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Panel on Health Services
Subcommittee on Issues Relating to the Development of Chinese Medicine

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Testing centre for Chinese medicines

The 2015 Policy Address announces that the Government has accepted the Chinese Medicine Development Committee's¹ ("the Committee") recommendation to set up a testing centre for Chinese medicines managed by the Department of Health ("DH"). The testing centre will specialize in scientific research on Chinese medicines, with a view to setting reference standards on safety, quality and testing methods of Chinese medicines. Through the testing centre, DH will continue to study and formulate more Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards² ("HKCMMS"). The testing centre will also embark on high-end research of Chinese medicines with a view to strengthening the capability for the quality control and identification of Chinese medicines. A herbarium on Chinese medicines with international standard will be set up. According to the Administration, through various platforms and with closer collaboration with the relevant international and Mainland organizations, the testing centre will help promote HKCMMS and the reference standards for testing of Chinese medicines as authoritative international benchmarks to pave way for the internationalization of Hong Kong's Chinese medicines industry.

¹ The Committee was established in February 2013 to focus on the study of four major areas, namely the development of Chinese medicine services, personnel training and professional development, research and development and development of the Chinese medicines industry (including Chinese medicines testing).

² DH has been developing HKCMMS since 2002 in view of the growing increase in the use of Chinese Materia Medica ("CMM") and rising importance of traditional medicine practice in the healthcare system of countries around the world. HKCMMS provides reference standards on CMM which are commonly used, of international importance and with good economic values. According to the Administration, HKCMMS is gaining popularity as reference standards in the field of Chinese medicine testing and certification. At present, six editions of HKCMMS covering standards for a total of 200 CMM have been published.

2. According to the Administration, the establishment of the testing centre is a further step to promote the development of Chinese medicine in Hong Kong after the Government's acceptance of the Committee's recommendations on the development of Chinese medicine hospital³, the integrated Chinese-Western medicine⁴ ("ICWM") and the HKCMMS project⁵ in early 2014.

Council Business Division 2
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³ The 2014 Policy Address announced that the Government had accepted the Committee's recommendation and reserved a site in Tseung Kwan O for setting up a Chinese medicine hospital.

⁴ In response to the Committee's suggestions, the Hospital Authority has set up a dedicated task force to undertake preparatory work for the implementation of the ICWM Pilot Project, including the design of relevant clinical and operational frameworks.

⁵ The Government accepted the Committee's recommendation which supported the continuation of the HKCMMS project to study and formulate standards for more Chinese herbal medicines; and the consideration of including study on the standard setting for Chinese medicines decoction pieces under the HKCMMS project, so that HKCMMS would be more widely adopted.