

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)580/20-21(02)

Ref : CB4/PL/HS+CB4/PL/ED

Panel on Health Services and Panel on Education

Joint meeting on 5 March 2021

**Background brief on enhancement of healthcare teaching facilities
of University Grants Committee-funded universities**

Purpose

This paper provides background information on enhancement of healthcare teaching facilities of University Grants Committee ("UGC")-funded universities and summarizes the major views and concerns expressed by Members in previous discussions on the subject.

Background

2. 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

3. 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 trainings is that the Government should consider increasing the number of 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 last four trienniums is in **Appendix I**.

4. In the 2018-2019 Budget, the Government had 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,

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/srsupplementary_reports.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 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.

20 physiotherapy and five optometry places.⁴ To expand the capacity for relevant professional healthcare training, the Government would 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 ("CUHK") and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University ("PolyU").

5. A joint meeting of the Panel on Health Services and Panel on Education was held on 21 January 2019 to discuss the enhancement of healthcare teaching facilities of UGC-funded universities. In order to cope with an increase of some 150 healthcare related FYFD places in the 2019-2020 to 2021-2022 triennium, the Administration put forward the following three proposed works projects: (a) construction of a teaching-research complex in Tai Po Area 39 for the Faculty of Medicine of CUHK; (b) construction of an academic building at Ho Man Tin Slope for PolyU's Department of Rehabilitation Sciences and School of Optometry; and (c) carrying out enhancement of facilities cum medical campus development of HKU ("The three proposed works projects"). Members did not object to the submission of the funding proposals of the three proposed works projects to the Public Works Subcommittee ("PWSC") for consideration. These funding proposals were endorsed by PWSC on 31 May and 19 June 2019 and approved by the Finance Committee ("FC") on 26 June 2020.

Members' concerns

The three proposed works projects

6. Members expressed concern about how the three proposed works projects, some of which would take several years to complete, could cope with the increase of some 150 healthcare-related places from the 2019-2020 academic year and questioned why the Administration did not submit the funding proposals at an earlier time. The Administration explained that various short-term alterations, additions, repairs and improvement works to campuses of the UGC-funded

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 an 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.

universities costing up to \$30 million each had been funded under the Capital Works Reserve Fund block allocations. Works projects were proposed by CUHK, PolyU and HKU with a view to expanding their capacities for relevant healthcare-related professional training in the short, medium and long term.

7. Members were informed that the HKU's proposed works project was short-term in nature. Subject to funding approval by FC, the project was aimed to commence in the third quarter of 2019 for completion in September 2020. As regards the medium and long-term works projects, they were targeted for completion by 2026 and 2028 respectively. For CUHK, the completion dates of various short, medium and long-term healthcare teaching-related works projects would meet the curriculum need of the cohort of students admitted in the 2019-2020 academic year. It was expected that the long-term projects would be fully completed by 2029.

8. In response to members' enquiries about the high estimated cost in money-of-the-day ("MOD") prices of PolyU's proposed works project which stood at \$1,300 million for the provision of about 10 344 square metre net operational floor area of space, the representative of PolyU advised that the estimated cost was worked out in consultation with UGC Secretariat and the Administration. The cost of pre-contract consultancy for the preparation of the design and tender documents for the project was less than \$30 million.

9. Members noted that CUHK's proposed works project would be carried out in two phases. The Administration would submit the funding proposal of \$60 million in MOD prices for Phase 1 of the project to PWSC in the 2018-2019 legislative session, and leave the submission of the funding proposal for Phase 2 of the project to the 2019-2020 legislative term. In response to members' enquiry about the estimated cost for Phase 2 of the project, the representative of CUHK advised that Phase 1 of CUHK's proposed works project would cover pre-contract consultancy for the preparation of the design and tender documents. The preliminary estimated cost of Phase 2 of the project which involved the construction of the teaching-research complex was about \$3,000 million.

10. In reply to members' enquiry about how the three proposed projects could help improving the quality of service in the public healthcare sector under the healthcare manpower constraint, the representative of CUHK advised that an objective of CUHK's proposed works project was to introduce virtual reality technology at the new teaching-research complex. This would enable trainees to have repetitive training and practices of skills in different simulated scenarios before further training in hospital wards.

11. In response to members' enquiries, the representatives of HKU advised that the latest estimated cost in MOD prices of HKU's proposed works projects was \$250 million. The total estimated cost in MOD prices of the short, medium and long-term works projects for HKU was in the range of \$6,000 million to \$7,000 million. As regards whether hostel places would be reduced arising from the redevelopment plan for a catering facility and the Madam S H HO Residence for medical students, members were advised that under the medium-term projects, the 300-odd hostel places of Madam S H HO Residence and Patrick Manson Residence would first be relocated to a new facility and some additional 400 hostel places would be provided at a later stage. This would enable all senior medical students and more nursing students attending clinical placement be allocated with hostel places.

12. Members opined that the level of capacity of the three proposed works projects should be drawn up on the basis of the number of students. However, the Administration's paper lacked information on the respective number of UGC-funded FYFD places to be provided by CUHK, PolyU and HKU and the healthcare disciplines involved. The Administration advised that starting from the 2019-2020 academic year, there would be an increase of 60 UGC-funded FYFD medical places and 60 UGC-funded FYFD nursing places. For HKU, there would also be seven additional UGC-funded FYFD dentistry places. As regards PolyU, the UGC-funded FYFD places in physiotherapy and optometry would be increased by 20 and five respectively.

13. Members expressed concern about whether the healthcare teaching facilities of CUHK, HKU and PolyU, if enhanced as proposed, could cope with further increase in healthcare-related UGC-funded FYFD places in the future in the face of an ageing population. Members were also concerned about whether the teaching manpower of the three universities would be able to cater for the growth in the number of student intake. The Administration advised that the two faculties of medicine of CUHK and HKU had the distinct role to train local medical graduates. They, together with PolyU, also offered UGC-funded FYFD nursing places. Apart from nursing graduates, PolyU offered a wide range of UGC-funded FYFD places to nurture allied health professionals in various disciplines, such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, optometrists, medical laboratory technologists and radiographers.

Healthcare manpower planning

14. Some members considered that the proposed increase of seven UGC-funded FYFD dental places was far from adequate to address the growing service demand arising from the ageing population. Members asked if the number of UGC-funded FYFD dental places could be further increased. The

Administration advised that it had kick-started a new round of healthcare manpower projection exercise, which would be conducted once every three years in step with the triennial planning cycle of UGC. It was expected that the next projection exercise would be completed by 2020.

15. A member expressed worry that since the reprovisioning of the Prince Philip Dental Hospital was still under planning, the capacity of the Hospital would limit the supply of local dentists. The Administration advised that the number of UGC-funded FYFD places for dental discipline had already been increased by about 40% from 53 to 73 in the 2016-2017 to 2018-2019 triennium, and would be further increased by seven for the 2019-2020 to 2021-2022 triennium. The Administration intended to reserve about \$100 million for the Prince Philip Dental Hospital to undertake urgent renovation and upgrading works at the existing campus, and would in parallel explore options for a reprovisioning site.

16. Members expressed concern about the arrangement for capping the total number of UGC-funded FYFD places at 15 000 per annum, under which an increase in the number of healthcare-related UGC-funded FYFD places would result in a reduction in the number of non-healthcare-related UGC-funded FYFD places. Some other members were also concerned about the number of non-healthcare-related UGC-funded FYFD places reduced by the three universities for the 2019-2020 to 2021-2022 triennium in order to maintain the above cap. The Administration explained that the UGC-funded universities enjoyed autonomy in the academic planning process in determining the distribution of their UGC-funded FYFD places. The universities would draw reference to the Administration's advice on manpower requirements before submitting their planning exercise proposals for UGC's consideration.

Campus security arrangements of universities

17. Regarding the Administration's withdrawal of the funding proposal of the PolyU's project at the FC meeting held on 15 November 2019 due to concerns about the project raised by some members, some other members asked if the Administration had revised the contents of the three proposed projects. The Administration advised that as campus facilities of some universities were vandalized during demonstrations in the latter half of 2019, quite a number of Members were concerned about the campus security arrangements of universities. The Government had conveyed those concerns to the management of CUHK, HKU and PolyU, and requested the universities to review their security measures on campus according to their respective conditions. The relevant considerations mainly included the formulation of a security system and enhancement of campus management and improvements to the building designs of the proposed projects

and enhancement of the structural safety of the buildings. Members noted that the management of the universities had completed a review on campus security arrangements and proposed corresponding improvement measures, thus responded to Members' concerns. While the schematic designs of the three proposed projects under this item had not been changed according to the result of the review by management of the universities and enhancement of campus security level, the three proposed projects would provide the necessary teaching-research facilities as originally planned. The estimated expenditures of the three proposed projects under this item required no adjustments.

Healthcare manpower

18. Considering that the demand of healthcare manpower in future might exceed the projection in the Report of the Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development, members were concerned whether the designs of the three proposed works could cater for the future expansion needs. The Administration advised that it released the aforesaid Report in 2017 to lay the foundation for future healthcare manpower planning in Hong Kong, and support the healthy and sustainable development of the healthcare system. As an ongoing initiative to monitor the manpower of healthcare professionals, the Administration would conduct manpower planning and projections for healthcare professionals once every three years. A new round of manpower projection exercise had already commenced, and the results were expected to be published by end of 2020. When planning and designing the proposed works, the three universities had provided extra space to cope with the possibility of a persistent increase of healthcare training places in future, so as to meet long-term need for space. Moreover, the three universities were proactively planning for other short, medium and long-term works projects, in order to upgrade and increase their healthcare related teaching facilities. The scale of these work projects could be duly adjusted according to needs.

PolyU's project

19. Members asked about the details of the community clinic to be provided in PolyU's proposed new teaching building, including the positioning of the clinic, its estimates of income and expenditure as well as the financial arrangements of its daily operation and if PolyU would retain the Optometry Clinic, which currently provided services at PolyU's main campus, after the provision of a community clinic in the proposed new teaching building. Members also asked if PolyU would provide shuttle bus services connecting the main campus with the proposed new teaching building.

20. The representatives of PolyU advised that a rehabilitation clinic and an optometry clinic would be provided in the proposed new teaching building upon its completion. In addition to medical services for the community, the two clinics would also provide practicum opportunities for students of the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences and the School of Optometry. The optometry clinic to be provided in the proposed new teaching building mainly served the elderly and children in the district. The Optometry Clinic that was currently providing services at PolyU's main campus would continue its operation after the commencement of service of the new clinic. PolyU would, taking into account the operation of the new clinic, decide whether or not to retain the existing Optometry Clinic. PolyU also had plans to provide shuttle bus service connecting the main campus with the proposed new teaching building.

CUHK's project

21. Members enquired about how the Administration had come up with the cost for carrying out pre-contract consultancy for the works project to be set at \$59.7 million. Members also asked if the Administration would consider adjusting the project scope of the remainder of CUHK's project, so as to cover the repair works of campus facilities that were vandalized during demonstrations in CUHK in the latter half of 2019.

22. The representatives of CUHK replied that the authority had conducted a feasibility study on the proposed teaching-research complex and formulated a preliminary proposal on the allocation of the floor area of the proposed complex for teaching, research and other supporting uses after taking into account the views of the relevant departments of the university. As the detailed design of the proposed complex was yet to be formulated, CUHK, having made reference to the project costs and consultancy fees of other completed projects with similar nature and upon discussions with the Architectural Services Department, estimated that the total project cost of the proposed complex was around \$2.8 billion, and the pre-contract consultancy fee generally took up around 2% of the total project cost. It was only the estimated project cost and subject to FC's approval for this project, CUHK would engage consultants by tender and enter into a contract based on the actual returned tender price. Upon completion of the relevant consultancy studies and statutory procedures, CUHK would invite tenders for the construction works of the proposed teaching-research complex. Same as other public works projects, the funding proposal for FC's approval would be based on the returned tender price. CUHK would request the consultant to review the design of the proposed teaching-research complex and its external perimeter to ensure that security needs would be fulfilled.

Other works projects to enhance healthcare teaching facilities of universities

23. Noting that the Administration had earmarked about \$20 billion for various short, medium and long-term works projects to upgrade and increase the healthcare teaching facilities of CUHK, PolyU and HKU, members enquired if the provision concerned was sufficient to pay for the works expenditures of all related projects. The Administration advised that PolyU's project was about to proceed to the construction stage, its estimated expenditure would be higher than that of projects of CUHK and HKU for carrying out pre-contract consultancy or the conversion works of the existing campus. The representative of PolyU further advised that the renovation works of healthcare-related teaching facilities within the PolyU campus had commenced, and part of them could be completed successively in the coming two to three years to cope with the increase of healthcare training places. The works concerned did not have a direct relation with the PolyU's project being discussed. Also the construction of PolyU's integrated teaching building was a long-term works project. The authority had engaged a consultant to carry out a works study and it was expected that the funding proposal would be submitted in 2022-2023 for FC's approval. The whole works project was expected to be completed in 2029.

Latest position

24. The Administration will brief the Panel on Health Services and the Panel on Education on the progress of the enhancement projects concerned on 5 March 2021.

Relevant papers

25. A list of relevant papers is set out in **Appendix II**.

**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)).

Appendix II

List of relevant papers

Meeting	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Health Services and Panel on Education	21 January 2019	Administration's paper Administration's paper(power-point presentation materials) Administration's paper (Supplementary Information) Information note prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat Minutes
Public Works Subcommittee	31 May 2019	Administration's paper - PWSC(2019-20)13 Minutes (Chinese only)
	19 June 2019	Administration's paper - PWSC(2019-20)17 Minutes
Finance Committee	26 June 2020	Administration's paper - FCR(2020-21)3 Minutes