

(English Translation)

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**LABOUR AND WELFARE BUREAU
GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT**

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11 October 2019

Ms Wendy JAN
Clerk to the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms JAN,

I refer to the letters from Hon KWONG Chun-yu, Hon SHIU Ka-chun and Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen concerning “Purchase of Premises for the Provision of Welfare Facilities”, which were referred to this Bureau by the Legislative Council (LegCo) Secretariat on 6 June. During the discussion of the above agenda item at the meeting of the Panel on Welfare Services on 10 June, representatives of the Government already responded to the questions raised by the three Members in their letters. Subsequently, the LegCo Secretariat telephoned us in September to advise that although representatives of the Government already responded to the questions raised in the letters at the aforementioned meeting, the Government was required to provide a written response to the letters. In this regard, we set out our written response as follows.

It was announced in the 2019-20 Budget that \$20 billion will be allocated for the Government to purchase properties for accommodating welfare facilities to help meet the acute shortfall of premises. Taking into account new day services which are in acute demand, existing welfare facilities facing area shortfall or requiring reprovisioning, as well as district profiles, preliminary assessment of the availability of suitable premises,

and the number of planned projects of welfare facilities in specific districts, etc., the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has proposed a list of welfare facilities to be accommodated in the premises of the purchase exercise. Details are set out in the paper submitted by Government to the above meeting of the Panel on Welfare Services. As regards the numbers of applicants on the waiting lists for relevant services and the average waiting time, these are at **Annex**. The welfare facilities to be accommodated include a total of 15 day care centres for the elderly to help meet the service demand for day care services for the elderly. Regarding Integrated Home Care Services (IHCS), as the care services for the elderly are mainly provided in a home-based mode, the service units for the IHCS are not included in the list of welfare facilities to be accommodated in the premises purchase exercise.

Regarding the identification of suitable premises, the Government will identify suitable premises through different channels, including considering property information provided by owners or real estate agents, approaching property owners directly, identifying suitable properties from advertisements of newspapers and websites of developers/owners or property agents, conducting site visits at targeted districts, and soliciting through the Government's website saleable properties from owners.

On the provision of welfare facilities in development projects, the Government will continue to adopt a multi-pronged approach to reserving suitable sites/premises in different projects (e.g. private and public housing developments, development projects of the Urban Renewal Authority, vacant school premises redevelopment/conversion projects, development projects on Government, Institution or Community sites, etc.) for the operation of welfare services. Relevant measures include the Scheme to Encourage Provision of Residential Care Home for the Elderly Premises, and the provision of public facilities in private developments, etc. Besides, the SWD has maintained close contact with the Development Bureau with a view to imposing land sale conditions in appropriate land sale site projects, under which developers are requested to construct welfare facilities in development projects that meet the needs of the district and the community as a whole.

In order to proceed with the premises purchase exercise as soon as possible, we will strive to submit funding application early to the Finance

Committee of the LegCo (FC). Upon securing funding approval from the FC, we will make arrangements to brief the 18 District Councils separately on the respective lists of proposed welfare facilities for the districts and listen to and consider carefully their views. At the same time, the SWD and the Government Property Agency will also start preparatory work for the purchase exercise as appropriate, with a view to starting as early as possible purchase of the first batch premises once the funding application is approved. We invite Members to support the relevant funding application so that the purchase exercise can commence early to benefit relevant service users soon.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

(Ms Rebecca CHEUNG)
for Secretary for Labour and Welfare

c.c. Director of Social Welfare (Attn: Mr Andy LIU)
Government Property Administrator (Attn.: Mr LAM Chik-man)
Secretary for Development (Attn.: Miss Nicole LEUNG)

(English Translation)

Annex

**Number of applicants on the waiting lists for
relevant welfare services and average waiting time**

Type of facility	Number of applicants on the waiting list for relevant services / Average waiting time
<i>Family and child care facilities</i>	
(a) Child Care Centre	The service agencies handle the applications directly. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) does not maintain records on the number of applicants on the waiting list or the waiting time.
(b) Co-parenting Support Centre	The service agencies arrange services for the users direct. The SWD does not maintain records on the number of applicants on the waiting list or the waiting time.
(c) Integrated Family Service Centre	There is no need for users to wait for using the services.
<i>Elderly facilities</i>	
(d) Day Care Centre for the Elderly	4 480 (as of April 2019)/about 12 months
(e) Neighbourhood Elderly Centre	There is no need for users to wait for using the services.
(f) District Elderly Community Centre	There is no need for users to wait for using the services.
<i>Rehabilitation facilities</i>	
(g) Day Activity Centre	1 396 (as of April 2019)/about 57.5 months
(h) Integrated Vocational Rehabilitation Services Centre	2 549 (as of April 2019)/about 21.3 months ¹
(i) Special Child Care Centre	1 622 (as of April 2019) ² /18.4 months
(j) Office-base of On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (OPRS)	1 285 (as of April 2019) ² /Not available ³

¹ Integrated Vocational Rehabilitation Services Centre does not have its own central waiting list and applicants are selected from the central waiting list of sheltered workshop and supported employment service. The information refers to the number of persons on the waiting list and average waiting time for sheltered workshop.

² The figure does not include users of pre-school rehabilitation services who are now attending transitional service of Early Education and Training Centre or On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services (OPRS), or users who are waiting for a change of service type/choice of centre.

³ As the average waiting time is compiled on a financial-year basis covering the 1st day of April of a year to the 31st day of March of the next year, no such figure for 2018-19 is available as OPRS was regularised in October 2018.

Type of facility	Number of applicants on the waiting list for relevant services / Average waiting time
(k) Support Centre for Persons with Autism	The service agencies handle the applications directly. The SWD does not maintain records on the number of applicants on the waiting list or the waiting time.
(l) District Support Centre for Persons with Disabilities	The service agencies handle the applications directly. The SWD does not maintain records on the number of applicants on the waiting list or the waiting time.
(m) Parents/Relatives Resource Centre	The service agencies handle the applications directly. The SWD does not maintain records on the number of applicants on the waiting list or the waiting time.
(n) Community Rehabilitation Day Centre	The service agencies handle the applications directly. The SWD does not maintain records on the number of applicants on the waiting list or the waiting time.
(o) Early Education and Training Centre	2 978 (as of April 2019) ² /16.6 months
<i>Youth facilities</i>	
(p) Integrated Children and Youth Services Centre	There is no need for users to wait for using the services.
(q) Youth Outreaching Team	There is no need for users to wait for using the services.
(r) Cyber Youth Support Team	There is no need for users to wait for using the services.