

Panel on Health Services

List of outstanding items for discussion
(position as at 12 June 2024)

	Subject	Proposed timing for discussion
1.	Elderly Health Care Voucher Greater Bay Area Pilot Scheme The Administration is taking forward the ‘Elderly Health Care Voucher Greater Bay Area Pilot Scheme’ (“Pilot Scheme”) to extend the coverage of the Elderly Health Care Vouchers to suitable medical institutions in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (“GBA”) next year. The preliminary target is to cover about five additional medical institutions as trial service points for provision of primary healthcare services at GBA cities where Hong Kong elderly have closer ties with, as well as to include individual designated medical institutions providing dental services in places such as Shenzhen. The Administration plans to brief the Panel on the latest progress of the Pilot Scheme.	July 2024
2.	Development of Chinese medicine Item proposed by Prof Hon CHAN Wing-kwong and Hon Elizabeth QUAT on 16 January 2024. The Administration plans to brief the Panel on the latest progress of various policy initiatives relating to the development of Chinese medicine.	July 2024
3.	Implementation of the regulatory regime under the Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance (Cap. 633) The item was referred to the Panel for follow-up by Subcommittee on Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance (Specification of Date for Section 135(1)(a))	Second half of 2024

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Notice and Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance (Specification of Date for Section 136(1)(a)) Notice.

At the policy briefing on 21 October 2019, members were advised that the application period for licences for private hospitals started on 2 July 2019, and that for day procedure centres would commence on 2 January 2020.

Subsequently on the Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance (Commencement) Notice 2021 in August 2021, the Government indicated that, under the phased implementation plan, the regulatory regime for clinics and health services establishments would commence at a later stage. Taking into account the Department of Health (“DH”)’s manpower situation, particularly the need for redeploying staff for COVID-19 related duties, applications for clinic licences and request for letters of exemption were expected to commence in 2023 at the earliest.

The Administration advised in January 2024 that as the COVID-19 epidemic subsided in 2023, DH has been planning the publicity and relevant guidelines in preparation for commencing the application for clinic licences and exemption letters for small practice clinics. The Government will brief the Panel at a suitable juncture when the preparation work is completed.

4. Corporate governance (including internal auditing and handling of patients’ privacy), and manpower situation of the Hospital Authority

Second half of
2024

This subject includes the following items proposed by Members:

Hon Alice MAK requested vide her letter dated 10 May 2021 (LC Paper No. CB(4)985/20-21(01)) the Panel to discuss the Hospital Authority (“HA”)’s handling of patients’ privacy;

Hon CHAN Han-pan proposed vide his letter dated 17 March 2020 (LC Paper No. CB(2)727/19-20(01)) that

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the Panel should discuss the effectiveness of the internal auditing mechanism of HA;

Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee at the Panel meeting on 25 January 2022 raised concern that some HA's doctors have turned to private practice after receiving specialist training in HA and requested to discuss the proposed topic; and

Corporate governance and manpower situation of HA and Progress report on the use of the additional funding earmarked in the 2019-2020 Budget for HA's work concerning its manpower, drug treatments and medical equipment.

In January 2024, the above items were merged as suggested by the Administration.

- 5. Provision of one-stop services for victims of sexual violence in and prevention of crime in psychiatric wards of public hospitals** To be confirmed

This subject was originally placed on the Panel's list of outstanding list for discussion as two separate items (viz. (i) Provision of one-stop services for victims of sexual violence in public hospitals and (ii) Prevention of crime in psychiatric wards of the hospitals under HA). In November 2019, the two items were merged as suggested by the Administration.

- 6. Pilot Accredited Registers Scheme for Healthcare Professions** To be confirmed

The Panel held a special meeting to receive views from members of the public on the subject on 10 December 2018. The Administration advised at the meeting that the Accreditation Agent announced the accreditation results for the speech therapist and audiologist professions in April and November 2018 respectively, and expected to announce the accreditation

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results for dietitian and educational psychologist professions in phases by the first quarter of 2019. Separately, the accreditation process for the clinical psychologist profession has commenced. Upon completion of the accreditation, the Accreditation Agent will review the effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme and report to the Administration with recommended measures for improvement. The Administration would study how to formulate a statutory registration regime for relevant accredited professions based on the Pilot Scheme.

At the Panel meeting on 17 January 2023, Dr Hon David LAM Tzit-yuen suggested discussion of the statutory registration of five healthcare professions (namely clinical psychologists, educational psychologists, dietitians, audiologists and speech therapists) under primary healthcare development.

The Administration advised in January 2024 that Dr Hon David LAM Tzit-yuen had raised an oral question on the relevant subject at the LegCo meeting on 1 November 2023, and the Government had [replied](#).

7. Provision of treatment and support for cancer patients and rare disease patients To be confirmed

Hon Elizabeth QUAT requested vide her letter dated 13 September 2022 (LC Paper No. CB(4)828/2022(01)) the Panel to discuss the subject on “Strengthening support for rare disease patients and cancer patients”. The Administration’s response has been issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)858/2022(01).

8. Public-private Partnership Programme To be confirmed

Dr Hon CHIANG Lai-wan proposed vide her letter dated 2 November 2020 (LC Paper No. CB(2)161/20-21(03)) that the Panel should discuss in the 2020-2021 legislative session the enhancement of the Public-private Partnership Programme. She further suggested vide her

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letter dated 18 May 2021 (LC Paper No. CB(4)1010/20-21(01)) that the Panel Chairman should arrange for discussion of the subject as soon as possible. The Administration's response to the letter was issued to members on 2 July 2021 vide LC Paper No. CB(4)1191/20-21(01).

Dr Hon David LAM Tzit-yuen further suggested discussion of this subject on 16 January 2024.

9. Ophthalmology services

To be confirmed

Item proposed by Hon YANG Wing-kit at the Panel meeting on 25 January 2022. Hon YANG Wing-kit raised concern about the prolonged waiting time for bookings for ophthalmology specialist services by the elderly, and requested that the Administration should review the effectiveness of providing ophthalmology specialist services.

10. Comprehensive policy on digital health technologies and legal framework of telehealth services

To be confirmed

Item proposed by Hon Duncan CHIU, Prof Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun and Dr Hon David LAM Tzit-yuen at the Panel meeting on 25 January 2022. Hon Duncan CHIU proposed discussion on the comprehensive policy on digital health technologies. In addition, he and Prof LEUNG proposed that a legal framework of telehealth services be formulated by the Administration.

11. Urban-rural healthcare system and general outpatient services in the evening and during weekend

To be confirmed

Item proposed by Hon LAM So-wai at the Panel meeting on 25 January 2022. She raised concern about the balance and development of urban-rural medical resources, and proposed discussion of the

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implementation of a government-led urban-rural healthcare system suitable to Hong Kong in the long run. She also proposed enhancement of general outpatient services in the evening and during weekend.	
12. Reforming the composition and functions of the Medical Council of Hong Kong	To be confirmed
Item proposed by Hon CHAN Hoi-yan on 17 January 2023.	
At the request of Hon CHAN Hoi-yan, the Research Office of the Research and Information Division of the Legislative Council Secretariat prepared an information note on “ Composition, complaint investigation and disciplinary inquiry mechanisms of medical councils in selected places ” dated 22 November 2023 (IN23/2023).	
13. Healthcare financing issues	To be confirmed
Item proposed by Dr Hon David LAM Tzit-yuen on 17 January 2023 and 16 January 2024. Dr LAM suggested discussion on how to further enhance the Voluntary Health Insurance Scheme by providing semi-private ward in public hospitals for people who had taken out voluntary health insurance, and exploring the establishment of individual or family healthcare accounts and adopting a co-payment model in the provision of newer and more expensive healthcare services.	
At the request of Dr LAM, the Research Office of the Research and Information Division of the Legislative Council Secretariat prepared an information note on “ Healthcare financing in Singapore and the United States ” dated 28 June 2023 (IN13/2023).	

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14.	Measures to support people having “Post COVID-19 condition” or “Long COVID”, and promoting the use of telemedicine services for the elderly at home and in residential care homes for the elderly	To be confirmed
	<p>Hon LEUNG Man-kwong requested the Panel to follow up on measures to address the sequelae of children infected with COVID-19 vide his letter dated 13 June 2022 (LC Paper No. CB(4)548/2022(01)) (Chinese version only). The Administration’s response has been issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)664/2022(01).</p> <p>Hon Judy CHAN Kapui further suggested discussion of this subject on 17 January 2023.</p> <p>The Administration proposed in February 2023 to include this subject for discussion when there are major changes in epidemic prevention policy which entails the need to report to the Panel.</p>	
15.	Mental health services	To be confirmed
	<p>Item proposed by Hon LAM So-wai on 17 January 2023. Ms LAM proposed provision of such services by District Health Centres to deal with problems such as suicide and domestic violence. At the meeting on 16 January 2024, Hon LAM So-wai and Hon Elizabeth QUAT further suggested discussion of this subject. Ms LAM expressed concern about the suicide problem of children and carers of persons with disabilities.</p> <p>The Administration advised in January 2024 that it strived to implement the 10 enhanced measures announced in June 2023 for supporting persons in mental recovery and those with mental health needs, which included launching a pilot scheme in three District Health Centres in collaboration with community organizations to provide mental health assessment for those in need, and to provide early follow-up and referral for high-risk cases. At the Panel meeting on 17 November 2023, the</p>	

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Government made a report under the agenda item on “Report on the new mental health initiatives and work of the Advisory Committee on Mental Health”.

At the meeting of the Panel on Welfare Services on 19 February 2024, members were advised that as mental health was related to medical services and issues of student mental health was related to education. After discussion, the Chairman of the Panel on Welfare Services, the Chairman of the Panel on Health Services and the Chairman of the Panel on Education agreed that the Panel on Education would take the lead in convening a joint meeting with the Panel on Health Services and the Panel on Welfare Services to discuss “Mental health related issues”.

16. Review of fees and charges for public healthcare services To be confirmed

Item proposed by Prof Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, Revd Canon Hon Peter Douglas KOON Ho-ming and Hon Elizabeth QUAT on 16 January 2024. Members expressed concern about Hong Kong people who had settled overseas returning to Hong Kong to receive public healthcare services, abuse of the accident and emergency departments, and ways to resolve the charging problem in the future, such as whether tiered charging would be adopted.