

**立法會**  
***Legislative Council***

LC Paper No. CB(2)927/12-13(04)

Ref : CB2/PL/HS

**Panel on Health Services**

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat  
for the meeting on 15 April 2013**

**Development of a Centre of Excellence in Paediatrics**

**Purpose**

This paper summarizes the concerns of the members of the Panel on Health Services ("the Panel") on the development of a Centre of Excellence in Paediatrics ("CEP").

**Background**

2. It was announced in the 2007-2008 Policy Address that the Government would explore the establishment of a multi-partite CEP<sup>1</sup> to provide family- and child-centric tertiary care to all children under the age of 18 with complex and serious illnesses<sup>2</sup> as well as enhance the standards of research and training in paediatrics. A Steering Committee comprising medical and healthcare professionals from the public and private sectors, academics, patient groups and non-government and charitable organizations was set up in 2008 to examine the scope of services, mode of operation and physical infrastructure of CEP.

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<sup>1</sup> It was also announced in the 2007-2008 Policy Address that the Government would study the establishment of a multi-partite Centre of Excellence in Neuroscience.

<sup>2</sup> These illnesses may include, for examples, ambiguous genitalia, biliary atresia, brain tumour, diaphragmatic hernia, chronic kidney diseases, Crohn's disease, liver failure renal failure and tube defects.

3. Based on the recommendation of the Steering Committee, CEP will be a public tertiary specialist hospital in paediatrics with clinical services as the core, providing tertiary care to children referred by regional public hospitals or the private medical sector based on clinical criteria and protocol. The existing regional public hospitals with paediatric departments will continue to provide acute paediatric services, secondary care services and community care in their respective communities.

4. Apart from providing clinical services, CEP will also double as a teaching and research hospital supporting clinical research activities. It will serve as a training ground for doctors, nurses and other allied health professionals in the specialty of paediatrics. With the emphasis on interdisciplinary training and sharing, the ultimate aim of CEP is to train up a strong team of experts in the field with advanced knowledge of the physical and psycho-social needs of children and adolescents. CEP will also carry out public education on issues related to paediatric health.

5. Adopting a "Design and Build" model, CEP will be established at a vacant site with an area of about 2.17 hectares in the South Apron of the Kai Tak Development. The Panel was briefed on proposed development of CEP on 12 March 2012 and was supportive of the proposed project. While the actual construction cost of CEP would only be made known upon conclusion of the tender exercise, the project was estimated to cost about \$9.7 billion in September 2011 prices.

### **Deliberations of the Panel**

6. The Panel held a meeting in March 2012 to discuss the development of CEP. The deliberations and concerns of members are summarized below.

#### Management and funding mechanism of CEP

7. Noting that CEP would be a public hospital under the Hospital Authority ("HA"), members were concerned about the management structure of CEP. They also expressed concern about the sources of funding to support the three function areas (i.e. clinical services, medical research and professional training) of CEP.

8. According to the Administration, the management structure of CEP would be different from that of existing public hospitals. It would be governed by a hospital governing committee/board of directors comprising experts from the public and private healthcare sectors, academics from the medical schools of the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and representatives from relevant stakeholders.

9. On the funding support for clinical services, the Administration advised that CEP would accept referrals from both the public and private sectors with reference to a set of clinical criteria. For cases referred by the public sector to CEP, the charges would be determined with reference to the established fees and charges policy of HA. For the private paediatrics services to be provided by CEP, the fees and charges would be set with reference to the market rate. The hospital fee income received would be counted towards income received by HA to support the operation of CEP. In line with the current arrangement, HA would continue to be responsible for the training and development of its medical and healthcare practitioners, including those in the field of paediatrics. As regards medical research projects to be undertaken by CEP, they would be funded by other financial sources such as the Health and Medical Research Fund set up under the Food and Health Bureau.

#### Demand for services of CEP

10. Concern was raised about the impact brought about by the increasing number of children born to non-local women in Hong Kong on services of CEP. According to the Administration, babies born to Mainland women in Hong Kong were Hong Kong residents (i.e. eligible persons) and entitled to use subvented public healthcare services at HA's hospitals, including CEP. In planning for the services of CEP, HA would take into account, among others, the demand for paediatric services from these newborn babies.

#### Design of CEP

11. Members noted that CEP would be co-located with a Centre of Excellence in Neuroscience and a new acute general hospital for operational support. Concern was raised about the connection between CEP and the new acute general hospital. There was a view that the Administration should adopt a

comprehensive approach when designing the three facilities in order to facilitate the circulation of patients within these facilities.

12. The Administration advised that there would be appropriate traffic links, including two link bridges and a tunnel across the road connecting CEP, the Centre of Excellence in Neuroscience and the new acute general hospital. Consideration would also be given to enhancing the connectivity within the major facilities in CEP, the Centre of Excellence in Neuroscience and the new acute general hospital.

### **Recent development**

13. According to the Administration, the Architectural Services Department has invited tender for CEP on 13 April 2012, and the tender evaluation is expected to be concluded by the first quarter of 2013. Subject to the tender result, the Administration will seek funding approval from the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council. It is expected that the construction works will commence in the second half of 2013 for completion by late 2017, with CEP targeted to commence services by phases from mid-2018.

### **Relevant papers**

14. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

**Relevant papers on the establishment of a multi-partite  
Medical Centre of Excellence in Paediatrics**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Paper</b>
Panel on Health Services	12.3.2012 (Item VI)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
11 April 2013