



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部食物及衛生局
Food and Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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27 June 2008

Clerk to Public Works Subcommittee
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road, Central
Hong Kong
(Attn: Ms Angel SHEK)

By Fax : 2869 6794

Dear Ms SHEK,

**Public Works Subcommittee
Follow-up to meeting on 4 June 2008**

I refer to your letter of 6 June 2008 and set out below the supplementary information regarding PWSC(2008-09)23 as requested by members.

(a) *Number and types of beds in Tseung Kwan O Hospital (TKOH) which are not yet made available for in-patient services*

TKOH was planned to provide a total of 458 in-patient beds when it was built. Its beds come into operation by phases from the end of 1999 to meet service demand and a total of 377 beds have been opened, providing in-patient services for various specialties such as medicine, surgery, gynaecology, paediatrics and orthopaedics and traumatology. In the past three years, the average bed occupancy rate of TKOH was 83%, which was comparable to that of other public acute hospitals.

The remaining 81 beds of TKOH which have not yet been made available for in-patient services are mainly from the obstetric ward, special care baby unit,

paediatric ward and special class ward. In order to utilize resources efficiently, TKOH has made use of the wards originally intended for obstetric and paediatric services to provide a range of clinical support services, including medical in-patient services, paediatric milk formulation, nasopharyngeal tests, training for nurses as well as temporary beds when necessary (e.g. during renovation or decanting of hospital wards). In addition, one of TKOH's wards has been converted to serve as an infection control ward with negative pressure for emergency use in the event of a major outbreak of influenza and idiopathic infectious diseases. As for the special class ward and the special care baby unit (SCBU) of TKOH, they have been temporarily used for administrative office and storage respectively given the change in service demand and that obstetric wards are not yet in operation.

(b) Resources required for providing obstetric services in TKOH, including requirements for medical staff

To ensure safety and efficiency, the provision of obstetric services in TKOH must be operated in close linkage with related services, such as paediatric support, SCBU, neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), operating theatre support for labour wards and other related laboratory and allied health support. The Hospital Authority (HA) estimates that upon full commissioning and operation of the obstetrics facilities in TKOH, the total annual costs required to provide the obstetric services would be about \$144 million per year, which takes account of the manpower requirement of a total of 28 doctors. Meanwhile, the total non-recurrent costs for providing the necessary furniture and equipment for SCBU, NICU, labour and delivery operating theatre, antenatal and postnatal ward are estimated at \$60 million.

(c) Comparison of the number of newborns in different districts and the provision of obstetric services in the respective public hospitals

A direct comparison of number of births in various districts and the provision of obstetric service in respective hospitals is not relevant as patients can receive hospital services in other districts outside their own residential districts and cross-cluster utilization of services is rather common. Instead, the number of live births in various hospitals under HA in 2007 and the number of obstetric beds in each hospital cluster are provided below.

Cluster	Hospital	Number of live births	Number of obstetric beds in the cluster
Hong Kong East	Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital	3 830	67
Hong Kong West	Queen Mary Hospital	4 229	79

Cluster	Hospital	Number of live births	Number of obstetric beds in the cluster
Kowloon Central	Queen Elizabeth Hospital	5 842	130
Kowloon East	United Christian Hospital	4 739	82
Kowloon West	Kwong Wah Hospital	5 378	226
	Princess Margaret Hospital	4 259	
New Territories East	Prince of Wales Hospital	6 035	130
New Territories West	Tuen Mun Hospital	5 389	70
Total:		39 701	784

- (d) *Figures on the annual number of newborns in the Tseung Kwan O (TKO) district in the past ten years, the expected timing for the number of newborns to reach the threshold for provision of obstetric services at TKOH and the lead time required to prepare for provision of obstetric services in TKOH*

HA has no data on the numbers of births in public hospitals from 1998 to 2001. From 2002 to 2007, the number of live births in public hospitals given by local mothers with reported residence in TKO are listed below:

Year	No. of live births*
2002	1 564
2003	1 378
2004	1 546
2005	1 541
2006	1 632
2007	1 665

* The number excludes those live births given by non-local women.

Based on the information available in HA system and the population projection by the Planning Department, HA can only provide projection of the number of births in public hospitals by mothers up to 2016. The projected number of live births in public hospitals given by local mothers with reported residence in Sai Kung District (including TKO Area) in 2016 is estimated to be 2 485.

The estimated lead time required to prepare for provision of obstetric services in TKOH is 2 to 3 years. This takes account of the lead time required for training obstetricians and midwives to operate the new service in the hospital, having regard to the present manpower situation in the territory.

Future planning for services provision in the whole Kowloon East Hospital Cluster

As regards the future planning for services provision in the whole Kowloon East Hospital Cluster (KE Cluster), the KE Cluster, like other hospital clusters, regularly reviews its services having regard to the demographic changes, increase in service demand and service utilization within the area, while mapping out the plans for provision of facilities and services based on future needs. The KE Cluster is drawing up the preliminary expansion plan of the United Christian Hospital. The HA Head Office will, in accordance with its established procedures, examine the project proposal before submitting it to the Government for consideration. At the present stage, the details as well as the expected commencement and completion dates of the project are not yet available.

Besides, the KE Cluster has already made plans for the redevelopment of the Haven of Hope Hospital. The redevelopment project mainly involves reprovisioning the existing infirmary wards and setting up the Day Medical and Rehabilitation Centre. HA and the Government will proceed with the relevant work in accordance with the established mechanism.

Views of Sai Kung District Council

HA has consulted the Sai Kung District Council (SKDC) on 4 March 2008 on the proposed expansion of TKOH. Members of the SKDC supported the proposed project. As regards the views of the SKDC on the provision of services at TKOH, we have provided response in a reply letter dated 10 June 2008 to the Complaints Office of the Legislative Council (LegCo). We will also attend a case conference to be held on 2 July 2008 to further discuss the issues with Members of LegCo and SKDC.

Yours sincerely,



(Miss Almaz LEUNG)
for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c. Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury (Attn: Mr Jack CHAN)
Chief Executive / Hospital Authority (Attn: Dr W L CHEUNG, Dr C C LUK)