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**Paper for the Panel on Health Services meeting
on 19 November 2012**

**Proposal for appointment of a Subcommittee on
Health Protection Scheme**

Purpose

This paper invites members of the Panel on Health Services ("the Panel") to endorse a proposal for appointment of a Subcommittee on Health Protection Scheme ("the Subcommittee") under the Panel.

Background

2. On 6 October 2010, the Government published the Healthcare Reform Second Stage Public Consultation Document entitled "My Health My Choice" in which a government-regulated, voluntary Health Protection Scheme ("HPS"), aiming at enhancing the long-term sustainability of the healthcare system, was proposed for public consultation. The Healthcare Reform Second Stage Public Consultation Report was released on 11 July 2011. According to the Administration, members of the public have expressed support for regulating the private health insurance and healthcare services through introducing HPS to improve market transparency, promote healthy competition, and enhance consumer protection. A three-pronged action plan is adopted to take forward HPS, which includes establishing a high level Steering Committee on Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development to conduct a strategic review on healthcare

manpower planning and professional development; setting up a Working Group on HPS to formulate detailed proposals on the supervisory and institutional frameworks for HPS; and taking measures to facilitate the development of healthcare services and infrastructure. The Administration's plan is to complete the preparatory work by the first half of 2013, and to proceed to draft and introduce HPS legislation, as appropriate. The implementation of HPS will take place in 2015 the earliest.

3. Members of the Panel in the Fourth Legislative Council were gravely concerned about the impacts of the proposed HPS on both the public and private healthcare systems. To enable more focused discussion on the detailed proposals and impacts of HPS, a Subcommittee on Health Protection Scheme was formed under the Panel ("the former Subcommittee") on 8 August 2011 to study issues relating to HPS. The former Subcommittee submitted its report to the Panel on 4 July 2012 and recommended that the Panel should appoint a subcommittee to assist its monitoring work of the implementation progress of HPS in the Fifth Legislative Council. In the light of the above, the Chairman suggested at the Panel meeting on 26 October 2012 that the Clerk should be requested to draw up the terms of reference, work plan and time frame for the Subcommittee for the Panel's endorsement.

Proposed terms of reference of the Subcommittee

4. "To study issues relating to the introduction of HPS as proposed by the Government for the Second Stage Public Consultation on Healthcare Reform and make recommendations where necessary."

Proposed work plan

5. The Subcommittee will follow up on the recommendations of the former Subcommittee and focus its work on the following areas -

- (a) roles of public and private healthcare systems;

- (b) roles of public funding and health insurance in financing healthcare services including the utilization of government subsidy;
- (c) objectives, concept and design of HPS; and
- (d) supporting infrastructure for HPS including healthcare manpower planning and supply, healthcare service provision and regulatory framework for HPS and private health insurance.

Proposed time frame for completion of work

6. Under rule 26(c) of the House Rules, the Subcommittee is expected to complete its work within 12 months of its commencement and report to the Panel. Should the Subcommittee consider it necessary to work beyond 12 months, the Subcommittee would, after obtaining the endorsement of the Panel, report to the House Committee and give justifications for an extension of the 12-month period.

Advice sought

7. Members are invited to endorse the appointment of the Subcommittee with the proposed terms of reference, work plan and time frame as set out in paragraphs 4 to 6 above.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
5 November 2012