

**For discussion  
on 18 October 2024**

**Legislative Council Panel on Health Services**

**Update of the Chinese Medicine Hospital of Hong Kong Project**

**Purpose**

This paper updates Members on the progress of the Chinese Medicine Hospital of Hong Kong project.

**Development background and positioning of the Chinese Medicine Hospital**

2. The Government is committed to promoting the development of Chinese medicine (CM) in Hong Kong. It was announced in the 2014 Policy Address that a site on Pak Shing Kok Road in Tseung Kwan O had been reserved for developing the first CM hospital in Hong Kong. The Government further announced in the 2018 Policy Address that CM would be incorporated into the healthcare system in Hong Kong through Government subsidising defined CM services, which included a combination of Government-subsidised inpatient and outpatient services offered by the future CM hospital. In May 2018, the Health Bureau (HHB) (formerly the Food and Health Bureau) established the Chinese Medicine Hospital Project Office (CMHPO) to oversee the development of the CM hospital project and take forward the planning, design, construction and commissioning of the CM hospital.

3. The CM hospital is constructed by the Government. In 2021, Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) was selected through tendering procedures as the Contractor for operation of the hospital. In the same year, HKBU incorporated the HKBU Chinese Medicine Hospital Company Limited as the Operator to manage, operate and maintain the hospital. The construction works of the hospital commenced in the same year, marking the beginning of the commissioning stage of its development. Since then, the HHB has been actively taking forward various preparations for the commissioning of the hospital with the Contractor and the Operator.

4. The CM hospital will be operated under a public-private partnership model. As a flagship CM institution in Hong Kong, it will undertake five key missions, namely clinical services, training and education, research, collaboration and creating health values. Taking on the role of a “change driver”, the hospital will engage in positive interaction with various stakeholders of the CM industry to foster CM development in Hong Kong, the Greater Bay Area and the international community.

5. The Government has announced in October 2024 that the official name of the first CM hospital in Hong Kong is The Chinese Medicine Hospital of Hong Kong (CMHHK) (香港中醫醫院).

### **Service commencement of the CMHHK and its five-year service plan**

6. The services of the CMHHK will cover primary, secondary and tertiary services. Equipped with 400 beds, the CMHHK will provide pure CM services, services with CM playing the predominant role and Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine services, with modes of delivery including inpatient, day-patient, outpatient and community outreach services.

7. Within the first year after service commencement, the CMHHK will provide outpatient and day-patient services, and set up multi-disciplinary clinical teams to pave the way for the full-scale launching of hospital services. Starting from the second year after service commencement, the CMHHK will provide inpatient services by phases. Having regard to the progress and demand, it is planned that various clinical services will be fully launched progressively within five years after the service commencement, including the operation of a Clinical Trial and Research Centre.

8. Upon service commencement, the CMHHK will launch in full scale six specialised CM services, namely Internal Medicine in CM, External Medicine in CM, Gynaecology in CM, Paediatrics in CM, Orthopaedics and Traumatology in CM and Acupuncture and Moxibustion in CM. Moreover, the CMHHK has selected 23 special diseases for strategic development of CM special disease programmes (**Appendix**), in light of the clinical needs of the local community, the distinguishing features and strengths of CM, and the availability of talent and collaborative support. 12 special disease programmes will be commenced immediately upon the service commencement of the CMHHK, which include, inter alia, stroke rehabilitation, cancer

rehabilitation or palliative service, chronic pain, and preventive care, while the rest of the special disease programmes will be rolled out progressively within five years from the service commencement.

## **Progress of commissioning preparatory work of the CMHHK**

### *Construction works*

9. The CMHHK and the adjacent Government Chinese Medicines Testing Institute are flagship projects in the development of CM in Hong Kong. The CMHHK is the first multi-storey hospital project adopting Modular Integrated Construction (MIC) method, which requires meticulous co-ordination throughout the construction process. In collaboration with the Architectural Services Department (ArchSD), the HHB has been closely monitoring and assessing the building contractor's work progress. The installation of MIC components and the internal works of the building are being carried out simultaneously. It is expected that the construction works will be completed by mid-2025, with the hospital building and facilities to be handed over to the Operator by phases upon completion. The HHB has been working with the ArchSD during commissioning stage on tasks such as setting out a schedule for the pre-installation of furniture and equipment, arranging for the phased handover of hospital areas to tie in with the hospital's plan of service commencement, etc., so as to dovetail with the Operator's commissioning preparatory work.

### *Information technology systems of the CMHHK*

10. Regarding information and technology (IT) systems, the system analysis of the core hospital IT system and the design of its functions are largely completed. System software development stage has begun, with full-scale testing planned to start in the first quarter of 2025. Other sub-systems like the Enterprise Resources Planning System are also under development. The IT infrastructure of the hospital building, including the cabling work and the installation of major wired and wireless networks, is expected to be completed before the service commencement.

### *Procurement of furniture and equipment*

11. The furniture and equipment procurement work of the CMHHK is at its peak. The CMHPO has given priority to the procurement of building services related hospital equipment and large-scale systems

according to a procurement list and has completed the procurement work for some of them. The procurement of other furniture and equipment will be completed by phases. The installation, inspection and acceptance, and testing of procured items will be arranged by stages subject to the hospital site readiness so as to meet its service commencement needs.

### *Preparatory work of the Operator*

12. The core management team of the Operator formally assumed office in January 2024, marking the final stage of the commissioning preparatory work for the CMHHK. At present, its key areas of work include establishing the hospital's governance structure, setting up its operation system, formulating hospital corporate policies, manpower planning and remuneration packages, applying for the licences required for various services, drafting contracts for outsourced services, drawing up details of fees and charges for market-oriented services, developing a mechanism for collaboration among the three local universities with a School of Chinese Medicine, the Hospital Authority (HA) and the 18 Chinese Medicine Clinics cum Training and Research Centres (CMCTRs) and the like. All these tasks are progressing on schedule in an orderly manner.

### *Industry consultation*

13. Industry support is crucial to the development of the CMHHK. For the purpose of exchanging views with the CM sector on the development of the first CM hospital in Hong Kong, the CMHPO has organised ten open forums<sup>1</sup> since October 2018, covering various topics related to the CMHHK as well as sharing its latest information and development progress. In tandem with the commissioning of the CMHHK, the CMHPO plans to organise more consultation activities with different themes next year, in order to cast a wide net for views on the way to enhance the development plan of the CMHHK.

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<sup>1</sup> The themes of the open forums held include: the development and planning of the CMHHK; the financial arrangement, contract management and performance assessment of the CMHHK; the services, teaching, training and scientific research of the CMHHK; the design and facilities of the CMHHK; specialised CM services and special disease programmes; consultation on the development of CM clinical services at the CMHHK and communication with stakeholders; the planning of automation and IT systems for the CMHHK; CM nursing development in hospital practice; the role of Chinese medicines professionals at the CMHHK; training programmes developed under the Chinese Medicine Development Fund to support the CMHHK's services as well as CM talent development and planning.

## *Nurturing and pooling talent for the CMHHK*

### Training programmes subsidised by the Chinese Medicine Development Fund

14. The Government officially launched the Chinese Medicine Development Fund (CMDF) in 2019 with a view to enhancing the overall standard of the CM sector and promoting the development of CM on all fronts. The CMDF provides focused support for, inter alia, the development needs of the CMHHK by nurturing and pooling talent through various funding schemes.

15. To strengthen the building of a CM talent pool for Hong Kong, the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (NATCM) and the HHB jointly organised the “Hong Kong Chinese Medicine Talent Training Programme”, of which two short-term and one medium-term training programmes have been successfully held so far, covering CM practice in acupuncture and moxibustion, gynaecology, orthopaedics and traumatology, as well as Chinese medicines compounding and processing techniques and other topics. With funding support from the CMDF, trainees are given the opportunity to undergo high-quality theoretical and clinical training in Beijing. Training places are reserved in each of the programmes for participation by Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) and Chinese medicines professionals nominated by the Operator. The HHB will continue to collaborate with the NATCM in rolling out more short-term and medium-term training programmes, in the meanwhile to explore the launch of a three-year long-term training programme. A certain number of training place quotas will continue to be reserved in future programmes for participation by suitable personnel recommended by the Operator.

16. In addition, the CMDF has launched a “Talent Training Programme for the Development of Chinese Medicine Hospital” under its Strategic Theme Commissioned Project Funding Programme to commission professional bodies or academic institutions to organise training programmes on designated themes, with a view to launching training courses that suit the talent needs of the CMHHK. The course themes include “Clinical Collaboration of the CM and Nursing Professions”, “Clinical Collaboration of the CM and Allied Health Professions”, “Health Administration and Hospital Management in CM”, “Medico-legal Liability of Individuals and Institutions”, “Clinical Risk Management and Patient Safety”, and “Chinese Medicine Nursing Training Programme”.

### Establishment of a talent pool for the CMHHK

17. The Operator is formulating a mechanism for the establishment of a talent pool comprising CMPs, Chinese medicines professionals and healthcare professionals interested in taking part in the CMHHK's work, to meet the needs of hospital commissioning and continuous development. The above-mentioned personnel can join the talent pool through institution nomination or individual enrolment, and members of the talent pool will be given priority in enrolling for CMHHK-related training programmes. The Operator will also update them on the latest development and information of the CMHHK through different channels, as well as proactively explore with them opportunities to work in the hospital.

### *Collaboration with universities, the HA, the CMCTRs and the industry*

18. As an "open hospital", the CMHHK welcomes industry participation in hospital work in different ways, which will promote patient flow, talent flow and knowledge flow and thereby fulfill the hospital's role as a "change driver" in promoting the overall development of CM in Hong Kong. CMPs, Chinese medicines professionals and other healthcare personnel may be engaged as full-time or part-time employees of the CMHHK or participate in the hospital's work as honorary staff. The CMHHK is exploring to establish mechanisms and channels for inviting institutions or individuals in the private sector to participate in the hospital's work in different ways.

19. The HHB is actively examining how the CMCTRs and the CMHHK can work in partnership and is exploring ways to enhance the collaboration between the two in areas such as services, training, education and research. The CMHHK will also function as a teaching hospital of the three local universities with a School of Chinese Medicine to provide clinical training for their undergraduate or postgraduate students. The Government will also provide funding to support the CM personnel of the above institutions to participate in the services and training programmes of the CMHHK on a rotational basis. The HHB and the Operator will jointly set up working groups with the universities and the HA respectively to discuss and plan the details.

### *A Bill relating to the operation of the CMHHK*

20. The CMHHK is built by the Government. It is managed, operated and maintained by the Operator, with the Contractor and the

Operator being responsible for execution of contractual requirements. As a hospital controlled by the Government, the CMHHK is not a private healthcare facility<sup>2</sup> as defined in section 3 of the Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance (Cap. 633) and is not subject to regulation under the existing provisions of Cap. 633 which are applicable to private healthcare facilities. The Government will ensure the professional quality of the CMHHK through the hospital governance and structure, and also need to ensure that provisions in other ordinances or regulations that are generally applicable to private healthcare facilities or public hospitals in relation to exemptions or exceptions, conferment or protection of rights and benefits, or defences in the course of providing hospital services will also apply to the CMHHK under the same circumstances, with a view to facilitating the CMHHK to operate smoothly and enjoy the same status corresponding to other hospitals. In this connection, the Government has preliminarily identified certain ordinances or regulations relating to the daily operation of the CMHHK requiring technical amendments, which may include the following situations:

- (a) Ensuring that patients who need to be hospitalised in the CMHHK due to sickness or employment-related injury are entitled to the same sickness allowance or clinical expenses as patients admitted to private healthcare facilities or public hospitals; and
- (b) Ensuring that smoking is prohibited both indoors and outdoors in the CMHHK applicable with the relevant penalties.

The actual scope and content will be elucidated in detail when the bill is introduced into the Legislative Council (LegCo).

21. The Government proposes to introduce into the LegCo a bill, which is operational and technical in nature, to implement the above

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<sup>2</sup> Section 3 of Cap. 633 reads as follows:

“(1) A private healthcare facility is any of the following facilities that is not managed or controlled by a **specified authority**—

- (a) a hospital;
- (b) a day procedure centre;
- (c) a clinic;
- (d) a health services establishment,

other than a day procedure centre, clinic or health services establishment primarily used for teaching or research relating to medicine or dentistry and that is managed or controlled by a scheduled university.

(2) Also, a private healthcare facility does not include any premises that are not normally used for medical purposes but are temporarily used for emergency or rescue purposes.” (emphasis added)  
According to Section 2(1) of Cap. 633, “specified authority” includes the Government.

legislative proposal. The Government plans to introduce the bill into the LegCo in the 2025 legislative session with a view to completing the legislative process before the hospital commences services.

22. Setting up a hospital that provides services with CM playing a predominant role is a breakthrough in the healthcare system of Hong Kong, and the Government expects that more hospitals will provide hospital services with CM playing a predominant role in the future. After the CMHHK has come into operation for some time, based on the actual experience of the CMHHK, the Government plans to develop a long-term and appropriate legislative framework and regulatory regime for the regulation of healthcare institutions that provide hospital services with CM playing a predominant role.

### **Commissioning timetable**

23. Notwithstanding the tight construction schedule and the increasingly heavy and complex commissioning preparatory work being undertaken by the Operator, the CMHHK is targeted, based on the current progress, to commence operation by phases in December 2025.

### **Advice Sought**

24. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

**Health Bureau**  
**October 2024**



## Appendix

### Special disease programmes to be rolled out within five years after the commissioning of the CMHHK

<b>Internal Medicine in CM</b>	<b>External Medicine in CM</b>	<b>Gynaecology in CM</b>	<b>Paediatrics in CM</b>	<b>Orthopaedics and Traumatology in CM</b>	<b>Acupuncture and Moxibustion in CM</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cancer rehabilitation or palliative care*</li> <li>- Preventive care*</li> <li>- Elderly degenerative diseases*</li> <li>- Mental illness*</li> <li>- Seasonal flu*</li> <li>- Functional digestive disorder*</li> <li>- Chronic kidney diseases</li> <li>- Cardiovascular diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chronic skin diseases*</li> <li>- Macular degeneration</li> <li>- Peripheral vascular diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infertility, pre-natal and postnatal care*</li> <li>- Menstrual diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Five retardations*</li> <li>- Paediatric gastrointestinal diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chronic joint diseases*</li> <li>- Strain and sprain</li> <li>- Pelvic displacement</li> <li>- Herniated intervertebral disc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stroke rehabilitation*</li> <li>- Chronic pain*</li> <li>- Insomnia</li> <li>- Facial paralysis</li> </ul>

\*denotes special disease programmes to be rolled out upon the hospital service commencement.

(The roll-out plan for the above special disease programmes of the CMHHK is subject to adjustment in view of the changing service demand. Other special disease programmes will also be developed in the future.)