

Panel on Health Services

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 5 November 2010)

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

**1. Healthcare Reform Second Stage Public Consultation
- Health Protection Scheme**

December 2010

On 6 October 2010, the Government published the Second Stage Public Consultation Document on Healthcare Reform entitled "My Health My Choice" under which a government-regulated, voluntary Health Protection Scheme ("HPS") was proposed for public consultation for three months ending 7 January 2011.

The Administration briefed the Panel on the same day on the Consultation Document. Members agreed to follow up discussion on the proposed HPS in the new legislative session.

**2. Pilot Project on Outreach Primary Dental Care
Services for Elderly in Residential Care Homes**

January 2011

Item proposed by the Administration.

The Administration proposes to engage non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") with expertise in dental care to provide outreach primary dental care services to elderly in residential care homes. Subsidies will be provided to the selected NGOs to enable them to provide dental outreach services free of charge to needy elderly.

3. Drug Formulary of the Hospital Authority

February / March
2011

At the meeting on 12 February 2007, the Administration was requested to report to the Panel when the Hospital Authority ("HA") Board had come to a view on the mode of supply of self-financed item drugs before implementation. The Administration was also requested to review the assessment criteria for introducing new drugs into HA Drug Formulary and for assistance under the Samaritan Fund.

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

When the grant for the Samaritan Fund was discussed at the Panel meeting on 10 November 2008, members raised concern about the assessment criteria and the operation of the Drug Formulary and the Samaritan Fund. Members considered it necessary to advance the discussion on the matter at a forthcoming Panel meeting.

At the meeting on 8 June 2009, the Administration briefed members on the latest developments of the HA Drug Formulary.

When the policy on the use of drugs in public hospitals under HA in immediate life threatening emergency situations was discussed at the Panel's special meeting on 19 June 2009, Hon Andrew CHENG and Hon Albert CHAN proposed to discuss the implementation of the HA Drug Formulary at a future meeting, and deputations should be invited to give views on the subject.

At the meeting on 15 October 2010, members agreed that the subject should be discussed by the Panel at a future meeting.

4. Referral from Duty Roster Member regarding the iron chelating therapy for Thalassaemia patients in public hospitals

(see Note)

As agreed by the Duty Roster Members of the Legislative Council who met with The Thalassaemia Association of Hong Kong on 15 December 2009, the concern raised by the Association regarding the iron chelating therapy for Thalassaemia patients in public hospitals was referred to the Panel for follow-up.

Note: The Administration has advised that the subject be discussed by the Panel in the context of "Drug Formulary of HA" scheduled for discussion in February/March 2011.

5. Primary Care Development Strategy – Primary Care Advocacy Campaign

1st quarter, 2011

Item proposed by the Administration.

At the meeting on 12 July 2010, the Administration briefed the Panel on the latest progress of the primary

care development strategy formulated based on the advice and recommendations of the Working Group on Primary Care.

At the special meeting of the Panel on 15 October 2010, the Administration advised that it planned to publish a primary care development strategy document at the end of 2010. At the same time, the Primary Care Office under the Department of Health would also embark on a two-year primary care advocacy campaign starting from 2010 in partnership with healthcare professionals to raise public awareness of the benefits of primary care in disease prevention and management, encourage the public to make fuller use of primary care service, and adopt a preventive approach in improving health.

6. Services of the public general out-patient clinics (see Note)

At the meeting between Legislative Council Members and members of Kwai Tsing District Council ("KTDC") held on 5 July 2010, some KTDC members expressed concern about the prescription errors, the supply of drugs, as well as the difficulties encountered by the elders in using the telephone appointment service of the public general out-patient clinics. The above concerns were referred to the Panel for follow-up with the Administration.

Note: The Administration has advised that the subject be discussed by the Panel in the context of "Primary Care Development Strategy – Primary Care Advocacy Campaign" scheduled for discussion in 1st quarter, 2011.

7. Implementation of the Elderly Healthcare Voucher Pilot Scheme 1st quarter, 2011

The Panel discussed with the Administration on the Pilot Scheme on 12 October and 12 November 2007, and 14 April 2008. At the meeting on 14 April 2008, the Panel passed a motion requesting the Administration to provide health care vouchers to elders aged 65 or above, increase the value of each health care voucher to at least \$100, expedite the launching of the health care voucher pilot scheme within 2008, and provide each senior citizen with at least 10 health care vouchers a year.

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

The Scheme was launched on 1 January 2009 for three years up to the end of 2011.

At the special meeting of the Panel on 16 October 2009, the Administration advised that an interim review would be conducted after the Scheme had been implemented for a year. A comprehensive review would also be carried out upon the completion of the three-year pilot period. The reviews would cover the effectiveness and scope of the Scheme, amount of subsidy, etc.

At the meeting on 8 March 2010, Hon CHAN Hak-kan proposed discussion of the interim review on the implementation of the Scheme in view of the media reports about improper voucher reimbursement claims by some healthcare service providers enrolled in the Scheme.

At the special meeting of the Panel on 15 October 2010, the Administration advised that it was now conducting an interim review on the Scheme, and anticipated that it would be completed by the end of 2010. Subject to the outcome of the interim review, the Administration would consider extending and enhancing the Scheme, including how to better appraise the effectiveness of the Scheme and promote wider use of preventive care among the elderly.

8. Redeployment of directorate posts in the Department of Health

1st quarter, 2011

Item proposed by the Administration in the 2008-2009 legislative session.

The Administration has advised that the discussion of the item was deferred due to the unavailability of time slot. Item was then planned to be incorporated in a composite proposal on creation of directorate posts for discussion on 12 April 2010. In the light of a letter dated 26 March 2010 from the Government Doctors' Association ("GDA") to the Director of Health, copied to Panel members, the item was withdrawn, pending further consultation with GDA. The Administration advises that the item will be resubmitted in 1st quarter, 2011.

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

9. Mental health service plan for adults for 2010-2015 and the findings and recommendations of the Report of the Review Committee on Management and Follow-up of Mental Patients with Reference to the Mental Patient Incident in Kwai Shing East Estate

March / April
2011

Item proposed by Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou on 6 September 2010.

The Panel discussed with the Administration on the new mental health service programmes launched by HA at the meeting on 11 May 2010. Members were advised, amongst others, that to enhance the mental health services in response to the needs of the community in a systematic manner, HA was developing a mental health service plan for adults for 2010-2015, setting out the goals, objectives and action priorities for the mental health services for adults in the next five years.

At the meeting, the Panel passed a motion urging the Administration to set up an independent committee to investigate the causes of the tragedy occurred on 8 May in Kwai Shing East Estate involving a chopping attack by a man which left two dead and three seriously injured, so as to find out the root of the problem with a view to improving the treatment and rehabilitation services for mental illness and preventing the recurrence of similar incidents. In the light of the incident and the concerns of members and the community, HA set up a Review Committee on Management and Follow-up of Mental Patients with Reference to the Mental Patient Incident in Kwai Shing East Estate in May 2010. The Review Committee has submitted its report to the Chief Executive of HA and the Secretary for Food and Health on 3 August 2010.

At the meeting on 15 October 2010, members agreed that the subject should be discussed by the Panel at a future meeting.

10. Electronic health record sharing

2nd quarter, 2011

Item proposed by the Administration in the 2009-2010 legislative session.

At the meeting on 9 March 2009, the Administration briefed the Panel on the proposal to develop a territory-wide

patient-oriented electronic health record ("eHR") sharing system. At the special meeting of the Panel on 19 June 2009, the Panel received the views of deputations on the proposal.

The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved the funding proposals for the directorate staffing support for the Electronic Health Record Office ("eHR Office") and the implementation of the first stage of the territory-wide eHR Programme on 10 July 2009. On the legal framework and the implementation plan for the eHR sharing system, the Administration advised that it would commence the formulation of the necessary long-term legal framework after obtaining the funding approval, and would provide an interim report to the Panel on Health Services in due course.

The eHR Office was set up in July 2009 to take forward the Programme. At the special meeting of the Panel on 16 October 2009, the Administration advised that it would consult the relevant professions, stakeholders and the public in 2010 on issues such as voluntary participation, authorisation and consent for record access and the long-term legal framework required for the protection of privacy and security of personal health data, and prepare for the drafting of the necessary legislation.

11. Implementation of the Shared Care Programme

2nd quarter, 2011

The Panel was briefed on the three-year pilot Programme at the meeting on 8 March 2010. The Administration agreed to revert to the Panel on the progress of the Programme one year after implementation.

12. Improvement of doctors' working hour in public hospitals

2nd quarter, 2011

The Panel discussed with the Administration on the Final Report on Doctor Work Reform on 12 April 2010. The Administration was requested to revert to the Panel on the progress of improving doctors' working hour in six to 12 months' time.

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

13. Shortage of nurses

(see Note)

At the meeting on 8 March 2010, Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che suggested that the subject should be discussed by the Panel within the current legislative session.

Note: The Administration has advised that an information paper on the subject will be provided to the Panel in due course.

14. Issues related to health services under the Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation

To be confirmed

At the meeting on 12 July 2010, members agreed to defer the discussion of the item to a future meeting in view of the time constraint.

15. Regulation of "Health Maintenance Organisations"

To be confirmed

The issue was last discussed by the Panel at the meeting on 11 June 2007. The Administration was requested to revert to the Panel on the time frame for establishing a statutory licensing regime to regulate health maintenance organisations, in view of the lack of adequacy of the Medical Director concept to safeguard patients' welfare.

16. Referral from Duty Roster Member regarding the provision of medical services for children in poverty

To be confirmed

On 16 April 2010, Duty Roster Members of the Legislative Council met with representatives of the Hong Kong Society for Community Organization to receive views on the provision of medical services for children in poverty. Duty Roster Members agreed that the issue be referred to the Panel for follow-up.

17. Commencement of provisions related to proprietary Chinese medicines in the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap. 549)

To be confirmed

The Administration consulted the Panel on 12 July 2010 of its plan to commence in phases from December 2010 the provisions in the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap. 549) and the Chinese Medicines Regulation (Cap. 549F)

**Proposed timing
for discussion**

related to the mandatory registration of proprietary Chinese medicines ("pCm") and the requirements of label and package inserts.

The Panel agreed to decide in the new legislative session whether it was necessary to convene a special meeting to re-visit the matter and receive views from the trade.

The Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Commencement) Notice 2010, the Chinese Medicine (Fees) Regulation (Commencement) Notice 2010 and the Chinese Medicines Regulation (Commencement) Notice 2010 were gazetted on 8 October 2010 and tabled before the Council on 13 October 2010. By these Commencement Notices, the Secretary for Food and Health appoints 3 December 2010 and 1 December 2011 as the day on which the offences relating to the sale, import and possession of pCm through registration and the requirements of label and package inserts will come into effect respectively.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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