

**LC Paper No. CB(2)479/12-13(01)**

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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Ms Elyssa Wong  
Clerk to Panel  
Panel on Health Services  
Legislative Council Complex  
1 Legislative Council Road  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms Wong,

**Latest arrangement for Mainland women giving birth in Hong Kong**

I refer to Item 5 on the list of follow-up actions in LC Paper No. CB(2)191/12-13(02). At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Health Services held on 7 May 2012, the Administration was requested to provide -

- (a) information to elaborate its explanation that from the economic and market perspective, following the decision of the private hospitals to stop accepting bookings for obstetric services in 2013 from non-local pregnant women whose husbands were non-Hong Kong residents, the private hospitals could either increase their obstetric service charges to cover its operation cost or lower their obstetric service charges to attract the Mainland spouses of local residents who hoped to give birth in Hong Kong as well as local pregnant women who originally opted to use the public obstetric services;

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- (b) the number of obstetric beds to be provided by those private hospitals which were expected to lower its price in the face of keen competition; and
- (c) statistical data demonstrating the effectiveness of the enhanced measures to control the use of obstetric services by non-local women referred to in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(2)1863/11-12(01)).

### **Response to Items (a) & (b)**

The private hospitals in Hong Kong are currently providing a total of some 600 obstetrics beds and have been handling 40 000-odd delivery cases each year in the past, with 30 000-odd and 10 000-odd of them involving non-local and local pregnant women respectively. Among those delivery cases of non-local pregnant women, vast majority involves couples who are both non-Hong Kong residents.

In 2013, public hospitals will not accept delivery bookings from non-local pregnant women while private hospitals will also cease to accept delivery bookings from Mainland pregnant women whose husbands are not Hong Kong permanent residents or Hong Kong residents who came to Hong Kong on One-way Permit. As such, compared with 30 000-odd delivery cases in last year, the number of cases of delivery by non-local women to be handled by private hospitals will decline significantly.

While private hospitals may adjust the number of obstetric beds that they provide, in face of a slump in demand for obstetric services, we estimate that there is room for downward adjustment of the charges for obstetrics services provided by private hospitals.

### **Response to Item (c)**

The enhanced measures to control the use of obstetric services by non-local women mentioned in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the paper are effective.

Since the enhancement of the complementary immigration measures in late 2011, the number of Mainland pregnant women gate-crashing the Accident and Emergency Departments (A&EDs) without prior booking has declined substantially from an average of 150 per month during the period from September to December 2011 to only 26 cases in November 2012.

In 2012 (up until 16 December), the Immigration Department (ImmD) has refused entry of 4 053 Mainland pregnant women who have not made prior bookings for obstetric services, which represents a substantial increase of more than two times over the year-round figure of 1 931 in 2011.

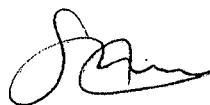
From October 2011 to November 2012, the ImmD had successfully prosecuted 456 Mainland pregnant women who had overstayed to give birth in Hong Kong, and they were subsequently repatriated to the Mainland. In 2012, the ImmD prosecuted three Mainland pregnant women who came to Hong Kong to give birth through illicit means (one involved in conspiracy to defraud, one making a false representation to an immigration officer, one having in her possession a false instrument and making a false representation to an immigration officer). All of them were convicted and sentenced to imprisonment terms up to eight months.

To combat the problem of Mainland pregnant women gate-crashing the A&EDs to give birth in Hong Kong without delivery bookings, the HKSAR Government established a liaison mechanism with the Guangdong authorities in February 2012 to enhance the exchange of intelligence. Law enforcement agencies of the HKSAR have implemented enhanced enforcement measures against illicit intermediaries assisting Mainland pregnant women to give birth in Hong Kong. These include stepping up the inspection of dubious intermediaries and referring doubtful intermediaries to the Guangdong authorities for follow-up actions. The Police also closely monitors activities of the intermediaries through cyber patrol and will follow up on any illegal act detected in accordance with the law. In 2012, 12 individuals involved in illicit activities to assist Mainland pregnant women to give birth in Hong Kong (including

intermediaries and cross-boundary vehicle drivers) were sentenced to imprisonment for terms ranging from eight weeks to a year.

Since February 2012, the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA) of the Home Affairs Department has carried out more than 40 inter-departmental joint operations with the Police and/or the ImmD etc. with more than 1 100 inspections conducted at premises suspected to be unlicensed guesthouses offering short-term rental accommodation to Mainland pregnant women. During that period, OLA instituted a total of 48 prosecutions, in which 43 persons were convicted of having contravened the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance. Besides, OLA is currently examining the evidence collected for 46 cases. Prosecutions will be initiated if it is established that there is sufficient evidence to support the prosecutions.

Yours sincerely,



( Ms Estrella Cheung )

for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c. Security Bureau  
Home Affairs Department  
Department of Health

( Attn : Miss Peggy Yung )  
( Attn : Ms Mildred Cheung )  
( Attn : Dr Raymond Ho )