

**Subcommittee on Smoking (Public Health) (Notices)
(Amendment) Order 2017**

**Follow-up actions arising from the discussion
at the meeting on 9 May 2017**

The Government's response to the three items raised by Members is set out as follows.

Technical Briefing in November 2016

2. The Government held a briefing on 23 November 2016 for the tobacco trade to further explain the Government's proposal to amend health warnings on packets and retail containers of tobacco products as well as the technical issues related to implementation of the proposal. Local agents and/or dealers of tobacco products and trade associations, such as the Tobacco Association of Hong Kong, were invited to attend the briefing.

Publicity and Public Education Activities

3. The Department of Health ("DH") has been actively promoting a smoke-free environment through publicity on smoking prevention and cessation services. To leverage community efforts, DH collaborates with the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health, non-governmental organisations ("NGOs") and health care professionals to promote smoking cessation, provide smoking cessation services and carry out publicity programme on smoking prevention. Apart from the ongoing programmes targeting different population groups, DH will be launching a smoking cessation public-private partnership pilot program in Q4/2017 with a view to encouraging more smokers to quit smoking as early as possible through involving private doctors. Moreover, the Tobacco Control Office ("TCO") will continue to monitor the local smoking prevalence and devise appropriate anti-smoking measures, such as the recent efforts to prevent the public from taking up electronic cigarettes. For 2017-18, the expenditures/provisions related to health promotion activities and smoking cessation services coordinated by the TCO of DH and its subvented organisations

are \$135.1 million. The manpower involved is internally absorbed by the TCO thus no breakdown is available. We should maintain the momentum of our publicity and public education efforts though specific figures on expenditures/provisions for 2018-19 are not yet available.

Plain Packaging

4. The World Health Organization has in May 2016 advised member states to get ready for plain packaging. Plain packaging refers to “measures to restrict or prohibit the use of logos, colours, brand images or promotional information on packaging other than brand names and product names displayed in a standard colour and font style”. As to the introduction of plain packaging in Hong Kong, we will continue to keep in view the local situation, as well as the community's expectation and support. The Government all along has been taking a progressive and multi-pronged approach in its tobacco control policies with a view to minimising the harmful effects of tobacco on the public and the community. As we have just initiated amendments to the Smoking (Public Health) (Notices) Order to increase the size of health warning to 85% of the two largest surfaces of packets or retail containers of tobacco products, we will evaluate in due course the planning for further measures, including the introduction of plain packaging.

Food and Health Bureau
Department of Health
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