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**Panel on Health Services**

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat  
for the meeting on 9 May 2011**

**Pilot Scheme of Hospital Accreditation**

**Purpose**

This paper summarizes the concerns of members of the Panel on Health Services ("the Panel") on the launch of a pilot scheme of hospital accreditation.

**Background**

2. The Hospital Authority ("HA") launched a pilot scheme for accreditation of public hospitals in April 2009. Hospital accreditation is one of the widely adopted measures aiming at improving the quality of healthcare services and patient safety. Through participating in the accreditation process, hospitals are expected to strengthen their accountability to service quality and safety, thereby strengthening public confidence in their quality of healthcare services.

3. Five public and three private hospitals have participated in the pilot scheme. Under the pilot scheme, performance of the participating hospitals will be assessed by internationally recognized healthcare standards. Accreditation awards will be granted to hospitals at regular intervals to ensure sustained improvement in service quality and delivery of safe healthcare services. A Steering Committee on Hospital Accreditation, comprising representatives from the Food and Health Bureau, the Department of Health ("DH"), HA and the Private Hospitals Association, has been set up to oversee the pilot scheme.

## **Deliberations of the Panel**

### Occurrence rate of medical incidents

4. Members noted that the pilot scheme of hospital accreditation was aimed at enhancing HA's quality assurance mechanism to meet with the rising expectation from the public and to strengthen public confidence in the services of public hospitals. Members sought information on the occurrence rate of medical incidents between public and private hospitals in Hong Kong as well as those in other countries, so as to identify the level of performance of local hospitals.

5. The Administration advised that it was difficult to compare the performance of public and private hospitals in Hong Kong given the variations in their policies and mechanisms to identify, report and manage medical incidents. The aims of introducing hospital accreditation in Hong Kong were to enhance the transparency and accountability of both public and private hospitals, including their standards with regard to the management of medical incidents.

6. As regards the comparison of the occurrence rate of medical incidents between hospitals in Hong Kong and overseas, the Administration advised that public hospitals in Hong Kong had a much lower rate of medical incidents than that of other countries. Yet, it was difficult to compare the local statistics relating to medical incidents with those in overseas countries as overseas countries had different mechanisms for reporting medical incidents.

### Disclosure of sentinel events in hospitals

7. Members noted that HA would consider disclosing a sentinel event in public hospitals if it had immediate major impact on the public or involved a patient's death, while DH would consider disclosing a sentinel event in private hospitals if it constituted a persistent public health risk or involved a large number of patients. There was a concern that the criteria for disclosing sentinel events and their details in private hospitals were different from those of public hospitals. Members urged the Administration to remove such discrepancies upon the introduction of hospital accreditation.

8. The Administration agreed that it was necessary to align the different descriptions of reported sentinel events between public and private hospitals. One of the key objectives of the pilot scheme for hospital accreditation was to develop a set of common hospital accreditation standards for measuring the performance of both public and private hospitals in the management of medical

incidents and complaints, as well as other aspects relating to the performance of public and private hospitals.

### Progress of the pilot scheme

9. On the progress of the pilot scheme for hospital accreditation, members were advised that one private hospital had been awarded the accreditation status in March 2010 and the remaining participating hospitals were expected to be accredited in 2010-2011. A territory-wide accreditation scheme would be implemented in around four years following the completion of the pilot scheme.

### **Latest developments**

10. As at March 2011, five participating public hospitals in the pilot scheme have been awarded full accreditation status for four years by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards ("ACHS"). The five public hospitals are: Queen Mary Hospital, Caritas Medical Centre, Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Tuen Mun Hospital.

11. To enhance service quality and clinical governance, HA plans to roll out Phase Two of the hospital accreditation programme, which will cover a total of 15 public hospitals by 2015-2016.

12. According to a press release issued by DH on 13 October 2010, a leading international conference promoting hospital accreditation and patient safety would be held in Hong Kong in September 2011. The conference will be organized by the International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua). Some 1 500 and 2 000 health administrators, hospital management and healthcare professionals are expected to attend the conference. According to DH, this is the first of ISQua conference to be held in Asia.

### **Relevant papers**

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

**Relevant papers on  
Pilot Scheme of Hospital Accreditation**

| <b>Committee</b>         | <b>Date of meeting</b> | <b>Paper</b>  |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Panel on Health Services | 8.12.2008<br>(Item V)  | <a href="#">Agenda</a><br><a href="#">Minutes</a>                                       |
| Panel on Health Services | 9.11.2009<br>(Item IV) | <a href="#">Agenda</a><br><a href="#">Minutes</a>                                       |
| Panel on Health Services | 14.6.2010<br>(Item IV) | <a href="#">Agenda</a><br><a href="#">Minutes</a><br><a href="#">CB(2)198/10-11(01)</a> |

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