens, including persons with disabilities, acquire the necessary skills and provide them with the ICT facilities to participate in the information society.

21. The concerned government departments have put in place various measures, including, among others, sponsorship for digital inclusion projects, promotion of web accessibility and provision of assistive devices for accessing computer facilities and Internet to achieve the dual objectives of raising the persons with disabilities' ICT awareness and promoting the wider use of ICT to enhance their employability and enrich their lives.

Recreational, Sports, Cultural and Arts Activities

22. The Government has been committed to promoting the participation of the persons with disabilities in recreational, sports, cultural and arts activities with a view to improving their quality of life, giving them opportunities to develop their potentials as well as facilitating their full integration into the community.

23. Regarding the cultural, recreational and sports facilities, all venues under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) built after 1997 are in compliance with the design and facility requirements of the *Design Manual: Barrier Free Access 1997* issued by the Buildings Department. For venues built before 1997, improvements for compliance with the requirements of the Manual will be carried out in future renovation or alteration works so far as the geographical environment, architectural conditions, technologies and resources permit. At present, nearly 90% of the existing cultural, recreational and sports venues under LCSD are access free to facilitate the use of the venues by persons with disabilities.

24. The requirements of the Manual will also be adhered to in the future planning of facilities in new venues. The LCSD will continue to be proactive in improving the existing facilities of venues, including 21 cultural venues and 33 leisure venues to be improved from 2007 to 2010, to better suit the needs of persons with disabilities and to facilitate their use of the facilities. For example, to tie in with the 2009 East Asian Games, renovation works will be carried out at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium and Hong Kong Coliseum in 2008. The facilities

such as the number of wheelchair spaces and related accessory facilities for persons with disabilities will be increased and upgraded. In the public libraries, performing venues and museums managed by the LCS D, appropriate devices and equipment are provided for persons with visual impairment and hearing impairment to use the facilities and enjoy the performances. Special guided tours are also offered to persons with disabilities, and the frontline staff will render appropriate assistance to them as required.

25. As regards cultural and recreational activities, LCS D has always given consideration to and catered for the needs of persons with disabilities, making its activities and services as accessible to them as to those without disabilities. To promote greater participation in cultural and recreational activities among persons with disabilities, the government departments concerned have specially developed a number of initiatives as follows:

- (a) following the success of the International Festival of Inclusive Arts (the Festival) held last year, the LWB will continue to collaborate in partnership with the co-organisers of the Festival in sustaining the effort of promoting the message of inclusion through arts activities. The LWB will also undertake to offer financial support to relevant community and non-governmental organisations, including the Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong, in the promotion of a variety of arts activities including workshops, exhibitions and the staging of local and overseas performances, etc. Apart from enriching the experiences of stage performances and exhibitions of persons with disabilities and honing their artistic and performing skills, these activities can also serve to enable the public to appreciate their performances and the value of inclusion;
- (b) “Jockey Club Arts for the Disabled Scheme” will continue to join hands with the rehabilitation agencies, arts bodies and special schools in the provision of a variety of basic arts training, specific training led by trainers and performing/exhibition opportunities to persons with disabilities so that they can demonstrate their talents of creativity and potentials in the areas of culture and arts. A training manual covering a variety of visual and performing arts will be issued in late 2007 for trainers’ reference and application purpose;
- (c) the LCS D will continue to promote the participation of the persons with disabilities in cultural, recreational and sports activities through its audience building programmes and various recreational and sports activities. Meanwhile, the LCS D has been committed to widely disseminating the message of exercising and health to special schools, sheltered workshops, rehabilitation centres and participants of the

“Outreaching Fitness Programme for Persons with a Disability” to encourage the persons with disabilities to make a habit of frequently doing exercise in order to stay and become healthier. In addition, the LCSD has further improved the “School Sports Programme” by designing a set of indicators for an Award Scheme specially for special school students to encourage their continuous participation in sports activities;

- (d) the LCSD will also cooperate with art groups of persons with disabilities or rehabilitation agencies to organise performances, workshops or exhibitions with a view to giving the persons with disabilities opportunities to develop their artistic potential. In parallel with such efforts, the LCSD will, when formulating the year plan on recreational and sports activities, work in collaboration with the relevant agencies providing services for persons with disabilities so as to design a wide variety of recreational and sports activities that meet the various needs of the persons with disabilities. The LCSD will organise 1 014 free tailor-made recreational and sports activities for the persons with disabilities in 2007/08 and the estimated number of participants would reach 61 800;
- (e) persons with disabilities and their minders (on one-to-one basis) can purchase tickets to performing arts or various cultural, sports and recreational programmes organised for the public by the LCSD at half-price concessionary rate. Such concession also extends to the charges for booking facilities provided by the LCSD; and
- (f) the LCSD will continue to provide subventions to national sports associations (NSAs) for persons with disabilities to organise various free sports and recreation activities generally for persons with disabilities, so as to enhance their physical, mental and social development.

26. To encourage and support athletes and/or artists with disabilities and have potential, the HAB, LCSD, SWD and Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), through various financial provisions and subventions, provide support to NSAs for persons with disabilities, Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) and local athletes with or without disabilities, and artists and art groups, with a view to nurturing more artists and athletes with disabilities who have the potentials through promotion and training. Also, the HKSI has been actively planning for the redevelopment project of the HKSI and its facilities, aiming to provide better multi-purpose training venues and facilities for elite athletes, including elite athletes with disabilities.

27. With regard to the training for trainers and staff of recreational, sports, cultural and arts activities, at present, all staff working in LCSD venues have received training to provide the public, including persons with disabilities, with services of top quality. Frontline staff will provide persons with disabilities with suitable assistance to cater for their needs. LCSD will continue to organise relevant training programmes for staff and approach organisations serving for persons with disabilities to understand specifically the needs of various kinds of persons with disabilities. In addition, training programmes will be strengthened to enhance staff's knowledge and awareness of equal opportunities, deepen their understanding of the needs of persons with disabilities, and sharpen their abilities to communicate with persons with disabilities. These include, for example, training on "sign language" and courses on "communicating with the blind". LCSD will also encourage sports organisations to incorporate courses into their train-the-trainer programmes to educate trainees on the special needs of persons with disabilities who participate in recreational and sports activities.

Public Education

28. The RAC Subcommittee on Public Education on Rehabilitation has diligently followed the directions stipulated in the RPP to step up the publicity efforts and encourage cross-sector participation in promoting social inclusion and integration of the persons with disabilities. Activities include –

- (a) the abovementioned subcommittee has decided to adopt "work towards an inclusive and barrier-free society for persons with disabilities" as the theme for the 2007/08 public education programme. The LWB have increased the funding allocation to step up the publicity efforts;
- (b) The LWB will continue to organize the Mental Health Month in October this year with over 20 non-governmental organizations and the mass media. Activities that are underway/completed include –
 - (i) production of a half-hour TV Special on mental health;
 - (ii) arranging psychiatrists to appear in TV programmes for public consultations; and
 - (iii) organizing insomnia and stress management mental health workshops;
- (c) the LWB is organizing a prize-awarding scheme - "Caring Environment Recognition Scheme" during the latter half of 2007 jointly with the

Hong Kong Joint Council for People with Disabilities, the Hong Kong Council of Social Services and the 18 District Councils. The scheme aims to encourage the business sector to provide proper “barrier-free” access and appropriate facilities in buildings by giving recognition to buildings providing exemplary barrier-free access and facilities to persons with disabilities. The scheme promotes the importance of “barrier-free” for persons with disabilities;

- (d) the LWB will produce TV APIs to step up the scale of propaganda on mental health and barrier free and to raise public awareness and acceptance of persons with disabilities by leveraging on the mass media;
- (e) the subcommittee will reinforce parents’ understanding of AD/HD and SpLD by means of publicity. The subcommittee has included the subject in the publicity items for 2008/09 Public Education on Rehabilitation; and
- (f) the subcommittee is considering ways to step up the coordination with the non-profit organizations and the marketplace for the promotion of social inclusion and integration of the persons with disabilities.

Other Issues of Concern

Specific Learning Difficulties and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

29. On the inclusion of SpLD and AD/HD into the new RPP, relevant departments will continue and plan to implement the following measures:

- (a) students with SpLD and AD/HD have been a target group supported through Integrated Education implemented by the EDB. Relevant authority will continue to carry out related measures towards this direction;
- (b) subject to compliance with the eligibility conditions, persons with SpLD and AD/HD may apply for various rehabilitation services provided by the Government, such as pre-school training and vocational rehabilitation; and
- (c) relevant departments have also planned to enhance training for the staff providing relevant rehabilitation services so as to sharpen their understanding of the needs of persons with SpLD and AD/HD. The LWB and the RAC Sub-committee on Public Education on

Rehabilitation have included publicity of the subject among their publicity items for public education in 2008/09.

“International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health” (ICF)

30. RAC will set up a working group to study overseas experiences of implementing this classification and explore its feasibility in Hong Kong.

Mental Health

31. The Food and Health Bureau will take the lead to collaborate with all relevant sectors and personalities for implementing a sustainable mental health strategy. Regular liaison meetings will be held by the HA with the social welfare sector and the SWD to discuss the provision of mental health services.

Standardisation of Sign Language

32. RAC will set up a working group to study the issue and explore its feasibility.

Implementation of RPP

33. On 11 September 2007, the RAC discussed on how to implement the recommendations of the new RPP through cross-sectoral collaboration and formulated concrete promotion strategies and follow-up measures in this regard. The strategies are outlined below:

- (a) through the Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Disabled, to mobilise active participation of the rehabilitation sector in cross-sectoral collaboration to empower persons with disabilities and their carers, and to turn them into social capitals for the purpose of implementing the recommendations;
- (b) the RAC will join hands with other relevant government departments and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service to proactively promote the initiatives of the RPP among the business sector through a series of incentives and different channels and to solicit their support for and participation in the implementation of the recommendations. In parallel, one-stop information and support service will be strengthened

to facilitate employment of the persons with disabilities by the business sector as well as their integration into the community;

- (c) to actively solicit support and cooperation from District Councils and NGOs in jointly promoting inclusiveness in various aspects of community and social services; and
- (d) to liaise with the government policy advisory boards and committees, bureaux and departments, with a view to making a concerted effort to promote the concept of “Society for All”, appealing to them for taking into consideration the needs of persons with disabilities in the course of policy formulation and review, and exploring the opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.

34. The RAC has also worked out the specific follow-up measures on the basis of the above strategies and targeted at 760 NGOs, business and trade organisations, community organisations, policy advisory boards and committees and government departments for purposive lobbying and wide publicity.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
September 2007