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Panel on Health Services and Panel on Education

**Information note prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the joint meeting on 21 January 2019**

**Enhancement of healthcare teaching facilities
of University Grants Committee-funded universities**

In January 2012, the Administration established the Steering Committee on Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development ("the Steering Committee") to formulate recommendations on how to cope with anticipated demand for healthcare manpower, strengthen professional training and facilitate professional development, with a view to ensuring the healthy and sustainable development of the healthcare system. The strategic review primarily covered the 13 healthcare professions which are subject to statutory regulation, viz. medical practitioners, dentists, dental hygienists, nurses, midwives, Chinese medicine practitioners, pharmacists, chiropractors, medical laboratory technologists, occupational therapists, optometrists, radiographers and physiotherapists. To assist the Steering Committee in making informed recommendations on healthcare manpower planning, The University of Hong Kong ("HKU") was commissioned to conduct manpower projections of respective healthcare professions under study. A generic manpower projection model that suited the local circumstances and was adaptable to changing parameters to cater for differences in utilization patterns among individual professions was developed. The manpower projections were completed in 2016.¹

¹ The technical reports prepared by HKU on manpower projection of respective healthcare professions with the base year of 2011, which are in English version only, can be assessed at the website of the Food and Health Bureau ("FHB"): https://www.fhb.gov.hk/en/press_and_publications/otherinfo/180500_sr/srsupplementaryreports.html. According to the Administration, the manpower projection for midwife is not available as it is considered that a meaningful projection cannot be conducted.

2. The Steering Committee published the Report of Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development² in June 2017. The recommendation put forth by the Steering Committee in relation to publicly-funded healthcare training is that the Government should consider increasing the number of University Grants Committee ("UGC")-funded training places for those disciplines which would face manpower shortage in the medium to long term. However, it was remarked that in so doing, consideration should be given to, among others, capacity constraints of UGC-funded universities and the need to preserve their flexibility to allocate first-year first-degree ("FYFD") places to non-healthcare disciplines which also faced manpower shortage if the total number of UGC-funded FYFD places in full-time-equivalent terms should remain unchanged at 15 000 per annum. A summary of the number of UGC-funded training FYFD healthcare training places in the current and the last three trienniums is in the **Appendix**.

3. In the 2018-2019 Budget, the Government has set aside a sum of \$300 billion as an initial provision for the purpose of planning ahead the necessary healthcare infrastructure to meet the increasing demand for healthcare services arising from an ageing population.³ It was announced in the Chief Executive's 2018 Policy Address that in preparation for the foreseeable tight manpower situation of the healthcare profession and considering the long training cycle, the number of healthcare-related UGC-funded FYFD intake places would be increased from 1 776 to 1 929 in the 2019-2020 to 2021-2022 triennium. The 153 additional intake places included 60 medical, 60 nursing, eight dental, 20 physiotherapy and five optometry places.⁴ To expand the capacity for relevant professional healthcare training, the Government would

² The Report of Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development can be assessed at the website of FHB: https://www.fhb.gov.hk/download/press_and_publications/otherinfo/180500_sr/e_sr_final_report.pdf. In respect of manpower projection, the demand at the base year of 2015 is assumed to be at an equilibrium.

³ According to the Administration, the \$300 billion is set aside for supporting the second 10-year hospital development plan, improving the healthcare facilities in the Department of Health, as well as upgrading and increasing healthcare teaching facilities in the UGC-funded universities.

⁴ At the meeting of the Panel on Education on 4 January 2019, members were briefed on the recurrent funding for the UGC-funded universities in the 2019-2020 to 2021-2022 triennium. In respect of the number of UGC-funded FYFD places in the 2019-2020 to 2021-2022 triennium, members were advised that the number would be maintained at 15 000 per annum in full-time-equivalent terms. Among the four motions passed under that agenda item, the Government was urged, among others, to adopt the existing 15 000 places as the baseline and explore the increase in the number of "manpower-planned" healthcare-related places by over 150 without affecting the number of "non-manpower-planned" places under the recurrent funding, so that the total number of UGC-funded places would be correspondingly increased to a minimum of 15 150.

earmark about \$20 billion out of the provision of \$300 billion for short, medium and long-term works projects to upgrade and increase the teaching facilities of HKU, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

4. The Administration will brief the Panel on Health Services and the Panel on Education on the enhancement projects concerned on 21 January 2019.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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**Number of University Grants Committee-funded
First-year-first-degree Healthcare Training Places**

	2005-2006 to 2008-2009	2009-2010 to 2011-2012	2012-2013 to 2015-2016	2016-2017 to 2018-2019
Doctors	250	320	420	470
Dentists	50	53	53	73
Registered Nurses (General)	518-550 for both streams	560	560	560
Registered Nurses (Psychiatric)		30	70	70
Registered Chinese Medicine Practitioners	79	79	79	79
Pharmacists	30	50	80	90
Occupational Therapists	40	46	90	100
Physiotherapists	60	70	110	130
Medical Laboratory	35	32	44	54
Optometrists	35	35	34	40
Radiographers	35	48	98	110

Source : The Administration's paper entitled "Strategic review on healthcare manpower planning and professional development" (LC Paper No. CB(2)1608/16-17(05)).