

**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members in
examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09**

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Session No. : 10**

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
S-LWB(WW)01	SV009	CHAN FANG On-sang, Anson	141	Subvention: Skills Centres
S-LWB(WW)02	SV013	CHAN FANG On-sang, Anson HO Chun-yan, Albert LEONG Kah-kit, Alan	141	Social Welfare
S-LWB(WW)03	SV012	CHAN FANG On-sang	170	Family and Child Welfare
S-LWB(WW)04	SV006	CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando	170	Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services
S-LWB(WW)05	SV011	LI Fung-ying	170	Family and Child Welfare
S-LWB(WW)06	S052	WONG Kwok-hing	170	Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services
S-LWB(WW)07	S053	WONG Kwok-hing	170	Social Security
S-LWB(WW)08	S054	WONG Kwok-hing	170	Services for Elders
S-LWB(WW)09	S085	WONG Kwok-hing	170	Family and Child Welfare Services for Elders Young People

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat:
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (5) Subvention: Skills Centres

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : On subvention for training courses/programmes offered by the Skills Centres of the Vocational Training Council for persons with disabilities aged 15 or above to enhance their employment prospectus, Hon. CHAN FANG On-sang, Anson noted that less than 40% of the trainees enrolled for the courses completed the training programmes. The Administration was requested to:

- a) provide information and statistics on the number of trainees enrolled on and completed the courses in respect of various courses;
- b) account for the low graduation rate; and
- c) consider what measures would be adopted to improve the situation.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN FANG On-sang, Anson

- Reply :
- a) The numbers of trainees who have enrolled on and completed the various courses in academic year (AY) 2006/07 are set out at Annex.
 - b) The full-time training courses offered by the Skills Centres are mostly of two-year duration (except for Massage Service course). The number of trainees completing their training every year, therefore, will not be more than half of the total training places offered each year. In AY 2006/07, 290 out of a total enrolment of 621 trainees in the three Skills Centres were undertaking their second year of training and were expected to graduate at the end of the academic year. Altogether 245 trainees completed their training in AY 2006/07, representing a graduation rate of about 84.5%. There was a small number of trainees (45 in AY 2006/07) who could not complete their training, and this was mainly due to health problems or loss of interest in the studies.
 - c) On-going efforts are being made to provide counselling and support services to the trainees to help them complete their training and enhance their employability. More trade visits, extra-curricular activities and group sessions on social, interpersonal skills are arranged to better arouse and sustain trainees' interest.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG

Post Title	Permanent Secretary
	for Labour and Welfare

Date	11 April 2008

Annex**Skills Centres
Trainee Statistics for Academic Year (AY) 2006/07**

Class	Course Title	No. of trainees enrolled as at 30.9.2006	No. of trainees undertaking their first year of training	No. of trainees expected to complete training in AY 2006/07	No. of trainees completed training in AY 2006/07	Graduation rate in AY 2006/07
		(A) + (B)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(C) / (B)
1	Basic Catering Service	98	54	44	42	95.5%
2	Commercial and Retailing Service	47	23	24	13	54.2%
3	Computer and Network Practice	27	14	13	10	76.9%
4	General Service Work	173	94	79	73	92.4%
5	Interior Decoration	10	5	5	4	80.0%
6	Logistics Service	26	13	13	9	69.2%
7	Massage Service	9	0	9	8	88.9%
8	Office Practice	123	72	51	46	90.2%
9	Packaging Service	60	33	27	24	88.9%
10	Printing	48	23	25	16	64.0%
Total:		621	331	290	245	84.5%

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 141 – Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title) :
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Programme : (2) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer : Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question :

The Administration to consider adopting a long-term planning approach for the development of social welfare services rather than conducting annual consultation with the welfare sector before drawing up the Policy Address and the Budget.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN FANG On-sang, Anson, Hon. HO Chun-yan, Albert and
Hon. LEONG Kah-kit, Alan

Reply :

The Administration has already undertaken to study the long-term development planning for social welfare in Hong Kong through the Social Welfare Advisory Committee (the Committee). The study will be conducted on a macro and strategic level and will take into account the Administration's policy formulation and resource allocation processes. The Committee will proceed with the consultation with various stakeholders shortly.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Date	11 April 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : The Administration to provide detailed figures in respect of demand for various types of child care services in the community and how far the different demand could be met by the supply of corresponding child care services provided by the Government.

Asked by : Hon. CHAN FANG On-sang, Anson

Reply : The provision and utilisation of various kinds of child care services to support children and families in need are summarised as follows:

Service Type	No. of Places	Average utilisation (%) between April and December 2007
Aided full-day standalone child care centres	666	94.0
Occasional child care service	498	74.0
Extended hours service	1 244	90.0
Mutual help child care centre	305	7.6
Day foster care service	40	62.5 (The service has just been in operation since October 2007. Utilisation reflects situation as at 29 February 2008.)
Day small group home service	15	The statistics on utilisation are not yet available since the service has just been in operation since December 2007.

The above utilisation rates suggest that the current provision of different child care services is adequate to meet demand. The Social Welfare Department will continue to oversee the supply and utilisation of various child care services so as to ensure adequate provision to assist children and families in need of the services.

To supplement the provision of existing child care services, the Administration will provide funding of \$45 million over the next three years to pilot more flexible forms of day child care services at the neighbourhood level that offer greater flexibility to meet the needs of the parents; and for strengthening day foster care service.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	10 April 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : The Administration to provide information on the districts upon which the 490 additional residential services places for persons with disabilities will be allocated.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply : The Administration has identified suitable premises in Kwai Chung and Kowloon City for providing the 490 additional residential places for persons with disabilities. While the use of these premises is subject to final confirmation, the Administration has already commenced the necessary preparation work.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Stephen Fisher

Director of Social Welfare

11 April 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : The Administration to provide information on the number of teams and manpower involved in establishing connection with vulnerable families through outreaching activities under the Family Support Programmes (FSP), including those to be implemented by the Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs)/Integrated Services Centres (ISCs) and Family and Child Protective Services Units (FCPSUs).

Asked by : Hon. LI Fung-ying

Reply : To increase connection with needy families, including families at risk of domestic violence, psychiatric problems and social isolation, who are reluctant to seek help, the FSP has been launched in 61 IFSCs, 2 ISCs, 11 FCPSUs and 8 Psychiatric Medical Social Services Units since early 2007. Under the FSP, through telephone contacts, home visits and other outreaching programmes, we seek to introduce needy families to various support services available and motivate them to receive services to prevent further deterioration of their problems. Volunteers including those who have personal experience in overcoming family/personal problems or crises have been recruited and trained to contact these families and to provide them with support and assistance.

With the additional annual recurrent resources of \$30 million, additional manpower, including social work and non-social work staff, have been provided to the above-mentioned Units. Since the outreaching activities under the FSP is part and parcel of the services provided by these Units, there is no breakdown of the number of staff involved.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Stephen Fisher

Director of Social Welfare

10 April 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : In the reply numbered LWB(WW)266, the Administration states that the current average waiting time for admission to hostels for severely mentally handicapped persons and moderately mentally handicapped persons is around 7 and 4 years respectively but only 267 and 155 additional places will be provided for both type of hostels in 2008-09. Would the Administration please inform this Committee:

- (1) whether it has any plans to reduce the waiting time to less than 5 years? If no, what are the reasons?
- (2) whether it has taken the initiative to contact and keep in touch with those mentally handicapped persons awaiting hostel places and their carers so as to provide support and assistance for them?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply (1) While the Administration will endeavour to ensure a steady increase in subsidised residential care places, we are unable to set a definite target and a timetable for the provision of new places due to a number of uncertainties, including the availability of resources and suitable sites.

At the same time, the Administration will continue to promote the three-pronged development of private, self-financed and subsidised residential care services so as to provide more service options for persons with disabilities (PWDs). We will also continue to develop people-oriented community support services in order to facilitate the PWDs' community living.

- (2) The majority of PWDs on the waiting list for subsidised residential care places are receiving various day training, vocational rehabilitation and community support services provided by the Social Welfare Department. These include services at day activity centres and sheltered workshops, services in supported employment, day care for severely disabled persons, home-based training and support etc. Through such rehabilitation services, PWDs are provided with the necessary support and assistance to

enable them to continue to live in the community while alleviating the stress on their families or carers.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	11 April 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : In the reply numbered LWB(WW)135, the Administration lists out the number of participants and the effectiveness of various employment assistance projects. The information provided reveals that some of these projects are not very effective as more than half of the participants have failed to secure full-time employment. In this regard, would the Administration please inform this Committee:

- (1) how many recipients have secured semi or part-time paid employment apart from full-time employment with the help from the above employment assistance projects?
- (2) whether it will review and revise the above employment assistance projects in 2008-09 to equip the participants with better skills and training for securing full-time employment?
- (3) whether it will take follow-up action to assist those recipients who have participated in the projects but still cannot secure full-time employment?
- (4) whether it will take follow-up action to check the progress of those recipients who have secured full-time employment at their early stage of employment and provide them with support?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : (1) Among the employment assistance projects, we have kept records on part-time employment of the participants in addition to those of full-time employment only for the Special Training and Enhancement Programme (My STEP) and the Extended Community Work Experience and Training Programme (Extended CWETP). Up to end-January 2008, out of the total of 317 participants in My STEP, nine participants have taken up part-time employment and amongst the 434 participants in Extended CWETP, 44 participants have secured part-time employment.

- (2) Reviewing the existing arrangements under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme for helping and motivating the unemployed able-bodied recipients to rejoin the labour force and become self-reliant is an on-going effort. In 2008-09, we will continue to monitor the projects to ensure that the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can fulfil all the requirements to assist and encourage the CSSA able-bodied unemployed recipients to seek and engage in full-time employment. In launching new employment assistance projects, we will take account of past experience to further improve the projects.
- (3) CSSA able-bodied unemployed recipients who have participated in the employment assistance projects but still cannot secure full-time employment will revert to the Active Employment Assistance (AEA) Programme under the CSSA Scheme. Under the AEA Programme, personalised employment assistance is rendered to recipients to overcome their work barriers and enhance their employability. They are required to regularly come to the relevant Social Security Field Units for interview and employment assistance.
- (4) NGOs operating the employment assistance projects provide post-placement services for participants for a period of no less than three months after they have secured full-time employment. The post-placement services include work-place visit, individual counselling service and mutual help group for sharing experience. These aim to help the participants overcome any difficulties they may encounter at the early stage of their employment.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	11 April 2008

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 170 – Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : In the reply numbered LWB(WW) 221, the Administration states that it will further look into the ways to promote quality residential care services in self-financing/private residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs). However, it was reported by the media the other day that some private RCHEs had pocketed the additional one-month Comprehensive Social Security Assistance payments for their residents. This reveals that there is room for improvement in monitoring private RCHEs. In this connection, would the Administration please inform this Committee of the following:

- (1) What is the manpower provision for monitoring and inspecting RCHEs in 2008-09? Is there any increase when comparing with that in 2007-08?
- (2) Did the Administration conduct surprise site inspections to all RCHEs in 2007-08? How many of them have been found non-compliant with the regulations and given warnings and being punished as a result? What is the total number of complaints on RCHEs received in 2007-08, out of which how many cases were successfully prosecuted?
- (3) What measures will be taken by the Administration in 2008-09 to step up monitoring of RCHEs? Would the Administration consider reviewing the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) (CoP) to reduce non-compliance?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : (1) Further to the creation of five Assistant Social Work Officer posts and one Senior Social Work Officer post in 2007-08, five Registered Nurse posts will be created in 2008-09 to replace the existing contract nurses in the Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (LORCHE), making up a total of 38 inspectors to carry out the inspection duties.

- (2) LORCHE conducted unannounced inspections to all RCHEs. In 2007, about 360 warning letters and 3 000 advisory letters were issued to non-compliant RCHEs, requiring them to make improvement or rectifications within a reasonable period of time.

LORCHE received 273 complaints against 182 RCHEs. One of them was successfully prosecuted while other homes have made rectifications upon receiving advice/warning.

- (3) In the coming year, LORCHE will step up monitoring of RCHEs by increasing the frequency of routine inspections and adopting a risk-based monitoring approach. In particular, inspections will be extended to non-office hours, Sundays and public holidays, focusing on high-risk items such as staffing, drug management and application of physical restraint, etc.

The existing CoP was revised in October 2005 and has been fully implemented since January 2006. Further review and revisions will be made as necessary. Apart from CoP, LORCHE has from time to time issued circular letters and guidelines concerning key aspects relating to the quality of care for elderly residents in RCHEs.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Stephen Fisher
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	11 April 2008

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2008-09
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-LWB(WW)09

Question Serial No.

S085

Head : 170 – Social Welfare
Department

Subhead (No. & title):

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare
 (3) Services for Elders
 (7) Young People

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Question : According to the reply numbered HAB171 (Question Serial No. 2257), the Government will no longer establish new Neighbourhood Level Community Development Projects as residents in new towns including Tung Chung and Tin Shui Wai are already supported by a range of community services including the integrated services for family, young people and elderly. Would the Administration please inform this Committee:

- (1) the details of the integrated services, the financial provision involved, and the criteria for assessing whether the relevant services are sufficient to meet the needs of respective districts?
- (2) how it will adjust the services to cater for respective districts given that they will have their own pressing problems and special needs?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply : (1) & (2) In planning welfare services for various districts, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will take into account the target population profile, the service needs as well as availability of existing services, etc.

Both Tin Shui Wai and Tung Chung are new towns. SWD has provided the following welfare services for local residents there -

Type of Service District	No. of units in Tung Chung Note 1	No. of units in Tin Shui Wai Note 1
Integrated services for elderly, family and young people		
Integrated Services Centre	2	-
Elderly services		
District Elderly Community Centre	Note 2	2
Day Care Centre for the Elderly		2
Social Centre for the Elderly		3
Home Help		0
Integrated Home Care Services	1	4
Enhanced Home and Community Care Services	1	1
Neighbourhood Elderly Centre	0	2
Young people services		
Integrated Children and Youth Services Centre	Note 2	7
Children and Youth Centre		2
Overnight Outreaching Service for Young Night Drifters		1
District Youth Outreaching Social Work Service	Note 3	1
Family services		
Integrated Family Service Centre	Note 2	3
Family and Child Protective Services Unit	Note 3	1

Note 1: Rehabilitation services and other territory-wide services (e.g. Residential Care Home for the Elderly, Refuge Centre for Women and Family Crisis Support Centre, etc.) are not included.

Note 2: The services are subsumed under the two Integrated Services Centres in Tung Chung.

Note 3: The services are provided by the service units located on the Hong Kong Island.

The subventions for the above centres are mostly included under the lump sum provisions to non-governmental organisations concerned and not apportioned to individual centres.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Stephen Fisher

Post Title _____ Director of Social Welfare

Date _____ 11 April 2008