

Legislative Council Panel on Health Services

Hong Kong Children's Hospital

PURPOSE

This paper briefs members on the phased service commissioning of the Hong Kong Children's Hospital (HKCH).

BACKGROUND

2. The Government announced in the 2007-08 Policy Address that it would study the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Paediatrics to upgrade our health care services. A Steering Committee comprising of healthcare professionals from the public and private sectors, academics, and representatives from patient groups and non-government organisations (NGOs) was set up in 2008 to examine the scope of services, operational model and physical infrastructure of the project, which aims to enhance the quality of paediatric services in Hong Kong by concentrating expertise, research and training with multipartite involvement. A suitable site was then identified in the Kai Tak Development Area for the establishment of the new hospital.

3. The Finance Committee of the Legislative Council approved in 2013 a capital funding commitment of \$13 billion (in money-of-the-day prices) for the Centre of Excellence in Paediatrics project. Construction works began in August 2013. The Centre was officially named as the "Hong Kong Children's Hospital" in 2014. Construction of HKCH was completed in late 2017 and the site was handed over to HA in February 2018 for preparation of commencement of operation.

FACILITIES

4. HKCH consists of two towers of 11 storeys with a planned capacity of 468 inpatient and ambulatory beds. There are operating theatres, ambulatory care centre, specialist outpatient clinic, integrated rehabilitation centre, as well as teaching and training facilities such as simulation training centre and auditorium.

5. Dedicated infrastructure such as a clinical trial centre and research laboratories have been planned in HKCH to facilitate close collaboration with the medical faculties of the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong for pursuing basic and translational research in paediatric and genetic diseases.

6. HKCH has adopted a children-centred and family-friendly design to create a better patient experience. Its colourful interior décor, abundant greenery coverage and natural light, as well as animals-themed wayfinding system help create a home-like environment to relieve the fear and stress of child patients. There are various facilities to support the care, leisure, social and learning needs of patients and their families, such as play areas, central rehabilitation garden, baby care rooms and classrooms, as well as railings, toilet seats and wash basins appropriate to children's height.

SERVICE MODEL AND SCOPE OF SERVICE

7. Upon service commissioning of HKCH, HA's paediatric services will be re-organised and operate under a hub-and-spoke model. HKCH will serve as the tertiary referral centre for complex, serious and uncommon paediatric cases requiring multidisciplinary management, providing diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation services for patients with relevant clinical needs, from birth to 18 years of age territory-wide. The existing 13 paediatric departments in the public hospitals will continue to provide secondary, acute, emergency and community paediatric care. Under this new arrangement, HKCH and the regional hospitals will work together

to form a coordinated and coherent paediatric service network, enhancing the quality of the overall public paediatric service.

8. HKCH will commence its service by phases. As in other new HA hospitals, such arrangement allows reasonable time for testing the service models and clinical workflow before the hospital comes into full service, so as to ensure patient safety, service quality and smoothness in operation. The following clinical services will be provided in HKCH in the first phase, which spans from December 2018 through 2019-20 –

- (a) Oncology: Services of the five existing children cancer centres under HA (located in Queen Mary Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, Prince of Wales Hospital and Tuen Mun Hospital) will be translocated to HKCH. All active children cancer patients will then be transferred to HKCH for treatment and follow-up;
- (b) Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery: All complex paediatric cardiology and cardiothoracic surgery service will be translocated from Queen Mary Hospital to HKCH, where treatment and surgeries will be provided to children with congenital and serious heart diseases;
- (c) Nephrology: Existing tertiary paediatric nephrology services will be translocated from Princess Margaret Hospital to HKCH, where treatment will be provided to children with chronic and serious kidney diseases. Secondary and step down nephrology care would be provided in regional centres;
- (d) Paediatric Surgery: Paediatric surgery service at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and United Christian Hospital will be translocated to HKCH. In addition, primary cleft and palate surgeries will be provided in HKCH;
- (e) Anaesthesia: Support will be available for surgical operations, sedation for procedures and cardiac catheterisation, pre-anaesthetic assessment and pain management;

- (f) Critical Care: Paediatric Intensive Care Unit, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and critical care transport service will be set up;
- (g) Radiology: Diagnostic and interventional radiology service will be provided;
- (h) Pathology: Anatomical pathology, chemical pathology, genetics, haematology and microbiology services will be provided; and
- (i) Palliative care: HA will set up at HKCH a central multidisciplinary paediatric palliative care team to coordinate and develop territory-wide paediatric palliative care services.

9. Regarding uncommon and genetic diseases, not only will HKCH pool together advanced equipment, expertise and relevant support, the Clinical Genetic Service under the Department of Health will also move into HKCH in late 2019. With the pooling of advanced equipment and expertise at the HKCH, laboratory testing, diagnosis and family counselling for uncommon and genetic diseases patients will be centrally conducted at the hospital.

10. Since October 2018, HKCH has begun to provide laboratory testing service for the Government's newborn screening programme for inborn errors of metabolism. The screening programme covers 24 metabolic diseases and will be gradually extended to all public hospitals with maternity wards. HKCH will also provide laboratory support to HA's non-invasive prenatal testing service as the second-tier screening for Down syndrome.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Service Commencement

11. To ensure a safe start and smooth transition, HKCH will commence its clinical services by phases, starting with specialist outpatient services, followed by the gradual opening of inpatient services. Beginning on 18 December 2018, the specialist outpatient clinic for nephrology, oncology and inborn errors of metabolism will commence operation. As a

start, selected paediatric cancer cases currently being followed-up at the Queen Mary Hospital and the Prince of Wales Hospital, as well as selected follow-up cases under the paediatric nephrology team of the Princess Margaret Hospital will be transferred to HKCH.

12. At the same time, other relevant services including pathology (laboratory testing and analysis), radiology (X-ray, ultrasound, Computed Tomography, Magnetic Resonance Imaging, and fluoroscopy) and pharmacy (dispensing and counselling) will be available to support the diagnosis and treatment of outpatients.

13. Other inpatient and ambulatory services mentioned in paragraph 8 above will be gradually introduced in HKCH from 2019.

Manpower arrangement

14. HA has been proactively planning for the manpower of HKCH. As mentioned above, some of HA's tertiary paediatric services will be translocated from regional hospitals to HKCH. Healthcare staff working in those units will be transferred to HKCH alongside with the respective services in due course. The number of translocation posts from other hospitals to HKCH is as follows –

Staff group	No. of translocation posts from other hospitals
Doctor	46
Nurse	169
Allied health	1
Supporting staff	66
Total	282

15. Separately, HKCH has been conducting advance recruitment of healthcare staff since 2015. These advance recruits have been attached to various public hospitals for training to acquire the necessary skills and clinical experience. As HKCH will soon commence service, the healthcare staff are being posted back to HKCH by phases for service set up,

orientation and drills. The table below sets out the number of staff recruited by HKCH under various staff groups as at 30 September 2018 –

Staff group	No. of approved posts	No. of recruited staff as at 30 September 2018
Doctor	75	58
Nurse	219	183
Allied health	122	115
Management, administration and supporting staff	569	460
Total	985	816

16. It is expected that there will be sufficient manpower at HKCH for meeting the requirement for the opening of specialist outpatient services and the initial inpatient services. HKCH will continue to conduct recruitment for various posts according to schedule, in conjunction with the HA annual planning exercises in order to achieve major milestones in service commissioning.

Public transport accessibility

17. HKCH is located in the Kai Tak Development Area. Currently, there are stops at the hospital entrance for green minibus route 86, Citybus route 22 and Kowloon Motor Bus route 5R, connecting to different MTR Stations (Kowloon Bay / Kowloon Tong / Kwun Tong / Ngau Tau Kok), Kowloon City, San Po Kong, Kai Tak North, Kowloon Bay Business Area, Kwun Tong Business Area and Kai Tak Cruise Terminal. It is anticipated that two new minibus routes will begin operation in December 2018 the earliest, connecting HKCH with Sau Mau Ping and Yau Tong respectively.

18. A convenient and direct transport network is crucial for HKCH to perform its role as a territory-wide referral centre serving patients from different districts. HKCH will continue to liaise with the Transport Department with a view to strengthening transport accessibility, including

opening of new routes, extending service hours, increasing frequency, etc. to tie in with its service commissioning.

Hospital Governance

19. HKCH is one of the public hospitals under Schedule 1 of the Hospital Authority Ordinance (Cap. 113). It comes under the Kowloon Central Cluster in terms of administration and management. As in other public hospitals, the hospital governance structure of HKCH led by the Hospital Chief Executive will oversee the clinical service and operation, human resources, finance as well as various administrative and supporting functions. In particular, designated committees on research and training have been set up under the hospital governance structure to meet the role of HKCH as the tertiary referral centre for territory-wide paediatric services in collaboration with the universities. A Hospital Governing Committee (HGC) was set up for HKCH under the Hospital Authority Ordinance (Cap. 113) with effect from 1 April 2018. The HGC comprises the Chairman and 12 members (including two ex-officio members).

Communication and publicity

20. HKCH has been conducting various stakeholder engagement activities. For example, hospital visits have been arranged to strengthen communication with different parties including government officials, Legislative Council Members, District Council Members, local and overseas professional groups, NGOs and the media.

21. Besides, forums have been organised for healthcare professional groups (e.g. Hong Kong Paediatric Society, Hong Kong College of Paediatricians) and private doctors to introduce HKCH's scope of service and patient referral mechanism.

22. Media briefings and interviews have been arranged to promulgate the role of HKCH and its service commencement arrangements. Patients, families and members of the public may also keep abreast of the

service information and latest news of HKCH through its website, newsletter and leaflets. An introductory animated video was also produced and shared on social media.

23. In order to provide services which could cater for the needs of child patients and their families, HKCH has all along been communicating with relevant NGOs and patient groups. Briefings and meetings have been organised to exchange views and explore collaboration opportunities in providing various support and organise activities for patients and families. Groups of persons with disabilities were also invited for site inspection to review the barrier free access facilities.

WAY FORWARD

24. The HA will continue to closely monitor the progress of HKCH's phased service commissioning to ensure patient safety and quality of service.

ADVICE SOUGHT

25. Members are invited to note the latest developments of HKCH.

**Food and Health Bureau
Hospital Authority
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