

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)901/19-20

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seen by the Administration)

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Panel on Health Services

Subcommittee on Issues Relating to the Support for Cancer Patients

**Minutes of the sixth meeting
held on Monday, 16 December 2019, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan, SBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon Elizabeth QUAT, BBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP
Hon CHAN Han-pan, BBS, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Dr Hon Pierre CHAN
Hon KWONG Chun-yu
Hon CHAN Hoi-yan
- Member attending** : Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP
- Members absent** : Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Dr CHUI Tak-yi, JP
Under Secretary for Food and Health
- Miss Trista LIM
Principal Assistant Secretary for Food and Health (Health)2
Food and Health Bureau

Dr Deacons YEUNG
Director (Cluster Services)
Hospital Authority

Dr Frank CHAN
Chief Manager (Integrated Care Programs)
Hospital Authority

Ms Ivis CHUNG
Chief Manager (Allied Health)
Hospital Authority

Ms Anna LEE
Chief Pharmacist
Hospital Authority

**Attendance
by invitation**

: Mr CHAN Ka-long

Hong Kong Take the Lead Institute

Mr CHAN Ka-kin
Principal

Labour Party

Mr KWOK Wing-kin
Chairperson

The Hong Kong Pharmaceutical Care Foundation Limited

Ms CHIANG Sau-chu
Director

Cancer Strategy Concern Group

Mr Samuel MAK
Convenor

仁醫滙

王家旗先生
發展部總監

Ms LAM Sin-man

Cancer Patient Alliance

Mr CHAN Wai-kit
Chairman

WeCareBill Foundation

Miss YIM Hang-wah
Volunteer

Mr CHAN Yiu-fai

Hong Kong Academy of Pharmacy

Ms Iris Jacqueline CHANG
President

Alliance for Patient's Right

Ms Carina CHEN
Chair

Clerk in attendance : Ms Maisie LAM
Chief Council Secretary (2) 5

Staff in attendance : Mr Ronald LAU
Council Secretary (2) 5

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 5

Action

- I. Mechanism for appraisal of cancer drugs for inclusion in the Hospital Authority Drug Formulary and the safety net and arrangement for the provision of sustainable and affordable drug treatment for cancer patients**
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)356/19-20(01) and (02)]

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

Action

2. The Subcommittee received views from 12 deputations on the mechanism for appraisal of cancer drugs for inclusion in the Hospital Authority Drug Formulary and the safety net and arrangement for the provision of sustainable and affordable drug treatment for cancer patients, and noted one written submission from an organization not attending the meeting.

Follow-up actions required of the Administration

Admin

3. The Administration was requested to:
- (a) provide for members' reference a general comparison of the pricing of cancer drugs among Hong Kong, the Mainland and Taiwan, and account for the discrepancies, if any;
 - (b) consider the suggestion of setting up a mechanism to join hands with the Greater Bay Area or the whole Mainland in procurement of cancer drugs with a view to lowering Hong Kong's cancer drug costs through bulk purchase;
 - (c) advise whether and, if so, how the Administration and the Hospital Authority would further streamline the process for listing of new cancer drugs on the Hospital Authority Drug Formulary and introduction of self-financed cancer drugs into the safety net; and
 - (d) provide a consolidated written response to the views expressed by deputations at the meeting and in the written submissions.

II. Any other business

4. The Deputy Chairman advised that the next meeting of the Subcommittee would be held in January 2020. Members would be informed of the details in due course.

5. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 6:26 pm.

**Proceedings of the sixth meeting of the
Subcommittee on Issues Relating to the Support for Cancer Patients
on Monday, 16 December 2019, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Time marker	Speaker	Subject(s)/Discussion	Action required
<i>Agenda item I: Mechanism for appraisal of cancer drugs for inclusion in the Hospital Authority Drug Formulary and the safety net and arrangement for the provision of sustainable and affordable drug treatment for cancer patients</i>			
000558 - 000839	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000840 - 001327	Chairman Admin	Briefing by the Administration (LC Paper No. CB(2)356/19-20(01))	
001328 - 001647	Mr CHAN Ka-long	Presentation of views	
001648 - 001938	Hong Kong Take the Lead Institute	Presentation of views	
001939 - 002254	Labour Party	Presentation of views	
002255 - 002620	The Hong Kong Pharmaceutical Care Foundation Limited	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(2)356/19-20(03))	
002621 - 003015	Cancer Strategy Concern Group	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(2)426/19-20(01))	
003016 - 003329	仁醫滙	Presentation of views	
003330 - 003731	Ms LAM Sin-man	Presentation of views	
003732 - 004134	Cancer Patient Alliance	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(2)356/19-20(04))	
004135 - 004451	WeCareBill Foundation	Presentation of views (LC Paper No. CB(2)356/19-20(05))	
004452 - 004746	Mr CHAN Yiu-fai	Presentation of views	
004747 - 005138	Hong Kong Academy of Pharmacy	Presentation of views	
005139 - 005522	Alliance for Patient's Right	Presentation of views	
005523 - 010355	Chairman Admin The Hospital Authority ("HA")	The Administration and HA made the following responses to the views expressed by the deputations: (a) to facilitate timely registration of new pharmaceutical products in Hong Kong so that they could be made	

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		<p>available in the market as early as possible, the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138) was amended in February 2015 to enable legislative amendments relating to new pharmaceutical products be made via negative vetting procedures. In addition, from June 2018, upon receipt of an application for registration of a new pharmaceutical product by a pharmaceutical company, or when a new pharmaceutical product was covered under HA's early access programme or other relevant government-subsidized drug programmes, the Pharmacy and Poisons Board would initiate the legislative procedures to shorten the time required for registration of the product concerned;</p> <p>(b) various strategies in relation to timely and effective treatment had been formulated under the Hong Kong Cancer Strategy, the first attempt of the Administration to offer a holistic plan for cancer prevention and control for Hong Kong. Separately, an additional recurrent subvention of \$400 million had been provided to HA in 2019-2020 for widening the scope of its Drug Formulary including cancer drugs. For those who were able and willing to use private healthcare services, the rolling out of the Voluntary Health Insurance Scheme had improved the accessibility, quality and transparency of individual indemnity hospital insurance products;</p> <p>(c) confirmed and suspected cancer cases referred to HA would be classified as priorities 1 and 2 (i.e. urgent and semi-urgent) cases. These patients would be arranged to have the consultation within two weeks and eight weeks respectively. On average, the actual waiting time was one week and five weeks respectively;</p> <p>(d) under the established mechanism for listing of new drugs on its Drug Formulary, HA followed an evidence-based approach having regard to the safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness of drugs. To expedite the introduction of new drugs into the safety net coverage, HA had, since 2018, increased the frequency of relevant prioritization exercise from once to twice a year. It would keep abreast of the latest development of clinical and scientific evidence and include more drugs into the safety net as early as possible;</p> <p>(e) subject to the clinical judgement of doctors, cancer patients of HA with the same indications would be prescribed the same medication; and</p> <p>(f) following the introduction of enhancement measures to improve the means test mechanism under the safety</p>	

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		<p>net in early 2019, there had been an increase in the number of approved applications and the amount of subsidy granted. HA would keep in view the situation for further enhancement.</p>	
010356 - 010659	Chairman Admin	<p>The Chairman's call for the Administration to consider the deputations' suggestions of tax deduction for cancer drug expenses and provision of one-stop care and support services. The Administration would take into account this suggestion when considering the provision of support to patients.</p>	
010700 - 011226	Deputy Chairman Dr Fernando CHEUNG Admin	<p>At 5:36 pm, the Deputy Chairman took the chair in the absence of the Chairman.</p> <p>Dr Fernando CHEUNG's view that the procedure for the listing of new drugs on the Drug Formulary and the introduction of self-financed drugs into the safety net were too cumbersome. In his view, the Administration should engage patients in the formulation and implementation of strategies in relation to prevention, treatment and support services of cancer as well as the listing of drugs. He urged the Administration to convene a summit on cancer strategy for formulation of a policy to deal with the treatment of cancer. In response, the Administration advised that it would look into the feasibility of convening a summit or a platform of similar nature. As the first step, the annual convention of HA would be an available platform for discussion and exchanges on the relevant subjects.</p>	
011227 - 012019	Deputy Chairman Dr Pierre CHAN Admin HA	<p>In response to some deputations' views, Dr Pierre CHAN stressed that the progress of drug registration had no connection with filibustering in the Legislative Council as the classification of drug substances was through negative vetting procedures. He enquired about the reason for the unreasonably high cancer drug price in Hong Kong when compared with that in Taiwan; the measures to streamline the process for the listing of drugs in the Drug Formulary and to control drug price; and the consideration factors in the inclusion of new drugs.</p> <p>The Administration reiterated the measures in place to expedite the introduction of new drugs into the market. HA advised that the Drug Formulary, the Samaritan Fund and the Community Care Fund First Phase Programme of Medical Assistance Programme currently covered 119, 18 and 22 cancer drugs for treating various types of cancers. It had been repositioning cancer drugs under the safety net as Special Drugs under HA Drug Formulary if adequate clinical and scientific evidence was accumulated.</p> <p>The Deputy Chairman requested the Administration to provide in writing for members' reference a general comparison of the pricing of cancer drugs among Hong Kong, the Mainland and Taiwan, and account for the discrepancies, if any.</p>	Admin

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012020 - 012619	Deputy Chairman Mr POON Siu-ping Admin HA	<p>Mr POON Siu-ping enquired about (a) the latest number of cancer patients in Hong Kong; (b) HA's total expenditure on cancer drugs in 2019-2020; (c) a comparison of cancer drug expenditure in Hong Kong and other places including Singapore; and (d) the Administration's view on the deputations' suggestion of setting up a mutual aid platform for cancer patients.</p> <p>The Administration and HA advised that (a) according to the latest figures released by Hong Kong Cancer Registry in October 2019, the number of newly diagnosed cancer cases in Hong Kong in 2017 was around 33 000, which was 5.1% more than the number in 2016; new cancer cases had an annual growth of 3.1% over the last decade; and the number of cancer deaths reached 14 354, accounting for around 30% of total deaths; (b) HA had no figures on cancer drug expenditure as some cancer drugs were used for diseases other than cancer; (c) the Administration had no figures on the cancer drug expenditure of other places; and (d) the Administration would take into account the suggestion of setting up a mutual aid platform and its feasibility for long-term consideration..</p>	
012620 - 013723	Deputy Chairman Dr Helena WONG Admin HA	<p>Dr Helena WONG was concerned about how HA and the Administration negotiated with pharmaceutical companies for a reasonable price of cancer drugs to alleviate the burden of patients. She sought information on whether HA could further increase the frequency of the prioritization exercise from twice to four times a year to expedite the introduction of new drugs into the safety net coverage.</p> <p>The Administration advised that under the established mechanism of HA, the Administration in general was not involved in the negotiation with pharmaceutical companies for the introduction of new drugs for treatment of patients. HA advised that it would put the efficacy and safety before the price of drugs in the negotiation. For many pharmaceutical companies, there were universal list prices for the procurement of drugs. HA would decide whether the price offered was reasonable subject to experts' review. For the frequency of introducing new drugs into the safety net coverage, HA had been keeping a close track of the latest development of clinical and scientific evidence in this regard.</p> <p>Dr Helena WONG requested the Administration and HA to consider setting up a mechanism to join hands with the Greater Bay Area or the whole Mainland in procurement of cancer drugs with a view to lowering Hong Kong's cancer drug costs through bulk purchase.</p>	Admin
013724 - 014250	Deputy Chairman Prof Joseph LEE Admin	Prof Joseph LEE's view that the crux of the problem was lack of financial resources that various barriers were set for introduction of new drugs into HA's Drug Formulary	

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		<p>and the safety net, as well as advanced medical equipment for the treatment of cancer. He asked how the Administration could ensure the provision of optimal treatment to cancer patients.</p> <p>The Administration advised that starting from 2018-2019, the recurrent funding for HA would be increased on a triennium basis having regard to population growth and demographic changes. Separately, \$5 billion was earmarked for HA in the 2019-2020 Budget for upgrading and acquisition of medical equipment, including those for cancer treatment, and an additional recurrent subvention of \$400 million was provided for HA to widen the scope of the HA Drug Formulary. HA had also been promoting public-private partnership for diagnosis and treatment of cancer.</p>	
014251 - 014727	Deputy Chairman Mr KWONG Chun-yu Admin	<p>Mr KWONG Chun-yu's view that the Administration's efforts to develop and implement a cancer strategy was too slow. He called on HA to make reference to overseas practice to streamline the process for listing drugs on its Drug Formulary and the Administration to bolster the financial support for cancer patients and their families.</p> <p>The Administration stressed that the appraisal of new drugs for inclusion in HA Drug Formulary was conducted every three months. The frequency of the prioritization exercise for introduction of new drugs into the safety net coverage had also been increased from once to twice a year. The Administration was open to the suggestions from deputations on various avenues to enhance financial support for cancer patients.</p>	
014728 - 015405	Deputy Chairman Mr Michael TIEN Admin HA	<p>Mr Michael TIEN called on HA to consider listing a new target therapy drug lenvatinib for end-stage liver cancer on the Drug Formulary, and conducting a holistic review on the process for listing a drug on the Drug Formulary.</p> <p>HA advised that lenvatinib had been listed on the Drug Formulary as a self-financed drug since October 2019 soon after its registration in Hong Kong. It was reviewing whether there was adequate evidence to introduce the drug into the safety net.</p>	
015406 - 015957	Deputy Chairman Admin	<p>Sharing the views of deputations and members, the Deputy Chairman called on the Administration to:</p> <p>(a) advise in writing whether and, if so, how the Administration and HA would further streamline the process for listing of new cancer drugs on the Drug Formulary and introduction of self-financed cancer drugs into the safety net;</p> <p>(b) explore means to lower drug price to make drugs more affordable to patients;</p>	Admin

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		<p>(c) increase the transparency of the drug inclusion mechanism and take a more proactive approach in the appraisal of new drugs; and</p> <p>(d) further review and improve the means test mechanism under the safety net.</p> <p>As agreed previously, the Administration would revert to the Panel on Health Services the progress of the implementation of the enhancement measures of the means test mechanism of the safety net one year after implementation.</p> <p>The Deputy Chairman requested the Administration to provide a consolidated written response to the views expressed by deputations at the meeting and in the written submissions.</p>	Admin
<i>Agenda item II: Any other business</i>			
015958 - 020020	Deputy Chairman	<p>Closing remarks</p> <p>Arrangement for the next meeting</p>	

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
4 May 2020