

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Formulating a comprehensive mental health policy”
moved by Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
at the Council meeting of 11 January 2012**

**Motion as amended by Dr Hon Joseph LEE, Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou and
Hon Alan LEONG**

That the Government has long neglected the importance of formulating a sound mental health policy, Hong Kong people have persistently faced high rentals, high inflation, long working hours and the absence of retirement protection in their lives, and the Government has also failed to put in place a comprehensive safety net, create a fair competition environment, and provide Hong Kong people with sufficient and affordable homes, thus causing people's livelihood pressure to increase; besides, Hong Kong people's happiness index has long remained on the low side, and the symptoms of mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety are prevalent; government departments and organizations which are currently providing drug treatment and counselling services for people with mental illness and people recovering from mental illness follow different policies, and policy bureaux and administrative departments all adopt an indifferent attitude; hence, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive review of the existing policies and various services; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to formulate a comprehensive mental health policy, strengthen preventive and remedial services, improve the relevant policies on labour, land, healthcare, welfare and education, etc., including reviewing the existing psychiatric services provided by the Hospital Authority and non-profit-making organizations to ensure effective resource allocation between the two, while enhancing service quality and efficiency; comprehensively assessing the demand for healthcare manpower and appropriately increasing the number of healthcare personnel to ensure that the manpower is sufficient to cope with the demand of community mental rehabilitation programmes; and at the same time stepping up the work of mental health education and organizing talks in the community to enable the public to better understand the concept of mental health, with a view to preventing, addressing and identifying at an early stage various types of mental illness as well as building a care-based community, so as to improve Hong Kong people's living environment and mental health quality, reduce their chance of contracting mental illnesses, assist people with mental illness to recover and reintegrate into society, and promote all social sectors to accept people recovering from mental illness to integrate into society; this Council also urges the Government to:

- (a) formulate a long-term mental health policy, so as to set a clear direction for the prevention, early detection, treatment, rehabilitation, long-term care and public education of mental illness;
- (b) allocate more resources to train and recruit professionals and ancillary personnel engaging in the prevention of mental illness and rehabilitation services, and provide adequate land for developing community treatment and rehabilitation service facilities;
- (c) clearly position psychiatric services in the public sector so that resources are effectively utilized to treat people whose mental illness is more severe, and resolve the problems in the distribution of resources and facilities among the clusters so as to enhance effectiveness of the services;
- (d) strengthen training on professional knowledge on psychiatry for healthcare personnel in family medicine and enhance the collaboration between family medicine and psychiatric services, so that family doctors can diagnose and treat various types of mental illness at an early stage and make timely referral of serious cases to psychiatric units for follow-up;
- (e) allocate more resources for mental illness treatment, particularly for psychological treatment and more advanced drugs, so that people with mental illness can receive the most suitable treatment for their illness;
- (f) further develop the community medical and rehabilitation services to cater for the needs of people with mental illness and people recovering from mental illness, expand long-term case management, re-introduce evening consultation services, increase community rehabilitation facilities, and reinforce the collaboration of various types of services, with a view to assisting people with mental illness, people recovering from mental illness and their families in coping with the various difficulties in daily life; and
- (g) encourage the private and public sectors to employ people with disabilities including people recovering from mental illness, encourage the participation of the private sector by means of tax concession, etc., pro-actively promote public education and volunteer work on mental health and eliminate discrimination in the community;
- (h) increase resources for various psychiatric specialist services, including child psychiatric service and psychogeriatric service, in order to meet the increasing demand for psychiatric specialist services, such as specific learning disabilities and dementia, etc.;

- (i) expeditiously perfect and establish Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness in the 18 districts and strengthen the manpower of such centres, so as to enhance the community support and care for people recovering from mental illness, carers or people in the communities;
- (j) increase the manpower and training of relevant personnel such as psychiatric community nurses and social workers, etc., so as to reduce discharged patients' chances of relapse; and
- (k) regularly conduct studies on the mental health situation and policies in Hong Kong, and adopt corresponding measures to upgrade Hong Kong's mental health services.