



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

Our Ref. : FHB/H/33/32 Pt. 25

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

Dear Ms LAM,

**Legislative Council Panel on Health Services, Panel on Education
and Panel on Welfare Services**

Mental Health of Adolescents

At the joint-panel meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Health Services, Panel on Education and Panel on Welfare Services held on 20 December 2017, Members requested the Government / Hospital Authority (“HA”) to provide the following information –

- (a) provide quarterly reports on the work progress of the Advisory Committee on Mental Health which was established on 28 November 2017;
- (b) provide, with a breakdown by the year of schooling, the enrollment rates of eligible students for DH’s Student Health Service (“SHS”) and attendance rates of these students for the annual health assessment provided under SHS to screen, among others, for mental health problem(s);

- (c) in respect of the child and adolescent psychiatric service provided by HA, advise the annual expenditure involved, and the number and rate of increase in healthcare manpower for the provision of the service from 2011-2012 to 2016-2017;
- (d) provide information on the suicide rate of adolescents aged between 12 and 17 years in the past ten years;
- (e) advise the respective numbers and percentages of students who had received Tier-3 support under the Three-tier Intervention Model in the school setting in each of the past five years, and whether any of these students had committed suicide afterwards; and
- (f) advise whether and, if so, what additional funding support would be provided to tertiary institutions according to the number of students with special education needs admitted to individual institutions.

With information provided by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (“LWB”), the Education Bureau (“EDB”), the Department of Health (“DH”), the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”) and HA, I am authorised to provide the reply as follows –

- (a) Since the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Mental Health in December 2017, it has met four times to discuss various issues, including –
 - strengthening of child and adolescent mental health services;
 - recommending that a large-scale mental health survey be conducted to understand the mental health status of the population of Hong Kong, in particular children and adolescents, to assist the relevant bureaux/departments in formulating long-term mental health policies and strengthening services;
 - supporting the launch of an on-going mental health education and destigmatisation campaign (“the Campaign”) from 2018-19 onwards after the completion of the “Joyful@HK” Campaign in March 2018. The Campaign seeks to, through phased promotion and education,

strengthen people’s awareness on mental health, followed by messages on destigmatisation with a view to achieving the goal of developing a mental-health friendly and inclusive society; and

- providing advice to relevant bureaux/departments on and monitor the implementation progress of various service enhancement measures. Issues discussed by the Advisory Committee included the waiting time of DH’s Child Assessment Service, and the support for students with mental health needs in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools.

- (b) The table below sets out the enrolment number (and enrolment rate) and the attendance of the annual health assessment and psycho-social health assessment under the Student Health Service of DH in the past five years –

School Year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Number of Enrolment (enrolment rate)	661 200 (90%)	647 700 (91%)	636 200 (91%)	628 900 (92%)	626 300 (92%)
Attendance of Annual Health Assessment	425 300	419 900	415 400	413 500	415 900
Attendance of Psycho-social Health Assessment	152 400	149 100	147 200	148 700	150 800

- (c) Mental health services delivered by HA include inpatient, outpatient, daycare and community outreaching services. The table below sets out HA’s expenditure on mental health services in the past five years –

Year	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2018-19
HA’s Expenditure on Mental Health Services (\$ million)	3,858	4,079	4,368	4,579	4,870 (revised estimate)

The table below sets out the number of psychiatric doctors, psychiatric nurses (including community psychiatric nurses), clinical psychologists, medical social workers and occupational therapists working in psychiatric stream in HA in the past five years –

Year	Psychiatric Doctors	Psychiatric Nurses	Allied Health Professionals		
			Clinical Psychologists	Medical Social Workers	Occupational Therapists
2013-14	335	2 275	71	243	227
2014-15	333	2 442	77	243	236
2015-16	344	2 472	82	243	245
2016-17	349	2 493	90	243	257
2017-18 (as at 31 Dec 2017)	351	2 541	92	243	267

Note:

1. The manpower figures above are calculated on full-time equivalent basis including permanent, contract and temporary staff in all HA clusters, but exclude those in HA Head Office.
2. Psychiatric doctors refer to all doctors working for the specialty of psychiatry except Interns. Starting from 2016-17, psychiatric doctors also include doctors working in Siu Lam Hospital (“SLH”).
3. Psychiatric nurses include all nurses working in psychiatric hospitals (i.e. Kwai Chung Hospital, Castle Peak Hospital and SLH), nurses working in psychiatric departments of other non-psychiatric hospitals, as well as all other nurses in psychiatric stream.
4. Information on the number of Medical Social Workers is provided by SWD.

- (d) The suicide rate of adolescents aged between 12 and 17 years in the past ten years is not readily available.
- (e) All schools are requested to adopt the Whole School Approach to support students with special educational needs (“SEN”) through the Three-tier Intervention Model. The tier of support required by individual students is based on their genuine needs. Generally speaking, tier-1 support refers to helping students with mild or transient learning difficulties through the use of basic resources and quality teaching in regular classrooms. Tier-2 support refers to “add on” intervention, such as small group learning and pull-out programmes, etc., for students with persistent learning difficulties. Tier-3 support refers to intensive individualised support for students with severe learning difficulties under which schools are required to draw up an individual education plan (“IEP”) for each of these students.

Irrespective of the tier of support required by the students with SEN, schools are required to record the support and adaptations offered to the students as well as their progress for regular review to facilitate adjustment, where appropriate, of the tier of support required by individual students. As such, the tier of support of students with SEN may be adjusted upward or downward, and the need for tier-3 support may change from time to time according to the performance and prevailing support needs of the students. The distribution of public sector ordinary schools eligible for the Learning Support Grant by range of number of students with SEN requiring tier-3 support from the 2012/13 to 2016/17 school years is set out below –

Range of Students with SEN requiring Tier-3 Support	Number of Ordinary Schools				
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
0	144	129	131	119	111
1-5	506	524	527	547	554
6-10	18	23	19	16	19
11-15	6	2	3	4	5
16-20	0	0	0	1	3
More than 20	6	5	7	5	4

The nature of death of a person being suicide is, in most cases, confirmed after the legal proceedings of the Coroner’s Court. Over the years, EDB has not captured the number of student deaths the cause of which is confirmed to be suicide from the Court. Hence, EDB is unable to provide officially verified figures on student suicides and whether the students were with SEN and requiring tier-3 support. That said, EDB has required schools to report cases of students suspected of suicide to keep in view of the situation and provide professional support for the schools concerned as appropriate. The number of cases of students suspected of suicide as reported by primary and secondary schools to the EDB from the 2012/13 to 2016/17 school years is tabulated as follows –

School Year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Number of Students Suspected of Suicide	14	10	9	19	19

- (f) To facilitate students with SEN to pursue University Grants Committee (“UGC”)-funded programmes and adapt to campus

life as well as to further promote the inclusive culture, UGC has provided a one-off special grant of \$20 million in total for the eight UGC-funded universities in 2015 to enhance the UGC-funded universities' support for students with SEN, as a means to demonstrate UGC's commitment towards offering equal opportunities to all people, including students with SEN. The grant has been allocated on a pro-rata basis according to the number of students with SEN admitted to individual universities, so that universities may implement additional measures to enhance their support services for students with SEN. The funding is for the eight UGC-funded universities to purchase the necessary aids and equipment to facilitate the study of students with SEN; strengthen training among the academic and administrative staff to enhance their awareness towards students with SEN; and support student bodies to organise events and activities to encourage integration of students with SEN into campus life.

In the implementation of the above funding scheme, the UGC-funded universities have been effective in strengthening the assistance provided to students with SEN for them to adapt to campus life. UGC will conduct phase two of the scheme and provide an additional grant of \$20 million in 2018 to the UGC-funded universities to further strengthen the eight universities' support for students with SEN.

Starting from the 2013-14 financial year, the Vocational Training Council has been allocated an additional recurrent funding of \$12 million each year to purchase equipment and learning aids for students with SEN, providing them with psychological and student counselling services, and enhancing the support for teaching and learning.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chris Fung', written in a cursive style.

(Chris FUNG)
for Secretary for Food and Health

c.c.

Clerk to Legislative Council Panel on Education
(Attn: Ms Angel WONG)

Clerk to Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services
(Attn: Mr Colin CHUI)

Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Attn: Mr Huggin TANG)

Secretary for Education
(Attn: Dr Verena LAU)

Director of Health
(Attn: Dr Thomas CHUNG)

Director of Social Welfare
(Attn: Mrs Helen KWOK)

Chief Executive, Hospital Authority
(Attn: Mr Kenny WONG)