

**Replies to supplementary questions raised by  
Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10**

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare  
Session No. : 16**

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

The resources, road map, time frames and implementation criteria for taking forward the recommendations of the former Commission on Poverty (CoP).

Asked by : Hon. FUNG Kin-kee, Frederick

Reply :

With the conclusion of the work of the former CoP, an inter-bureau/department Task Force on Poverty (Task Force) was formed within the Government. The Task Force is chaired by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare with senior officials from the relevant bureaux/departments as members. One of the key tasks of the Task Force is to monitor the progress of implementation of the recommendations of the former CoP. Some of these recommendations have been implemented (e.g. the Transport Support Scheme, the Child Development Fund (CDF), the Home Improvement Scheme for the Elderly, the Pilot Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project, one-stop shop training/employment pilot etc.), while concrete implementation plans have been formulated for others (e.g. the Employees Retraining Board to further increase the number of training places). A progress report on the implementation of the former CoP recommendations was uploaded on the website of the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) in September 2008. We will report to the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services on further progress in the next few months.

On resources required, the relevant bureaux/departments are responsible for implementing recommendations under their purview, and the Task Force is supported by the Poverty Team under LWB. Apart from supporting the Task Force, the Poverty Team is also responsible for overseeing/implementing initiatives on poverty alleviation (e.g. CDF, short-term food assistance etc). The provision in the 2009-10 Draft Estimate for the Poverty Team is \$3.93 million, which covers the cost for six staff comprising two Administrative Officers, one Executive Officer, two secretarial and clerical supporting staff as well as one contract executive staff.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	PAUL TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	31.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (3) Women's Interests

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Please provide the details of measures, such as training programmes, to promote gender mainstreaming among the civil service, particularly in the upper echelon.

Asked by : Hon. HO Sau-lan, Cyd

Reply :

To facilitate the incorporation of women's needs and perspectives into the process of policy making, the Administration has, on the advice and with the assistance of the Women's Commission (WoC), implemented gender mainstreaming since 2002. The WoC has developed the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist (the Checklist), an analytical tool to assist government officials in incorporating, in a more systematic way, the gender needs and perspectives into the policy formulation and programme development processes, so that women and men will have equitable access to, and benefit from, society's resources and opportunities. We have to date applied the Checklist to 30 specific policy or programme areas which are of relevance to women. The full list is set out in our replies to earlier questions by Members, with serial numbers LWB(WW)014, 019, 027, 033 and 047.

Apart from adopting the Checklist, staff of many bureaux and departments have also applied the gender mainstreaming concept in the course of their daily work, taking into account the needs and perspectives of both genders. Please refer to the above replies for a number of such examples.

For gender mainstreaming to become an integral part of the policy-formulation and service delivery process, it is crucial to first develop a better understanding and awareness of the concept across the civil service. To facilitate the promotion of gender mainstreaming in the Government, we have since 2003 set up a network of Gender Focal Points (GFPs) in all bureaux and departments. The GFPs, who are directorate officers in most cases, serve as the resource person for their respective bureaux and departments and as the liaison points in implementing gender mainstreaming. They also assist in raising awareness and understanding of gender-related issues of the officers in their respective organisations. We meet with the GFPs from time to time and the last meeting was held in August 2008 when the GFPs offered useful advice on the strategy to further promote gender mainstreaming within the Government.

On the advice of the GFPs, we have developed a web-portal and produced an information leaflet on gender mainstreaming for reference by all civil servants. The web-portal serves as a resource and experience-sharing platform to help intensify understanding of the concept for all civil servants. It comprises information about the concept and application of gender mainstreaming, hyperlinks to useful websites and sets out nearly 40 examples of different policy or programme areas that have applied gender mainstreaming which the GFPs have helped collect and compile. The web-portal was launched and the leaflet was distributed to all civil servants in January 2009. We have also arranged to distribute the leaflet to Legislative Council Members on 27 March 2009. A training course on gender mainstreaming and gender-related issues is being developed and will be launched on the web-portal in due course for reference by all civil servants.

Following the advice of the GFPs, the Labour and Welfare Bureau has continued with the on-going efforts to provide training to different levels of civil servants, from senior officials involved in the formulation of policies to frontline civil servants involved in service delivery, to raise their awareness of gender-related issues and the concept of gender mainstreaming. To date, over 4 000 civil servants of various grades and ranks have attended various classroom gender-related training.

In September 2005, we arranged a briefing on gender mainstreaming for all Principal Officials and Heads of Departments and invited all LegCo Members and their assistants to a similar briefing in November 2005. These briefings will be repeated as deemed necessary. A training workshop for the GFPs themselves was also organised in January 2009. We have also through the GFPs encouraged bureaux and departments to incorporate gender-related training in their regular training programmes for their staff where appropriate. On the advice of the GFPs, we have collaborated with bureaux and departments to arrange tailor-made programmes or train-the-trainers sessions for their staff. These efforts will continue.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	PAUL TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	31.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme :

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

Please provide the number of job opportunities to be created as a result of improvement in social welfare services under the Labour and Welfare Bureau.

Asked by : Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply :

In 2009-10, there will be a net increase of 88 additional civil service posts, including 21 posts on time-limited basis, in the Social Welfare Department (SWD) as a result of improvement in social welfare and social security services. Details of the 88 posts are as follows:

Service areas	Net increase in number and type(s) of posts	Purpose
(a) Family and Child Welfare	14 posts in the Social Work Officer and Clinical Psychologist grades	To enhance frontline support in handling domestic violence cases, provide treatment and support to victims of domestic violence and further develop the batterer intervention programme.
(b) Social Security	58 posts in the Social Security Officer, Social Security Assistant, Statistician, Statistical Officer, Census and Survey Officer, Analyst/Programmer, Official Languages Officer and Clerical Officer grades	(i) To support the implementation of the employment assistance projects for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients; (ii) To support the replacement of the Computerised Social Security System; and (iii) To conduct a Household Expenditure Survey on CSSA households.

Service areas	Net increase in number and type(s) of posts	Purpose
(c) Services for Elders	Two posts in the Social Work Officer grade	To assist in the tendering and monitoring of contract services for the elderly, including contract residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) and community care services.
(d) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services	Ten posts in the Social Work Officer grade	To enhance the medical social services for the rehabilitation of persons with mental health and oncology problems.
(e) Services for Offenders	Four posts in the Social Work Officer grade	To enhance the probation service for convicted young drug offenders on a pilot basis.

In 2009-10, an additional 642 subsidised residential care places will come on stream. These places will be provided through two newly built contract RCHEs and the purchase of places from private RCHEs under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme (EBPS). Operators of these RCHEs are subject to staffing requirements stipulated in their respective service contracts/agreements with the SWD for the provision of the subsidised residential care places. It is, however, difficult to provide the exact number of job opportunities to be created as the number will vary according to different factors such as the number of private RCHEs participating in the purchase exercise under EBPS for the first time as well as the existing manpower provision of these RCHEs. Based on past experience, our rough estimate is that the provision of these additional places can create approximately 440 job opportunities, including social workers, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, care workers and other supporting staff, etc.

We also expect additional job opportunities to be created in 2009-10 in service centres/units operated by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private operators through additional Government subventions/funding for the enhanced provision of subsidised welfare services, including :

- (a) the provision of an additional 671 residential care places, 480 day and vocational rehabilitation training places and 354 pre-school rehabilitation services places for persons with disabilities;
- (b) the provision of an additional 80 day care places in day care centres/units for the elderly;
- (c) the provision of about \$7 million for strengthening the manpower of the Family Crisis Support Centre, the Suicide Crisis Intervention Centre, the four Refuge Centres for Women, and the Po Leung Kuk New Comers Ward to provide timely support to victims of domestic violence and vulnerable families, children in need and survivors of suicide; and

- (d) the strengthening of support for infirm and demented elders staying in subsidised residential care places in subvented/contract homes and private RCHEs participating in EBPS through an additional recurrent provision of \$37 million as Infirm Care Supplement and Dementia Supplement. The additional funding will enable the concerned RCHEs to employ additional staff to enhance the care for infirm and demented elders.

For (a) to (c), the NGOs operating subvented services are funded under the Lump Sum Grant subvention system (LSGSS). Under the LSGSS, the SWD no longer imposes input controls on the subvented NGOs in terms of staffing structures, levels of pay and individual items of expenditure. NGOs have the flexibility to deploy their LSG, insofar as the expenses are within the confines of the Funding and Service Agreements. As NGOs have the flexibility to deploy the subvention to arrange suitable staffing to ensure service quality and meet service needs, we are not in a position to estimate the number of new jobs created as a result of these service enhancements through the NGOs.

For (d), as the concerned RCHE operators have the flexibility to deploy the additional subventions/funding for employing additional staff or purchasing professional services, we are not in a position to estimate the number of new jobs created through this initiative.

We will also make the best use of various Government Funds under our purview, including the Lotteries Fund, Community Investment and Inclusion Fund, Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged and Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise, to support NGOs in enhancing their services or launching projects. As NGOs have the flexibility to deploy the allocated funding to arrange suitable staffing to ensure service quality and meet service needs, we are not in a position to estimate the number of new jobs created as a result of these new projects.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	PAUL TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	31.3.2009



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

What is the expenditure for the study about the preference of old age home residents in receiving end-of-life care over the past few years?

Asked by : Hon. TONG Ka-wah, Ronny

Reply :

The consultancy study about the preference of old age home residents in receiving end-of-life care was awarded at an amount of \$761,000 in 2007. The study is still under way.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<b>PAUL TANG</b>
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	31.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : Regarding the review on the permissible limit of absence from Hong Kong under the Old Age Allowance, when did the Government commence the review? When is the review expected to be completed?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : The Government commenced the review on the permissible limit of absence from Hong Kong under the Old Age Allowance in 2008. We expect to complete the review within the second quarter of this year.

Signature

Name in block letters

PAUL TANG

Post Title

Permanent Secretary  
for Labour and Welfare

Date

31.3.2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : Would the Administration please provide the respective numbers of persons with disabilities (PWDs) waiting for admission to hostels for mentally handicapped persons, hostels for severely physically handicapped persons and care and attention homes for severely disabled persons? In the past five years, how many PWDs were put on the priority waiting list to these hostels/homes due to special circumstances? What was the average waiting time for these special cases?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Kwok-che

Reply : (a) The waiting lists for the residential services concerned as at December 2008 are as follows:

Type of Service	No. of PWDs on the Waiting List
Hostel for Moderately Mentally Handicapped Persons (HMMH)	1 351
Hostel for Severely Mentally Handicapped Persons (HSMH)	1 892
Hostel for Severely Physically Handicapped Persons (HSPH)	414
Care and Attention Home for Severely Disabled Persons (C&A/SD)	377
Supported Hostel (SHOS)	784

(b) The numbers of applications for priority waiting list for these residential services from 2004-05 to 2008-09 (up to February 2009) and their average waiting time are as follows:

Type of Service	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09 (up to February 2009)	
	Priority waiting list Note 1	Average waiting time (months) Note 2	Priority waiting list Note 1	Average waiting time (months) Note 2	Priority waiting list Note 1	Average waiting time (months) Note 2	Priority waiting list Note 1	Average waiting time (months) Note 2	Priority waiting list Note 1	Average waiting time (months) Note 2
HMMH	19	6.4	35	5.3	17	4.7	27	3.4	30	4.0
HSMH	59	7.9	47	5.0	32	6.2	41	6.6	57	7.6
HSPH	6	7.0	2	27.0	8	Note 3	3	3.0	9	24.5
C&A/SD	19	6.8	14	5.9	17	5.9	15	3.3	12	3.2
SHOS	9	5.6	11	2.8	9	5.3	11	4.5	11	3.1

Note 1 Application for priority waiting list approved in the year.

Note 2 Average waiting time for priority waiting list cases admitted in the year.

Note 3 No admission in 2006-07 due to the lack of vacancies (turn-over and new provision) in the year.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Stephen Fisher

Director of Social Welfare

30 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : It is stated in the reply numbered LWB(WW)084 that the expenditure incurred by the Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness (ICCMW) in Tin Shui Wai is \$3.9 million. When will the Administration evaluate the effectiveness of the centre?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Kwok-che

Reply : The Social Welfare Department will evaluate the effectiveness of the new service delivery mode with the non-governmental organisation operator of the ICCMW one year after the commencement of service in March 2009.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	30 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders  
(4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :What is the natural wastage rate of the hostels for severely physically handicapped persons and residential care homes for the elderly?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Kwok-che

Reply : The numbers of discharged cases of the hostels for severely physically handicapped persons and care-and-attention homes for severely disabled persons were 6 and 24 respectively in 2008.

As regards residential care services for the elderly, a total of 3 905 elders were discharged from various types of subsidised residential care homes for the elderly (including self-care hostels, homes for the aged, care-and-attention homes and nursing homes) in 2008.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : All

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : It is stated in the reply numbered LWB(WW)152 that 31 complaints on the Lump Sum Grant (LSG) subvention system have been received by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) during the past three years. How many of them required SWD's investigation? What were the investigation results of the cases? It is also stated that the LSG can be withheld or terminated. Has SWD ever imposed such a penalty? If not, what are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. IP Wai-ming

Reply : SWD investigated all the 31 alleged complaints about the LSG subvention system. Of the 31 complaints, 25 were unsubstantiated, four were partially substantiated, one was withdrawn by the complainant and one could not be pursued because the complainants have not provided full contact details. For the four partially substantiated complaints, as the NGOs concerned readily rectified the acts of non-compliance in accordance with SWD's advice, there was no need for SWD to impose any penalty.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Stephen Fisher

Director of Social Welfare

30 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : Regarding the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme, it is stated in the reply numbered LWB(WW)238 that in 2008, the number of CSSA households accounted for more than 40% of the total households in Hin Keng Estate, Fu Heng Estate, King Lam Estate, Pok Hong Estate, Wan Tau Tong Estate and Wah Ming Estate. What are the reasons? Does the Administration have any special measures to help the residents of the above public housing estates?

Asked by : Hon. IP Wai-ming

Reply : The CSSA Scheme provides financial assistance to help individuals and families to meet their basic needs. It takes special care of children, the elderly, the disabled and the ill-health through the provision of higher standard rates and various special grants. For school children, there are special grants to cover school fees, transport fares to and from schools, examination fees and meal allowance, etc. For the elderly, the disabled and the ill-health, there are special grants to cover the costs of glasses, dental treatment, removal expenses, transport fares to and from hospital/clinic, medically-recommended diet and appliances. Moreover, there are employment assistance projects including the Integrated Employment Assistance Scheme, the Enhanced New Dawn Project and the Special Training and Enhancement Programme which assist able-bodied CSSA recipients to move towards self-reliance.

CSSA is not the only source of assistance for those in need. At the district level, a full range of social services are provided by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and other government departments as well as non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, SWD's district planning mechanism helps to coordinate the provision of social services and the mobilisation of community resources to address specific district needs and problems.



We have not conducted any study on the reasons for a higher percentage of households receiving CSSA in specific public housing estates.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	30 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders  
(4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : What are the job opportunities to be created as a result of the increase in places of residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) and the disabled in 2009-10?

Asked by : Hon. IP Wai-ming

Reply : As far as residential care places for the elderly are concerned, an additional 642 subsidised residential care places will come on stream in 2009-10. These places will be provided through two newly built contract RCHEs and the purchase of places from private RCHEs under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme (EBPS). Operators of these RCHEs are subject to staffing requirements stipulated in their respective service contracts/agreements with the Social Welfare Department for the provision of the subsidised residential care places. It is, however, difficult to provide the exact number of job opportunities to be created as the number will vary according to different factors such as the number of private RCHEs participating in the purchase exercise under EBPS for the first time as well as the existing manpower provision of these RCHEs. Based on past experience, our rough estimate is that the provision of these additional places can create approximately 440 job opportunities, including social workers, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, care workers and other supporting staff, etc.

For rehabilitation services, in 2009-10, an additional 671 residential care places and 480 day and vocational rehabilitation training places matching with the residential care services will be provided through six new/in-situ expansion projects. While additional job opportunities will be created as a result of the provision of additional rehabilitation services places for the persons with disabilities (PWDs), under the Lump Sum Grant subvention system, the non-governmental organisation operators have the flexibility to deploy the allocated provision to arrange suitable staffing to ensure service quality and

meet service needs. We are therefore not in a position to estimate the number of jobs created as a result of the increase in residential places for the PWDs.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : Would the Administration seriously consider converting places under the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project (NSCCP) into formal jobs to create employment opportunities for stay home mothers?

Asked by : Hon. LEE Wing-tat

Reply : The NSCCP is not an employment-oriented scheme. As the Financial Secretary pointed out in his Budget Speech, the NSCCP aims to provide parents in need with more flexible child care services in addition to the regular ones and at the same time promote community participation and mutual assistance in the neighbourhood.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : What are the provisions in 2009-10 earmarked for publicity and public education to enhance public awareness of the domestic violence problem?

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply : In 2009-10, \$5 million will be allocated for publicity and public education to enhance public awareness of the domestic violence problem.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen Fisher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Social Welfare

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31 March 2009

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2009-10  
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

**S-LWB(WW)14**

Question Serial No.

**SV027**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : What is the rationale behind the increase of 56% in the estimated annual expenditure for the provision of the Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (EHCCS) in 2009-10 as compared with 2008-09?

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply : The increase in the estimated annual expenditure for the provision of EHCCS in 2009-10 as compared with the Revised Estimate in 2008-09 is mainly due to:

- (a) the additional provision for the 810 EHCCS places created since December 2008. The full-year financial implications of these additional places can only be reflected in 2009-10; and
- (b) the upward price adjustment of service fees according to the contracts with the service operators.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : What are the performance indicators for the Support for Self-reliance Scheme, the Enhanced New Dawn (ND) Project and the Special Training and Enhancement Programme (My STEP) in 2008-09?

Asked by : Hon. TONG Ka-wah, Ronny

Reply : In 2008-09, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has launched various employment assistance projects to help able-bodied Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients move towards self-reliance. These include the Integrated Employment Assistance Scheme (IEAS), My STEP, and the Enhanced ND Project. The performance targets of these projects are as follows:

IEAS

The 60 IEAS projects provide employment assistance services to unemployed able-bodied CSSA recipients. Each project has to serve an average of about 530 participants. An IEAS operator has to provide participants with employment assistance services. Furthermore, 65 to 70 participants are selected to receive more intensive employment assistance services.

Each IEAS operator is expected to assist at least 20% of the participants to secure and sustain full-time paid employment for three months. For participants who have received intensive employment assistance, the target is at least 40% will be able to secure full-time paid employment for one month and at least 30% to sustain employment for three months.

## My STEP

My STEP is a trial employment assistance programme which seeks to motivate and assist long-term CSSA able-bodied unemployed youth aged between 15 and 29 to rejoin the workforce.

The four projects of My STEP provide employment assistance services to at least 560 target participants. At least 45% of the participants are expected to secure full-time paid employment for at least one month and at least 35% are expected to secure full-time paid employment for at least three months.

## Enhanced ND Project

The Enhanced ND Project helps single parents and child carers who are on CSSA with their youngest child reaching the age of 12 - 14 to build up their capacity for work, integrate into society and move to self-reliance through engagement in paid employment. Each of the 20 Enhanced ND Projects has to provide participants with employment assistance services and to select 300 enrolled participants to receive intensive employment assistance services.

At least 30% of the participants are expected to secure and sustain paid employment for three months. At least 40% of the participants who have received intensive employment assistance services are expected to secure paid employment for one month and at least 30% of them are expected to sustain employment for three months.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009



**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : Regarding the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme, it is stated in the reply numbered LWB(WW)239 that as at January 2009, Yuen Long was the district with the largest number of CSSA unemployed recipients and the second largest number of CSSA low earnings recipients. What are the reasons? Does the Administration have any measures to help the residents of Yuen Long District?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : The CSSA Scheme provides financial assistance to help individuals and families to meet their basic needs. It takes special care of children, the elderly, the disabled and the ill-health through the provision of higher standard rates and various special grants. For school children, there are special grants to cover school fees, transport fares to and from schools, examination fees and meal allowance, etc. For the elderly, the disabled and the ill-health, there are special grants to cover the costs of glasses, dental treatment, removal expenses, transport fares to and from hospital/clinic, medically-recommended diet and appliances. Moreover, there are employment assistance projects including the Integrated Employment Assistance Scheme, the Enhanced New Dawn Project and the Special Training and Enhancement Programme.

CSSA is not the only source of assistance for those in need. At the district level, a full range of social services are provided by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and other government departments as well as non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, SWD's district planning mechanism helps to coordinate the provision of social services and the mobilisation of community resources to address specific district needs and problems.

We have not conducted any study on the reasons for a higher number of unemployed and low earnings recipients on CSSA in Yuen Long. However, we have a large number of employment assistance and community initiatives in Yuen Long to assist able-bodied CSSA recipients to move towards self-reliance.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : Regarding the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme, it is stated in the reply numbered LWB(WW)238 that in 2008, the number of CSSA households accounted for more than 40% of the total households in Kwai Hing Estate and Po Tin Interim Housing. What are the reasons? Does the Administration have any special measures to help the residents of the above public housing estates?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : The CSSA Scheme provides financial assistance to help individuals and families to meet their basic needs. It takes special care of children, the elderly, the disabled and the ill-health through the provision of higher standard rates and various special grants. For school children, there are special grants to cover school fees, transport fares to and from schools, examination fees and meal allowance, etc. For the elderly, the disabled and the ill-health, there are special grants to cover the costs of glasses, dental treatment, removal expenses, transport fares to and from hospital/clinic, medically-recommended diet and appliances. Moreover, there are employment assistance projects including the Integrated Employment Assistance Scheme, the Enhanced New Dawn Project and the Special Training and Enhancement Programme which assist able-bodied CSSA recipients to move towards self-reliance.

CSSA is not the only source of assistance for those in need. At the district level, a full range of social services are provided by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and other government departments as well as non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, SWD's district planning mechanism helps to coordinate the provision of social services and the mobilisation of community resources to address specific district needs and problems.

We have not conducted any study on the reasons for a higher percentage of households receiving CSSA in specific public housing estates.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : It is stated in the reply numbered LWB(WW)225 that the number of places in sheltered workshops (SWs) was reduced by 160 in 2007-08 and remained unchanged in 2008-09, while the number of eligible persons with disabilities waitlisting for admission to sheltered workshops was 2 402 in 2008-09. Why does the Administration not increase the service capacity?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : The Social Welfare Department (SWD) has since April 2004 started to set up Integrated Vocational Rehabilitation Services Centres (IVRSCs), which is an enhanced vocational rehabilitation service mode incorporating the elements of both SW and supported employment. The “reduction” of 160 SW places in 2007-08 quoted in the question was in fact reprovisioned to a new IVRSC in the same year. In 2009-10, SWD plans to provide 320 new IVRSC places and 20 additional SW places through in-situ expansion.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

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Stephen Fisher

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Director of Social Welfare

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31 March 2009

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**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : It is stated in the reply numbered LWB(WW)225 that as at December 2008, the waiting time for admission to hostels for severely and moderately mentally handicapped persons, care and attention homes for severely disabled persons, hostels for severely physically handicapped persons, supported hostels and long stay care homes ranged from 20.4 months to 89.6 months. Given the high service demand and the long waiting time, why does the Administration not increase the service capacity?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : The Administration is mindful of the service demand for residential care services for persons with disabilities (PWDs) and will continue to make our best endeavours to increase the service capacity. In 2008-09 and 2009-10, we will increase the number of residential care places by 439 and 671 respectively. The numbers include a total of 552 additional places for hostels for severely and moderately mentally handicapped persons, 142 additional places for Care and Attention Home for the Severely Disabled, 112 additional places for Hostel for Severely Physically Handicapped Persons, 180 additional places for Supported Hostel, 100 additional places for Long Stay Home and 24 additional places for Small Group Home for Mildly Mentally Handicapped Persons.

The Administration will continue to closely monitor the service demand and as recommended in the Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan, adopts a three-pronged approach to increase the provision, viz:

- (a) To regulate the residential care homes for PWDs so as to ensure their service quality on the one hand while helping the market to develop residential care homes of different types and operational modes on the other;
- (b) To support non-governmental organisations to develop self-financing homes; and
- (c) To continue to steadily increase the number of subsidised residential care homes.

In tandem, we will continue to actively develop day care and community support services so as to provide PWDs with the necessary support and training to facilitate their continuous living at home and full integration into the community.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : Regarding the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme, it is stated in the reply numbered LWB(WW)238 that in 2008, the number of CSSA households accounted for more than 40% of the total households in Chuk Yuen North Estate, Fung Tak Estate, Tak Tin Estate, Tung Tau Estate, Tsui Ping North Estate and Wong Tai Sin Lower (I) Estate. What are the reasons? Does the Administration have any special measures to help the residents of the above public housing estates?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply : The CSSA Scheme provides financial assistance to help individuals and families to meet their basic needs. It takes special care of children, the elderly, the disabled and the ill-health through the provision of higher standard rates and various special grants. For school children, there are special grants to cover school fees, transport fares to and from schools, examination fees and meal allowance, etc. For the elderly, the disabled and the ill-health, there are special grants to cover the costs of glasses, dental treatment, removal expenses, transport fares to and from hospital/clinic, medically-recommended diet and appliances. Moreover, there are employment assistance projects including the Integrated Employment Assistance Scheme, the Enhanced New Dawn Project and the Special Training and Enhancement Programme which assist able-bodied CSSA recipients to move towards self-reliance.

CSSA is not the only source of assistance for those in need. At the district level, a full range of social services are provided by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and other government departments as well as non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, SWD's district planning mechanism helps to coordinate the provision of social services and the mobilisation of community resources to address specific district needs and problems.



We have not conducted any study on the reasons for a higher percentage of households receiving CSSA in specific public housing estates.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	30 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : Although the current enrolment rate of day care centres for the elderly (D/Es) is as high as 110%, the Administration will not increase the number of day care places in 2009-10. Can the existing D/Es meet the excessive demand? How many D/Es in the territory are fully occupied? Will the safety of the elderly persons be affected?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-kin

Reply : Since some elders do not attend the D/Es every day or they only occupy a half-day place, it is therefore possible for the D/Es to take in additional elders to fill the unused time slots and places. We have accordingly set the enrolment rate at 110% to maximise the utilisation of day care places. Even so, as at end-December 2008, the average daily attendance rate of D/Es was only about 90% of the capacity.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	30 March 2009

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (5) Services for Offenders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : What are the details of the two-year pilot scheme to assist convicted young drug offenders to start afresh, including the expected increase in caseload to be handled by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) after the additional provision of \$1.8 million per annum?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Sing-chi

Reply : Pursuant to the Security Bureau's policy initiative to tackle the drug abuse problem, SWD will launch the two-year pilot project targeting young drug offenders who are convicted and ordered by the court to be put on probation. It will include two major components –

- (1) Core modules which involve intensive supervision and monitoring of the probationers (e.g. reporting sessions, urine tests, curfew checks and progress report to court); and
- (2) Targeted training and treatment programmes which address the risks and needs of the probationers beneath their offending and drug abuse behaviour (e.g. psychological problem, poor interpersonal relationship, etc.).

The estimated provision of \$1.8 million per annum is to create four Assistant Social Work Officer (ASWO) posts to trial run the pilot project. Having regard to past experience in handling convicted young drug offenders under probation services, the pilot project is planned to serve 240 cases per annum, i.e. 60 cases per ASWO, at two designated Magistracies.

SWD will conduct an evaluation on the pilot project in due course.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	31 March 2009