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Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2016-17

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Session No. : 20

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CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)01

(Question Serial No. S0051)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie TAM)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Pursuant to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0012:

- 1) How many cases were prosecuted by the operators and/or referred to the police in the past 3 years?
- 2) In respect of the large-scale monitoring surveys undertaken by the Transport Department (TD), what were the manpower, resources and details involved?
- 3) How many inspections were conducted on the public transport operators by TD staff in the past 3 years?
- 4) The Scheme has been implemented for years and abuse is reported from time to time, including non-eligible persons using Elder Octopus to enjoy the concession, and short-haul passengers taking long-haul buses. This has significantly increased the fiscal burden. In this regard, will the Government consider carrying out an interim review on the Scheme to address the problems?

Asked by: Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long (Member Question No.36)

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows --

- (1) According to the information provided by public transport operators to the Transport Department (TD), there were a total of 179 prosecutions instituted by the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) Corporation Limited and 8 cases referred by bus companies to the Police from the implementation of the Scheme up to end January 2016.

- (2) TD has commissioned independent consultants to conduct large-scale monitoring surveys on a regular basis. The survey works include: collecting the data on eligible passengers travelling by MTR, buses, green minibuses and ferries with a view to monitoring the operation of the Scheme and the passenger trip data provided by operators. In parallel, independent consultants partner with operators to collect on site information on suspected cases of abuses, while the former also observes the latter's implementation of anti-abuse measures, e.g. posting notices, etc. In the past three years, \$21.9 million was spent in commissioning independent consultants to conduct large-scale monitoring surveys. At the same time, TD will monitor the work of the independent consultants. A dedicated time-limited team was set up in TD to administer the Scheme, including monitoring the work of the independent consultants.
- (3) As at end January 2016, TD has conducted 180 on-site inspections to monitor the implementation of the Scheme by public transport operators and the situation of passengers when enjoying the concessionary fare.
- (4) The Government will conduct a comprehensive review of the Scheme in 2018.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)02

(Question Serial No. S0057)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie TAM)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

In Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0032, the Government indicates that the Government Public Transport Fare Concession Scheme for the Elderly and Eligible Persons with Disabilities has a \$2 threshold and is therefore inapplicable to tram rides costing less than \$2. As many transport modes cannot be subsidised under this rigid principle, the elderly and persons with disabilities are unable to fully benefit from the Scheme. When will the Government review the Scheme to modify the rigid policy concept?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-hing (Member Question No. 11)

Reply:

The Government plans to conduct a comprehensive review of the Scheme in 2018.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)03

(Question Serial No. S0058)

Head: (141) Government Secretariat: Labour and Welfare Bureau

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Miss Annie TAM)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Pursuant to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0033, given that the Government could not provide an estimate of the number of applications for Disability Allowance (DA) from people with loss of one limb for this year, could it estimate the range of the number of these DA applicants based on the physical disability data from records of the registration cards for people with disabilities or from the Hospital Authority's patients records, so as to make funding provision?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

According to the records of the Central Registry for Rehabilitation, broken down by types of disabilities (regardless of the degree of disabilities), there were 13 395 persons with physical disabilities registered and issued with the Registration Card for Persons with Disabilities in 2015-16 (as at end-December 2015). However, this number not only includes the condition of loss of one limb or its functions, but also other types of physical disabilities. The Hospital Authority (HA) maintains and records patients' data mainly based on the patients' diseases (for example, cancer, heart and renal diseases) or medical procedure received (for example, surgical procedure such as hip replacement for medical care and related purposes). As physical disability is neither a disease nor a medical procedure, HA does not maintain record of the number of patients with physical disabilities.

The Social Welfare Department will continue to follow up with relevant parties (e.g. HA) on the recommendation of improving the existing assessment mechanism for the DA, and monitor the number of medical assessment conducted and the number of DA applications approved, in order to estimate the additional financial implications involved.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)04

(Question Serial No. S0064)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

To follow up on Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0051, please provide for the Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low Income Families (the Pilot Scheme), the number of participants who have applied for services relating to dementia at the same time, and the number of those who have not.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

Regarding the Pilot Scheme, the Social Welfare Department does not have information about whether the elderly persons under care are also applying for services relating to dementia at the same time or not.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0065)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

Regarding the issue of street sleepers in Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0058, would the Government please advise –

1. Will the Government commission a study in the future to find out more about the problem of street sleepers?
2. As it is pointed out in the reply that street sleeping is a complex issue involving different departments, why is there no inter-departmental task group with special responsibility for the issue?
3. What is the current policy on street sleepers?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

Street sleeping is a complex social issue involving polices of different bureaux and departments. The Government has been very concerned about the plight of street sleepers. Various bureaux and departments, including the Social Welfare Department (SWD), have been paying attention to and following up on issues relating to street sleepers. In addition to acting within their own areas of responsibility, they have also joined hands with the district service units, as well as collaborating and liaising closely with each other to render support to street sleepers, with a view to enhancing their motivation to accept services and assisting them to quit street sleeping as soon as possible.

SWD has been collecting data of local street sleepers through its units and non-governmental organisations specialised in serving street sleepers in order to update the figures and information on its Street Sleepers Registry. Relevant bureaux and departments will continue to monitor closely the situation and work out inter-departmental action plans and strategies in the light of actual circumstances and needs. Appropriate measure will also be taken to jointly assist street sleepers having regard to their changing service needs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)06

(Question Serial No. S0066)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

1. With reference to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0050, does the Government still consider it adequate to have an estimated increase of just 1 800 cases under the Indicators for the coming year?
2. It is stated in the Reply that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will deploy or allocate additional relevant expenditure based on the actual caseload. Please provide the amount of the additional expenditure required to be deployed and allocated for the past 3 years.
3. The Annex of the Reply shows that the percentage of the number of cases served to the total number of cases is rather high for some hospitals. For example, Tuen Mun Hospital had 31 medical social workers (MSWs) but they took up 14.44% of the whole caseload. Will the Government increase the manpower of these hospitals in light of the circumstances?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. When drawing up the estimated number of cases to be served for 2016-17, the projected figure was based on the information available at the time, taking into account the new service measures announced by the Hospital Authority (HA), the distribution of cases in the past, etc. Nevertheless, the actual number of cases served is affected by a number of factors, such as the nature and complexity of different cases, the service measures formulated by HA, etc. When drawing up the Revised Estimate for the number of cases served in 2016-17 at year end, SWD will examine carefully the actual number of cases served at the time in order to make further assessment and revise the number of cases served for the year as necessary.

2. From 2013-14 to 2015-16, SWD has provided a total of 7 additional MSWs based on the workload of MSWs and the demand for medical social service, which involved an additional full-year expenditure of about \$3.7 million.
3. Besides considering the actual caseload served by MSWs, SWD has to take into account the service areas of individual public hospitals or specialty clinics, nature and complexity of cases as well as the demand for welfare service, etc. when deploying the manpower of MSWs. Therefore, the number of cases served is only one of the considerations for deploying the manpower of MSWs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0067)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

1. Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0051 shows that the persons participating in the Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low Income Families (Pilot Scheme) are mostly aged above 50. Given that these participants are also persons in middle and old age, does the Government make changes accordingly when providing support and training to these carers?
2. Will the Government make adjustments and enhance publicity targeting relevant age groups in the future in response to the lack of young persons participating in the Pilot Scheme?
3. As a total of 566 carers had left the Pilot Scheme, accounting for about 1/4 of the participants, why is the Government not filling the vacancies left?

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. Every carer participating in the Pilot Scheme must receive support services provided by the recognised service providers (RSPs). The social workers of RSPs will regularly meet the carers and the elderly persons under care to know more about the conditions of the elderly persons and the caring capability of the carers. Appropriate support and counselling are provided based on the needs and caring conditions of the elderly persons/carers, while appropriate training for taking care of the elderly persons is recommended or chosen for the carers as necessary to enhance their caring capability.
2. The Pilot Scheme aims to provide living allowance for carers from low income families in order to supplement their daily expenses. Without targeting carers at any age group, any carer who is aged above 15 and meets all the criteria of the Pilot Scheme, including family income limit, can apply.

3. The two-year Pilot Scheme was launched in June 2014, providing 2 000 places. The closing date for submission of application was 31 January 2015. As all the 1 997 eligible carers had already been given approval and granted the allowance, there have been no eligible carers to fill the vacancies left by the carers who have stopped participating in the Pilot Scheme.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)08

(Question Serial No. S0068)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

To follow up on Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0055, in which it is mentioned that there is no information on the users receiving the Integrated Home Care Services (IHCS) and Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (EHCCS), please list by district and by the number of service places the organisations providing such services for the past 3 years.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

The lists of organisations providing IHCS(Ordinary Cases)(OC) and IHCS(Frail Cases)(FC) with breakdown by district and number of service places from 2013-14 to 2015-16 are set out at Annex 1 and 2 respectively.

The list of organisations providing EHCCS with breakdown by district and number of service places from 2013-14 to 2015-16 is set out at Annex 3.

**Distribution of IHCS(OC) Places
(From 2013-14 to 2015-16)**

District	Name of non-governmental organisations (NGOs)	Number of service places ^[Note]		
		2013-14	2014-15	2015-2016 (As at end-December 2015)
Central & Western	St. James' Settlement	665	567	595
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society			
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited			
Islands	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	258	245	248
Wan Chai	St. James' Settlement	530	505	518
	Methodist Centre			
Eastern	Hong Kong Society for Aged	1 681	1 584	1 491
	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals			
	Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre			
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society			
Southern	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	1 033	1 028	1 012
	Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association			
	Social Service Centre			
Wong Tai Sin	Caritas-Hong Kong	1 403	1 433	1 477
	Association for Engineering and Medical Volunteer Services			
	Christian Family Service Centre			
	Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council			
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited			
	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service			
Sai Kung	Caritas-Hong Kong	374	388	398
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society			
	Salvation Army			
Kwun Tong	Christian Family Service Centre	1 889	1 946	1 939
	Hong Kong Christian Service			
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society			
	Salvation Army			
Yau Tsim Mong	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service	870	918	916
	Salvation Army			
	Mongkok Kai-Fong Association Limited			
Kowloon City	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	1 330	1 328	1 291
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited			
	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association			

District	Name of non-governmental organisations (NGOs)	Number of service places ^[Note]		
		2013-14	2014-15	2015-2016 (As at end-December 2015)
Sham Shui Po	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	1 707	1 657	1 675
	Hong Kong Christian Service			
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society			
	Caritas-Hong Kong			
	Sik Sik Yuen			
	Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council			
Sha Tin	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited	1 417	1 394	1 419
	Caritas-Hong Kong			
	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong			
	Hong Kong Children & Youth Services			
Tai Po	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	735	698	685
	Hong Kong Children & Youth Services			
	Salvation Army			
North	United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service	1 094	1 203	1 127
	Caritas-Hong Kong			
	Hong Kong Evangelical Church Social Service Limited			
Yuen Long	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	1 327	1 232	1 292
	Caritas-Hong Kong			
	Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council			
	Pok Oi Hospital			
Tsuen Wan	Yan Oi Tong	434	425	378
	Hong Kong Society for the Aged			
Kwai Tsing	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	1 051	1 155	1 097
	Hong Kong Society for the Aged			
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited			
Tuen Mun	Yan Oi Tong	1 248	1 283	1 270
	Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council			
Total		19 046	18 989	18 828

[Note] IHCS(OC) service providers set their individual service capacity.

**Distribution of IHCS(FC) Places
(From 2013-14 to 2015-16)**

District	Name of NGOs	Number of service places
Central & Western	St. James' Settlement	10
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	10
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited	20
Islands	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	20
Wan Chai	St. James' Settlement	20
	Methodist Centre	10
Eastern	Hong Kong Society for Aged	30
	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	20
	Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre	10
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	10
	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	10
Southern	Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service Centre	50
	Caritas-Hong Kong	30
Wong Tai Sin	Association for Engineering and Medical Volunteer Services	20
	Caritas-Hong Kong	10
	Christian Family Service Centre	10
	Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	10
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited	30
	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service	20
Sai Kung	Caritas-Hong Kong	10
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	10
	Salvation Army	10
Kwun Tong	Christian Family Service Centre	60
	Hong Kong Christian Service	10
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	40
	Salvation Army	40
Yau Tsim Mong	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service	10
	Salvation Army	20
	Mongkok Kai-Fong Association Limited	10
Kowloon City	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	10
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited	10
	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	10
Sham Shui Po	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	10
	Hong Kong Christian Service	15
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	10
	Caritas-Hong Kong	15
	Sik Sik Yuen	10
	Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	10

District	Name of NGOs	Number of service places
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited	20
Sha Tin	Caritas-Hong Kong	20
	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong	20
	Hong Kong Children & Youth Services	40
	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	40
Tai Po	Hong Kong Children & Youth Services	10
	Salvation Army	10
	United Christian Nethersole Community Health Service	10
North	Caritas-Hong Kong	10
	Hong Kong Evangelical Church Social Service Limited	10
	Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association	10
Yuen Long	Caritas-Hong Kong	30
	Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	10
	Pok Oi Hospital	20
	Yan Oi Tong	30
Tsuen Wan	Hong Kong Society for the Aged	10
	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	30
Kwai Tsing	Hong Kong Family Welfare Society	50
	Hong Kong Society for the Aged	20
	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited	20
Tuen Mun	Yan Oi Tong	15
	Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	15
Total		1 120

**Number of EHCCS Places
(From 2013-14 to 2015-16)**

District	2013-14 (As at 31 March 2014)		2014-15 (As at 28 February 2015)		1 March 2015 to 31 December 2015		
	By district team	By cluster team	By district team	By cluster team	By district team	By cluster team	
Central & Western	171 (St. James' Settlement)	174 (Methodist Centre)	171 (St. James' Settlement)	174 (Methodist Centre)	171 (St. James' Settlement)	174 (Methodist Centre)	173 (St. James' Settlement)
Wan Chai	154 (St. James' Settlement)		154 (St. James' Settlement)		154 (St. James' Settlement)		
Eastern	206 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)		206 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)		206 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)		
Southern	158 (Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service Centre)		158 (Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service Centre)		158 (Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service Centre)		
Islands	89 (Hong Kong Family Welfare Society)		89 (Hong Kong Family Welfare Society)		89 (Hong Kong Family Welfare Society)		
Yau Tsim Mong	188 (Po Leung Kuk)	236 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)	188 (Po Leung Kuk)	236 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)	188 (Po Leung Kuk)	392 ^[Note 1] (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)	143 (Hong Kong Family Welfare Society)
Kowloon City	290 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)		290 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)		290 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)		
Sham Shui Po	255 (Caritas-Hong Kong)		255 (Caritas-Hong Kong)		255 (Caritas-Hong Kong)		
Wong Tai Sin	406 (Christian Family Service Centre)	428 (Haven of Hope Christian Service)	406 (Christian Family Service Centre)	428 (Haven of Hope Christian Service)	406 (Christian Family Service Centre)	769 ^[Note 2] (Haven of Hope Christian Service)	
Sai Kung	228 (Haven of Hope Christian Service)		228 (Haven of Hope Christian Service)		228 (Haven of Hope Christian Service)		
Kwun Tong	421 (Hong Kong Family Welfare)	336 (Christian Family Service)	421 (Hong Kong Family Welfare)	336 (Christian Family Service)	421 (Hong Kong Family Welfare)	336 (Christian Family Service)	161 (Haven of Hope Christian)

District	2013-14 (As at 31 March 2014)		2014-15 (As at 28 February 2015)		1 March 2015 to 31 December 2015		
	By district team	By cluster team	By district team	By cluster team	By district team	By cluster team	
	Society)	Centre)	Society)	Centre)	Society)	Centre)	Service)
Sha Tin	192 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service-Hong Kong)	212 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service-Hong Kong)	192 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service- Hong Kong)	212 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service-Hong Kong)	192 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service-Hong Kong)	212 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service-Hong Kong)	182 (Tung Wah Group of Hospitals)
Tai Po	129 (The Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Social Service)		129 (The Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Social Service)		129 (The Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Social Service)		
North	141 (Heung Hoi Ching Kok Lin Association)		141 (Heung Hoi Ching Kok Lin Association)		141 (Heung Hoi Ching Kok Lin Association)		
Yuen Long	178 (Yan Oi Tong)	256 (Po Leung Kuk)	178 (Yan Oi Tong)	256 (Po Leung Kuk)	178 (Yan Oi Tong)	766 ^[Note 3] (Po Leung Kuk)	
Tuen Mun	160 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service-Hong Kong)		160 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service- Hong Kong)		160 (Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service-Hong Kong)		
Tsuen Wan	235 (Hong Kong Family Welfare Society)		235 (Hong Kong Family Welfare Society)		235 (Hong Kong Family Welfare Society)		
Kwai Tsing	336 (Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited)		336 (Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited)		336 (Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited)		
Sub-total	3 937	1 642	3 937	1 642	3 937	3 308	
Total	5 579		5 579		7 245		

[Note 1] Including 2 cluster teams.

[Note 2] Including 3 cluster teams.

[Note 3] Including 4 cluster teams.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)09

(Question Serial No. S0052)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With reference to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0150, what is the current number of places of occasional child care service (OCCS) provided by the service units in various districts?

Asked by: Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long

Reply:

As at December 2015, the number of places for OCCS in various districts is set out in the Annex.

**Number of places for OCCS
(as at December 2015)**

District	Number of places
Central & Western	13
Eastern	22
Islands	13
Kowloon City	22
Kwai Tsing	34
Kwun Tong	50
North	16
Sai Kung	20
Sha Tin	30
Sham Shui Po	26
Southern	18
Tai Po	17
Tsuen Wan	20
Tuen Mun	33
Wan Chai	10
Wong Tai Sin	34
Yau Tsim Mong	22
Yuen Long	34
Total	434

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0053)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With reference to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0154,

- 1) What were the things involved in each of the 15 prosecution cases?
- 2) The staffing establishment, caring procedures, conditions of residential care homes, etc. as required under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance (the Ordinance), which came into operation in 1996, are already outdated. However, a clear timetable for reviewing and amending the Ordinance has yet to be worked out. What are the reasons?

Asked by: Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

- 1) The Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly of the Social Welfare Department has taken a total of 15 prosecution actions over the past 3 years, involving matters such as staff employment, drug management, use of physical restraints, record keeping and giving false information.
- 2) Proposals relating to the amendment of the Ordinance involve many complex issues. Keeping an open mind all along, the Government will continue to listen to the views expressed through various channels and examine different options. The most important thing at this stage is to explore how the monitoring mechanism for Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (RCHEs) could be further enhanced under the existing legal framework with a view to assuring the service quality of RCHEs.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)11

(Question Serial No. S0054)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With reference to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0155, how many residential care homes and residential care places are expected to be converted and upgraded in 2015-16?

Asked by: Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long

Reply:

All care-and-attention places were upgraded in one go to provide a continuum of care in 2013-14. Regarding residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) with self-care hostel and home for the aged (H/A) places participating in the conversion programme to provide a continuum of care, the progress is affected by a number of factors, such as the situation of elderly residents of the self-care hostel and H/A places leaving the services, the need, feasibility and progress of internal improvement works, etc. It is therefore difficult to accurately estimate at this stage the number of RCHEs and residential care places that could be converted in 2016-17.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)12

(Question Serial No. S0055)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With reference to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0156, when does the Government expect the review report on the Pilot Scheme to be completed?

Asked by: Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long

Reply:

The Government has extended the Pilot Scheme on Visiting Pharmacist Services to March 2017. The effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme will be reviewed for considering the way forward.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0075)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for The Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

To follow up on Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0189, in which it is mentioned that for the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly (Pilot Scheme), the Government will continue to invite eligible organisations to submit applications, while the list and the number of service places are expected to be announced in the second or third quarter of 2016, would the Government please advise whether consultation with the Legislative Council will be continued after the list is announced or whether the plan will only be formally implemented after funding approval from the Legislative Council?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) invited eligible non-governmental organisations, social enterprises and private organisations to submit applications for joining the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme as Recognised Service Providers (RSPs) on 22 March 2016 and the closing date for the submission of application would be 25 April 2016. SWD will set up a Vetting Committee (the Committee) to examine the eligibility of the applicants. The list of qualified RSPs and their service places for the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme is expected to be announced in the third quarter of 2016 following the completion of the vetting procedures by the Committee. The date of service commencement of the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme is scheduled for October 2016.

SWD launches the second phase of the Pilot Scheme with a funding from the Lotteries Fund (LF) of about \$640 million, which covers the Government subsidy on voucher value and a seed money grant to RSPs to purchase vehicle and/or furniture and equipment they need under the Pilot Scheme. Prior to the application for funding from LF, SWD had already briefed the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services on 11 January 2016 and listened to the views of relevant bodies at the Panel meeting on 6 February 2016. After launching the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme, SWD will continue to report to the Legislative Council on the progress in due course.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0076)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (3) Services for the Elderly

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With reference to Reply Serial No. 0142, would the Government please advise –

1. In the 2 phases of the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services (the Navigation Scheme), how many trainees have dropped out and how many trainees have quitted the work?
2. Has the Government reviewed the effectiveness of the Navigation Scheme, including the workload and attractiveness of the sector, so as to work out the next phase of the Scheme?
3. What is the current plan of the Government to assist the trainees in elevating their level and pursuing self-advancement in the sector?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. The “first-hire-then-train” pilot project (the pilot project) was implemented in 2 phases, providing a total of 200 places with 211 trainees recruited. As at end-December 2015, there were 92 trainees under the pilot project and a total of 119 trainees had left the pilot project. As at end-December 2015, there were around 160 trainees under the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services (the Navigation Scheme) and a total of 13 trainees had left the Navigation Scheme.
2. The Government commissioned the Yuen Yuen Institute Social Service Section to implement the pilot project. The organisation concerned was required to review and submit a report on the implementation progress and effectiveness of the pilot project. Under the framework of the pilot project, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) refined some of the implementation details (including the working hours and the starting salary, etc.) and launched the Navigation Scheme in July 2015 to encourage young persons to join the elderly and rehabilitation services.

3. Under the pilot project and the Navigation Scheme, trainees are arranged to enroll in orientation programmes to prepare them for entering the care sectors before taking up work in elderly or rehabilitation service units. Apart from receiving on-the-job training in elderly or rehabilitation service units, trainees are also provided with subsidies from the Government to pursue a two-year part-time diploma course. Mentorship is also arranged by the service units to assist them in adapting to the working environment. After successfully completing the first year of the course, they may apply to the SWD for registration as a Health Worker. After completing the second year of the course, young persons who are interested in pursuing a career in the care service and meet relevant eligibility requirements may, on the basis of their multi-skills qualification, pursue other training courses on their own initiative and move further up their career ladder in the care services sector. It is also learned that some of the trainees who have completed the two-year-part-time course are pursuing courses relating to care services (e.g. certificate course for phlebotomists and course for physiotherapist aide, etc.) at their own expenses for self-advancement in the sector.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)15

(Question Serial No. S0077)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With reference to Reply Serial No. 0143, would the Government please advise –

1. How many places for sheltered workshops (SWs) will be provided in the future? Will the additional places be able to help ease the waiting time of persons with disabilities?
2. According to the Reply, at present employment support to persons with disabilities is provided by the integrated vocational rehabilitation services centres (IVRSCs). What is the current enrolment rate of the 4 412 places? Do persons with disabilities have to waitlist for such service and how long is the waiting time?
3. In respect of the employment support for persons with disabilities, what is the expenditure for the coming year? Are there any new measures to enhance the employment rate of persons with disabilities?

Asked by: Hon TANG Ka-piu

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. The Social Welfare Department adopts an integrated service model to provide vocational rehabilitation services, whereby vocational rehabilitation service programmes such as SWs, supported employment (SE), etc. are pooled into IVRSCs so as to better cater for the diversified needs of PwDs for vocational rehabilitation services. As at end-December 2015, apart from the 5 276 SW places, there were also 26 IVRSCs in Hong Kong providing a total of 4 412 places. Meanwhile, the Government will continue to proactively identify suitable sites for provision of more rehabilitation service places for PwDs. The Government will also provide more rehabilitation service facilities including vocational rehabilitation services through the “Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses” with a view to relieving the pressure on service demand and shortening the waiting time. The Government plans to provide about 1 370 additional IVRSC places and 25 SW places in the coming 5 years (i.e. 2016-17 to 2020-21).

2. In 2015-16 (as at end-December 2015), the utilisation rate of IVRSCs was 105% ^[Note]. There is no central waiting list for IVRSCs and applicants are selected from the central waiting lists for SW and SE. In 2014-15, the average waiting time for SW and SE was 19.7 months and 3.1 months respectively. The figure for 2015-16 is not yet available 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

^[Note] SE of IVRSCs mainly provides necessary employment support services to enable service users to integrate into the open job market environment. Such kind of service is not confined by the physical setting. In order to allow more PwDs to receive the SE service for enhancement of employment opportunities in the open market, some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating IVRSCs flexibly deploy resources to admit additional service users, resulting in the utilisation rate of IVRSCs being over 100%.

3. In 2016-17, the estimated expenditure for vocational rehabilitation services is about \$677 million.

The Chief Executive has announced in the 2016 Policy Address that the Government had accepted the proposal made by the inter-departmental working group on the review of Disability Allowance, and would introduce a number of measures to assist PwDs in securing employment. Such measures include inviting the Community Care Fund to allocate funding for the introduction of pilot schemes, raising the maximum level of disregarded earnings for recipients with disabilities under the Comprehensive Social Security Scheme, and providing an additional grant for eligible recipients of Higher Disability Allowance who are in paid employment so that they can hire carers. In addition, the Labour Department will commission NGOs to launch a pilot scheme to provide counselling service for job seekers with disabilities. Regarding the pilot project for ex-mentally ill persons to serve as peer supporters, the Government will lay the groundwork for its incorporation into regular assistance programmes as soon as possible.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)16

(Question Serial No. S0056)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

1. According to Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0245, there is currently a population of about 360 000 aged 65 to 69, of which 126 000 are receiving the Old Age Living Allowance (OALA), representing about one-third of that population. With regard to the remaining elderly persons of about over 200 000 who are ineligible for OALA, has the Government conducted any study to understand why they are not receiving or not eligible for OALA?
2. What are the details and time frame for the review on OALA in the future? Will the Government consider allowing elderly persons aged above 65 to apply for OALA or receive a partial amount of the allowance on a non-means-tested basis?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. For the elderly population aged 65 to 69 not receiving or not eligible for OALA, the Social Welfare Department does not have information about the reasons behind.
2. The Government will keep in view the implementation of OALA which was launched in April 2013, taking account of the outcome of the current discussion on retirement protection.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

S-LWB(WW)17

(Question Serial No. S0059)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

To follow up on the information provided in Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0250, please provide the number of years the applicants under the Guangdong (GD) Scheme have moved from Hong Kong to settle in the Mainland over the years, based on their travel records, with a breakdown by the four categories of 1 year, 3 years, 5 years and over 7 years. Please also provide the average number of times these applicants have travelled between Hong Kong and the Mainland every year, as well as their average length of stay in Hong Kong.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

The Social Welfare Department does not have information on the number of years the applicants under the GD Scheme have moved from Hong Kong to settle in the Mainland, the average number of times these applicants have travelled between Hong Kong and the Mainland every year, nor their average length of stay in Hong Kong.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

(Question Serial No. S0060)

Head: (170) Social Welfare Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question:

With reference to Reply Serial No. 0143, would the Government please advise –

1. How many additional sheltered workshop (SW) places will be provided by the Government in the future? Will the places provided shorten the waiting time for persons with disabilities (PwDs)?
2. It is mentioned in the reply that the Government is currently providing employment support to PwDs through integrated vocational rehabilitation services centres (IVRSCs). What is the current utilisation rate of the 4 412 places concerned? Are PwDs put on a waiting list for using the service? How long is the waiting time?
3. What is the expenditure allocated for providing employment support for PwDs in the coming year? Are there any new initiatives to raise the employment rate of PwDs?

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-kin

Reply:

The information sought is provided as follows –

1. The Social Welfare Department adopts an integrated service model to provide vocational rehabilitation services, whereby vocational rehabilitation service programmes such as SW, supported employment (SE), etc. are pooled into IVRSCs so as to better cater for the diversified needs of PwDs for vocational rehabilitation services. As at end-December 2015, apart from the 5 276 SW places, there were also 26 IVRSCs in Hong Kong providing a total of 4 412 places. Meanwhile, the Government will continue to proactively identify suitable sites for provision of more rehabilitation service places for PwDs. The Government will also provide more rehabilitation service facilities including vocational rehabilitation services through the “Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses” with a view to relieving the pressure on service demand and shortening the waiting time. The Government plans to provide about 1 370 additional IVRSC places and 25 SW places in the coming 5 years (i.e. 2016-17 to 2020-21).

2. In 2015-16 (as at end-December 2015), the utilisation rate of IVRSCs was 105% ^[Note]. There is no central waiting list for IVRSCs and applicants are selected from the central waiting lists for SW and SE. In 2014-15, the average waiting time for SW and SE was 19.7 months and 3.1 months respectively. The figure for 2015-16 is not yet available 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

^[Note] SE of IVRSCs mainly provides necessary employment support services to enable service users to integrate into the open job market environment. Such kind of service is not confined by the physical setting. In order to allow more PwDs to receive the SE service for enhancement of employment opportunities in the open market, some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating IVRSCs flexibly deploy resources to admit additional service users, resulting in the utilisation rate of IVRSCs being over 100%.

3. In 2016-17, the estimated expenditure for vocational rehabilitation services is about \$677 million.

The Chief Executive has announced in the 2016 Policy Address that the Government had accepted the proposal made by the inter-departmental working group on the review of Disability Allowance, and would introduce a number of measures to assist PwDs in securing employment. Such measures include inviting the Community Care Fund to allocate funding for the introduction of pilot schemes, raising the maximum level of disregarded earnings for recipients with disabilities under the Comprehensive Social Security Scheme, and providing an additional grant for eligible recipients of Higher Disability Allowance who are in paid employment so that they can hire carers. In addition, the Labour Department will commission NGOs to launch a pilot scheme to provide counselling service for job seekers with disabilities. Regarding the pilot project for ex-mentally ill persons to serve as peer supporters, the Government will lay the groundwork for its incorporation into regular assistance programmes as soon as possible.

- End -

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**S-LWB(WW)19****(Question Serial No. S0061)**Head: (170) Social Welfare DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): ()Programme: (2) Social SecurityControlling Officer: Director of Social Welfare (Ms Carol YIP)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Labour and WelfareQuestion:

To follow up on the Reply Serial No. LWB(WW)0250, please provide the number of first-time applicants of the Guangdong (GD) Scheme and the number of applications rejected each year.

Asked by: Hon WONG Kwok-kinReply:

From 2013-14 to 2015-16, the number of GD Scheme applications and the number of applications rejected are as follows –

	Year			Total
	2013-14 (From 1 October 2013 onwards)	2014-15	2015-16 (As at end-December 2015)	
Number of applications received ^[Note1]	18 426	2 359	417	21 202
Number of applications rejected ^[Note2]	670	1 260	137	2 067

[Note1] Including new applications, re-applications and cases where applicants in receipt of other types of allowance under the Social Security Allowance Scheme chose to apply for GD Scheme instead. The Social Welfare Department does not have the number of first-time applications for GD Scheme.

[Note2] Applications rejected in the year may not have been received in the same year.

- End -