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Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Session No. : 16

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**Replies to supplementary questions raised by Finance Committee Members
in examining the Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08**

**Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
Session No. : 16**

Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
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Reply Serial No.	Question Serial No.	Name of Member	Head	Programme
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**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 Health, Welfare and Food

Question : In part (c) of the reply to the question of serial number HWFB(WW)005, the Administration stated that the reduction in the cost per month for the service was due to the additional service volume offered under the new contracts in 2006-07 without extra cost to the contract sum, as well as the fall of the Composite Consumer Price Index. In other words, the service volume and workload of service operators and district teams have been increased without additional resources since 2006-07. In this connection, could the Administration please inform this Committee of the number of staff for the Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (EHCCS) Teams in each district in 2006-07, and the number of cases served by them?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply : Between December 2005 and October 2006, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has allocated additional resources to increase the capacity of the EHCCS Teams in districts which have high demand.

The service contracts for the EHCCS Teams do not specify the number of staff required of an EHCCS Team. EHCCS Teams are however required to employ suitable number of staff to meet the service requirements.

The number of cases served by the 18 EHCCS Teams in 2006-07 (up to end February 2007) is as below:

District	No. of cases served by EHCCS Teams from April 2006 to February 2007
Central & Western	160
Islands	105
Wan Chai	146
Eastern	241
Southern	127
Yau Tsim Mong	131

District	No. of cases served by EHCCS Teams from April 2006 to February 2007
Sham Shui Po	148
Kowloon City	216
Wong Tai Sin	306
Sai Kung	189
Kwun Tong	314
Sha Tin	187
Tai Po	105
North	117
Yuen Long	144
Tsuen Wan	126
Kwai Tsing	267
Tuen Mun	127
Total	3 156

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)02

Question Serial No.

S060

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : In part (c) of the reply to the question of serial number HWFB(WW)005, the Administration stated that the reduction in the cost per month for the service was due to the additional service volume offered under the new contracts in 2006-07 without extra cost to the contract sum, as well as the fall of the Composite Consumer Price Index. In other words, the service volume and workload of the service operators and district teams have been increased without additional resources since 2006-07. In this connection, could the Administration please inform this Committee of whether additional resources will be allocated to teams with a heavy caseload, with a view to relieving their workload? If yes, what are the manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply : Between December 2005 and October 2006, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has allocated additional resources to increase the capacity of the Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (EHCCS) Teams in districts which have high demand. SWD will continue to monitor the service demand for EHCCS in 2007-08 and increase the service volume for districts with high service demand where necessary.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)03

Question Serial No.

S061

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Regarding the reply numbered HWFB(WW)001, could the Administration inform this Committee whether the Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre would provide comprehensive and one-stop service solely for victims of sexual violence?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply: The Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre (the Centre) is primarily aimed to provide support to victims of sexual violence. In addition to serving victims of sexual violence, the Centre will complement existing services for victims of domestic violence and individuals/families in crisis or distress, and provide after office hours outreaching services for elder abuse cases. This will create synergy among related services and optimise the utilisation of resources.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)04

Question Serial No.

S062

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Regarding the reply numbered HWFB(WW)001, could the Administration inform this Committee how much resources and manpower would be allocated by the Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre for supporting other victims of domestic violence (e.g. elder abuse cases)?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply: The estimated total operating cost of the Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre is \$20 million for three years. A team of 29 registered social workers and supporting staff will be employed to provide round-the-clock service throughout the year. There is no separate breakdown on resources and manpower specifically allocated to supporting other victims of domestic violence.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Director of Social Welfare

24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)05

Question Serial No.

S063

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Regarding the reply numbered HWFB(WW)001, could the Administration inform this Committee whether all the help-seeking cases would be dealt with by social workers of the Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply: All help-seeking cases will be dealt with by the registered social workers of the Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)06

Question Serial No.

S064

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Regarding the reply numbered HWFB(WW)001, could the Administration inform this Committee whether one-stop service would be provided by the Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre upon the commencement of services in Phase one?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply: The Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre (the Centre) will adopt a comprehensive and one-stop service model involving multi-disciplinary assistance for victims of sexual violence. Phase one of the services to be launched in late March 2007 includes a 24-hour hotline, arrangement of immediate intervention and follow-up services, after office hours outreaching/crisis intervention service and case consultation services. Short-term accommodation will be provided in Phase two, tentatively scheduled to come on stream in early 2008. For those in need of short-term accommodation prior to the launch of Phase two, the Centre will refer the cases to the existing emergency residential services or time-out facilities as appropriate for the necessary support.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

**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 Health, Welfare and Food

Question : With the ageing population problem worsening, the demand for residential care services will keep on increasing. However, according to the reply to the question of serial number HWFB(WW)003, in future, elders may need to wait for a longer time before being admitted to subsidised residential care homes for the elderly given the current progress of and the principle adopted for the conversion programme. In this connection, would the Administration consider speeding up the programme and giving up the subventions-neutral principle, so as to retain or increase the number of residential care places? If yes, what is the manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply : The conversion programme is to convert care and attention (C&A) places which are not providing continuum of care and the self-care(S/C) hostel places and home for the aged (H/A) places which do not have long-term care (LTC) element into C&A places which will provide continuum of care to better meet elders' need for LTC services.

The conversion programme is vacancy-led, which enables existing elders to stay in their homes for as long as necessary. The objective is to avoid any displacement of elders. As such, the pace of the conversion programme is dependent on the natural vacancy rate of the participating homes.

In parallel, we have been increasing the supply of subsidised residential care places through other means elsewhere. An additional 662 subsidised residential care places will become available in three contract homes and private residential care homes for the elderly under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme in 2007-08. Moreover, an additional \$16 million recurrent funding was secured in the 2007-08 Budget to plan for the provision of additional subsidised residential care places in new contract homes.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Director of Social Welfare

24 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)08

Question Serial No.

S066

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : The Administration stated in the reply that the Family Support Programme (FSP) launched in Integrated Family Service Centres, Family and Child Protective Services Units and Psychiatric Medical Social Services Units will be responsible for taking the initiative to approach families who are reluctant to seek help. However, these service units are already having a very heavy workload. Please inform this Committee of the additional manpower to be provided and deployed by the Administration to carry out FSP full-time. What is the expenditure incurred?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply: An annual recurrent provision of \$30 million has been allocated to launch the FSP. 43 social work officer grade posts in the Social Welfare Department and another 27 registered social worker posts in non-governmental organisations have been created to launch the FSP in 2006-07. Programme Assistants have also been employed to provide logistical support to the social workers.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	26 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)09

Question Serial No.

S067

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : The Administration stated in the reply that the Family Support Programme (FSP) launched in Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs), Family and Child Protective Services Units (FCPSUs) and Psychiatric Medical Social Services Units will be responsible for taking the initiative to approach families who are reluctant to seek help. However, these service units are already having a very heavy workload. Please inform this Committee of the number of volunteers, according to the Administration's estimate, that the service units have to recruit to facilitate the implementation of and provide support for FSP. If the service units fail to recruit sufficient manpower, what will be the Administration's arrangement?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply: In 2007-08, an estimated number of about 1 000 volunteers including those who have overcome family/personal problems or crises will be recruited and trained to contact families at risk and to provide them with support and assistance. The service units concerned will endeavour to achieve this target. If the target estimated number of volunteers cannot be met in 2007-08, the service units will continue to recruit and train volunteers in the following year.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)10

Question Serial No.

S079

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :
Programme : (5) Transport Services for People with Disabilities

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : The Administration states in the reply that there were 8 173 telephone booking for rebus service declined in 2006. What are the reasons?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

In 2006, the rebus dial-a-ride (DAR) served 320 285 passenger trips and received 88 213 orders for service. There were 8 173 orders declined (representing about 9% of total orders received) and about half of them were concentrated in the peak periods. To improve the DAR service, the Transport Department plans to add three rebuses in 2007-08. The Transport Department will review annually the fleet size of the rebus having regard to service demand.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ ALAN WONG

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Transport

Date _____ 23 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)11

Question Serial No.

S080

Head : 186 – Transport Department Subhead (No. & title) :
Programme : (5) Transport Services for People with Disabilities

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Transport

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Has the Administration studied the number of rebus passenger trips that can be reduced in case of granting 50% fare concession on public transport to people with disabilities (PWDs)? What will be the amount of expenditure that can be saved? If the Administration has not conducted the relevant study, would the Administration consider conducting such study? If affirmative, what will be the amount of expenditure incurred?

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

The Rebus service is provided primarily for PWDs who are unable to use public transport and have no alternative means of point-to-point transport service to their work place or other destinations. The clientele for rebus service is therefore different from those PWDs who can use public transport. The effect of fare concession should not be of great relevance to rebus users. As such, the Administration would not consider conducting such a study.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ ALAN WONG _____

Post Title _____ Commissioner for Transport _____

Date _____ 23 March 2007 _____

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)12

Question Serial No.

S078

Head: Head 140 Government Secretariat: Subhead (No. & title):
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Health
and Welfare Branch)

Programme: (1) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Health and Welfare)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question: Though the Government has put forward the vision of enabling the elderly to enjoy “a sense of security, a sense of belonging and a feeling of worthiness”, it has not mentioned any study or plan on universal retirement protection scheme in the coming year in its reply. Will the Government undertake any study or plan in this respect in 2007 in order to realize the objective of enabling the elderly to enjoy “a sense of security, a sense of belonging and a feeling of worthiness”? If yes, what is the projected cost?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply: The Government is now studying the sustainability of Hong Kong's three pillars of retirement protection (namely the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme and Old Age Allowance, a Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme and voluntary private savings) and expects to complete it in 2007. The Government will consider the findings of the study before deciding on the future course of action.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Ms Sandra LEE

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health,
Welfare and Food (Health and
Welfare)

Date _____ 23.3.2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)13

Question Serial No.

S071

Head: 140 Government Secretariat: Health, Subhead (No. & title):
Welfare and Food Bureau (Health
and Welfare Branch)

Programme: (3) Women's Interests

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Health and Welfare)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

With reference to the Administration's reply, there will not be any plans or activities in the coming year targeted at women who have newly arrived in Hong Kong and are living in poverty, though they also belong to the disadvantaged who are often in need of dedicated support and mutual support from peers. In the past the Administration set up some post-migration centres which received warm and positive responses from service recipients. In this connection, would the Administration inform us whether it will re-formulate policies and measures to assist vulnerable groups such as newly arrived women and women in poverty to integrate into the society? If yes, what are the details and the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply:

The Administration attaches importance to the early integration of new arrivals, including the vulnerable groups, into the local community. The Home Affairs Department (HAD) has set up a co-ordination mechanism on the range of services made available to the new arrivals, comprising those on welfare, education, housing, employment and health. HAD has since 1996 published a service handbook for new arrivals to enable them to be better informed of the public services available and the general situation of Hong Kong. The handbook has been updated regularly, and has also been uploaded onto the homepage of HAD. To promote community acceptance of new arrivals and to enhance mutual understanding between residents and new arrivals, the Home Affairs Bureau and HAD have also organised annual community education programmes since 2001. HAD also launched a publicity campaign with the theme of "We are one family" in 2005.

In the last few years, the HAD has adopted a new strategy by strengthening coordination within the Administration and partnership with Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs). At the central level, the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs chairs a Steering Committee on New Arrival Services, comprising representatives of relevant bureaux and departments, to give general direction to new arrival services. At the district level, District Officers chair 18 District Coordinating Committees to complement the work at central level. In addition, the HAD has been conducting a questionnaire survey to assess the profile and service needs of new arrivals. Results of the survey have been distributed to relevant Government departments and NGOs in the form of quarterly reports.

In parallel, the "Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme" was established in June 2006 to promote sustainable poverty prevention and alleviation efforts at the district level to help enhance self-reliance amongst the socially disadvantaged groups. So far, several approved projects have been targeted at engaging new arrivals in various types of work. These projects would commence operation in 2007-08. With grants from the Programme, the approved non-profit making organisations would start launching their projects to help create employment opportunities for the disadvantaged, including new arrivals.

Resources required for services and measures mentioned above are absorbed from within the existing resources of the HAD, and bureaux and departments concerned.

As to services provided to the new arrivals that fall under the purview of Health, Welfare and Food Bureau and Social Welfare Department, they are already set out in our earlier reply (Serial No. HWFB(WW)122).

Signature _____

Name in block
letters _____ Ms Sandra LEE

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare
and Food (Health and Welfare)

Date _____ 23.3.2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)14

Question Serial No.

S072

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : With reference to the Administration's reply, there will not be any plans or activities in the coming year targeted at women who have newly arrived in Hong Kong and are living in poverty, though they also belong to the disadvantaged who are often in need of dedicated support and mutual support from peers. In the past, the Administration set up some Post Migration Centres (PMCs) which received warm and positive responses from service recipients. In this connection, would the Administration inform this Committee whether it will consider re-opening the PMCs? If yes, what is the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. CHAN Yuen-han

Reply: There are 61 Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs) over the territory providing a continuum of preventive, supportive and therapeutic services, including family life education, parent-child activities, mutual support groups, volunteer training, counselling and referral services, etc. for people in need, including new arrivals. Compared with the four time-limited PMCs serving specific districts in the past, the services of the 61 IFSCs located across the territory are more accessible. Moreover, IFSCs also provide services previously not available at the PMCs. They include intensive counselling, assessment for compassionate re-housing, arrangement for clinical psychological services, etc. Depending on district needs, IFSCs also organise activities and programmes specially designed for new arrivals. As such, the Administration has no plan to re-open the PMCs.

Signature
Name in block letters
Post Title
Date

Paul TANG

Director of Social Welfare

24 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)15

Question Serial No.

SV023

Head: 140 Government Secretariat: Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (Health and Welfare Branch) Subhead (No. & title):

Programme: (1) Social Welfare

Controlling Officer: Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Health and Welfare)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question:

The Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (SHWF) to discuss with the Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works (SETW) with a view to reaching a final decision on the provision of fare concessions to people with disabilities (PWD) before the end of term of the current Chief Executive. As public transport (PT) operators have agreed to consider the feasibility of providing fare concessions to PWD in the light of the Survey on the Public Transport Needs of PWD (the Survey), the Administration to advise the latest progress in this respect.

Asked by: Hon. LEE Cheuk-yan and Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply:

Following the publication of the findings of the Survey in January 2007, SHWF and SETW wrote jointly to the PT operators, appealing for their support and consideration to offer fare concessions to PWDs.

At the meeting of the House Committee "Subcommittee to study the transport needs and provision of concessionary public transport fares for PWDs" (the Subcommittee) held on 27 February 2007, PT operators expressed the need for more time to study the survey findings. PT operators will respond to the survey findings at the next Subcommittee meeting on 12 April 2007.

In the meantime, the Administration will continue to pursue the issue proactively with the PT operators.

Signature _____

Name in block letters _____ Ms Sandra LEE

Post Title _____ Permanent Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Health & Welfare)

Date _____ 23.3.2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)16

Question Serial No.

SV020

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : The Administration to provide the number of complaint cases against private and subsidised residential care homes for the elderly in 2006-07 and the number of substantiated cases.

Asked by : Hon. TAM Yiu-chung

Reply : Between 1 April 2006 and 15 March 2007, the Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly received a total of 282 complaint cases against residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs). 249 of them were against private RCHEs, 22 were against subsidised RCHEs, and 11 were against self-financing RCHEs.

Of the 282 complaint cases, 24 are under investigation. The breakdown of the complaint items requiring rectification or improvement measures under those 258 completed cases is as follows:

Types of RCHEs	Complaint items requiring rectification or improvement measures
(a) Private	175
(b) Subsidised	9
(c) Self-financing	4
Total	188

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Director of Social Welfare

24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)17

Question Serial No.

SV021

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (4) Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : The Administration to provide the number of requests made by the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau for inclusion of residential rehabilitation homes in the planning of redevelopment projects, particularly those for old public rental housing estates, and the outcome of such requests. In the event that such requests were not acceded to, the reasons for rejection given by the relevant bureaux/departments.

Asked by : Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply : As at mid-March 2007, there is a total of 15 requests for inclusion of residential rehabilitation homes in redevelopment projects being pursued. Two sites are planned to be handed over to the Social Welfare Department for implementation of services in 2007-08 while the other 13 sites have been reserved for such purpose pending further planning of the projects.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Director of Social Welfare

24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)18

Question Serial No.

SV022

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (2) Social Security

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : The Administration to provide a report on its reviews of the Old Age Allowance (OAA), particularly the justifications for not extending the existing absence limit of 240 days.

Asked by : Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply :

- (1) OAA is non-contributory and is financed entirely by general revenue. It is largely non-means-tested. The residence requirement during receipt of OAA is to ensure that a non-contributory benefit is paid to Hong Kong residents with a genuine connection with Hong Kong. We have relaxed the permissible limit of absence from Hong Kong under the Social Security Allowance Scheme (consisting of OAA and Disability Allowance) from 180 days to 240 days a year since October 2005. The measure allows the recipients to spend more time to travel or visit their relatives and friends outside Hong Kong or take up short-term residence, while on the other hand ensures that public funds are spent on Hong Kong residents who regard Hong Kong as a place of permanent residence. We believe that the measure has struck a reasonable balance between the two considerations.
- (2) In implementing the above measure, due consideration has been given to the possible increase in the number of OAA applications as a result of removal of the absence limit or the reduction to the limit to one day and the financial implications involved which could be in the region of \$1,170 million a year. The establishment of an effective monitoring system to review the recipients' continued eligibility would also involve technical and financial considerations.
- (3) In view of the above, we have decided to keep to the present absence limit.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	26 March 2007

**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 Health, Welfare and Food

Question : What is the number of applicants for the Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (EHCCS) and the Integrated Home Care Services (IHCS) in 2005-06 and 2006-07 respectively? How many applications are being processed? How many cases have not been served despite being assessed as having service needs? Please set out in a table the answers to the above questions by service items (such as meal delivery) of these two services respectively.

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply : For the frailty-tested home care services, there were altogether 3 407 applications in 2005-06 and 2006-07 (up to end January 2007). As at end of January 2007, 330 applicants were being processed for admission to the services, pending agreement between the service operators and the users on the details of the service package. The remaining 3 077 applications were either admitted for services or have already been discharged from the services.

For the non-frailty-tested home care services, users will approach individual service operators direct for services. Therefore, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) does not have a record of the total number of applications received. As at December 2006, there were about 2 800 cases waiting for the non-frailty tested home care services. All of them are not urgent cases. Making use of the additional recurrent funding of \$20 million secured in 2006-07, SWD has increased the capacity of the non-frailty-tested home care services for the elderly. The additional capacity has started coming into place since January 2007. SWD projects that about 2 000 additional new cases will be served. With the additional capacity, the waiting list will be markedly reduced.

As a guiding principle, the IHCS Teams will continue to accord priority to elders who have urgent needs for the services and provide the most needed services (e.g. meal delivery) to them almost instantly.

The service details provided to individual service users are agreed between the service operators and the users according to the assessed needs of the elders. SWD does not have detailed breakdown by service items.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>Paul TANG</u>
Post Title	<u>Director of Social Welfare</u>
Date	<u>26 March 2007</u>

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)20

Question Serial No.

S082

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : It is stated in the Matters Requiring Special Attention in 2007-08 that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will continue with the Enrolled Nurse Training Programme for the Welfare Sector. Please set out in the following table the estimated manpower required and the number of existing staff for the residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) in the next five years. In addition, if the number of existing staff falls short of the estimated manpower required, how will the Administration increase the staffing provision for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to a sufficient level?

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Nurses required / Existing nurses					
Physiotherapists required / Existing physiotherapists					
Occupational therapists required / Existing occupational therapists					
Dispensers required / Existing dispensers					

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply : The licence of the RCHEs and the service agreement for contract homes and private homes participating in the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme have set out the minimum manpower requirements for various types of care staff for different types of RCHEs. However, individual RCHEs may build and maintain a staffing establishment which is higher than the minimum manpower requirements depending on their operational needs. We do not have ready information on the actual staffing provision for nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and dispensers in RCHEs

at present. Nor do we have sufficient data to make meaningful projection on this for the coming few years.

To alleviate the demand for Enrolled Nurses in the welfare sector, in particular in RCHEs, the SWD, in collaboration with the Hospital Authority, launched two batches of the Enrolled Nurse Training Programme for the Welfare Sector (the Programme) in 2006 which provided 220 Enrolled Nurse training places. The third batch will be launched in 2007-08 to provide an additional 110 Enrolled Nurse training places. Tuition fees are fully subsidised by SWD. Graduates will have to work in the welfare sector for at least a consecutive two years after graduation.

The HWFB is considering the provision of additional nurse training to address the nursing manpower demand of the welfare sector. The details are yet to be finalised.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>Paul TANG</u>
Post Title	<u>Director of Social Welfare</u>
Date	<u>26 March 2007</u>

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)21

Question Serial No.

S083

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Would the Administration please inform this Committee of the total number of applications made by residential care homes for Infirmity Care Supplement (ICS) and Dementia Supplement (DS) in 2006-07, as well as the number of cases which have been approved and granted supplement by the Administration and the total amount of supplement involved? Among them, how many cases have not been paid supplement yet and what is the amount involved? What is the plan of the Administration to pay the outstanding supplement to the non-governmental organisations concerned as soon as possible?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply : A total of 1 782 and 2 248 elderly residents in residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) applied for the Infirmity Care Supplement (ICS) and the Dementia Supplement (DS) for 2006-07 respectively. Among them, 1 092 and 2 180 applicants were confirmed to be eligible for ICS and DS respectively by the Hospital Authority. In 2006-07, ICS of \$28.6 million and DS of \$13.7 million were allocated to those RCHEs which were taking care of the elderly residents eligible for ICS and DS respectively, to enhance their manpower to take care of those elderly residents.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	<u>Paul TANG</u>
Post Title	<u>Director of Social Welfare</u>
Date	<u>24 March 2007</u>

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)22

Question Serial No.

S084

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : In face of an ageing population and a shortage of nursing manpower, the provision of an additional 110 Enrolled Nurse training places in 2007-08 still cannot fully meet the need of residential care homes. Besides, many existing nurses are going to retire in the coming ten years. What is the plan of the Administration to provide nurse training in order to meet the service need of residential care homes? Is there any plan to continue to train enrolled nurses (e.g. in 2008-09, 2009-10, 2011-12 and 2012-13)? If yes, what is the expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply : The HWFB is considering the provision of additional nurse training to address the nursing manpower demand of the welfare sector. The details are yet to be finalised.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Director of Social Welfare

24 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)23

Question Serial No.

S085

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : In 2007-08, 662 additional subsidised residential care places will be provided (515 of them will be subsidised care-and-attention (C&A) places, and 147 of them will be subsidised nursing places). Would the Administration please inform this Committee whether these additional places will be made available for those who are waitlisting for these services so as to shorten their waiting time?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply : The 662 additional subsidised residential care places to be provided in 2007-08, including 515 subsidised care-and-attention places and 147 subsidised nursing places, are for admission of elderly applicants on the Central Waiting List.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)24

Question Serial No.

S086

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Paragraph 53 of the Budget Speech by the Financial Secretary states that an additional \$38 million will be earmarked to elderly centres to enhance their outreach programmes, so as to reach out to more unidentified elders. Would the Administration please inform this Committee of the arrangements for other supporting services? Would the Administration allocate additional resources to the organisations concerned to provide supporting services? If yes, what is the manpower and expenditure involved?

Asked by : Hon. CHEUNG Chiu-hung, Fernando

Reply : The additional \$38 million is for strengthening the manpower of the 41 District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and 115 Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs) to enhance their outreaching efforts to hidden and singleton elders. The DECCs and NECs will follow up the needs of the elders after locating them, including referring them to the appropriate service agencies for services. The Administration will monitor the demand for support services arising from this initiative.

Signature

Name in block letters

Post Title

Date

Paul TANG

Director of Social Welfare

24 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)25

Question Serial No.

S089

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Concerning the manpower required for the Family and Child Protective Services Unit, would the Administration please inform this Committee of how the target of reducing the number of supervision cases per worker to 41 in 2007-08 could be achieved with a mere increase of 21 workers given the rising trend of domestic violence cases?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply: The projected average number of supervision cases per worker in 2007-08 is derived from the revised estimate of the number of cases in 2006-07 plus a projected increase due to various reasons including enhanced publicity and early identification, and the enhanced manpower that will be available in the year.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)26

Question Serial No.

S090

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : Concerning the Indicators of this Programme, on what basis does the Administration project an increase of only 198 cases (2.1%) for the Family and Child Protective Services Units in the 2007-08 estimate over the 2006-07 revised estimate? It has been reported that the number of domestic violence cases handled by the Police in 2006 surged nearly 70% (from 2 784 to 4 704) as compared with that of 2005 while the number of cases handled by the Social Welfare Department in 2006-07 also recorded an increase of 6.1% over that of 2005-06.

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply: The projected total number of supervision cases in 2007-08 is derived from the revised estimate of the number of cases in 2006-07 plus a projected increase due to various reasons including enhanced publicity and early identification.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

Examination of Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)27

Question Serial No.

S091

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (1) Family and Child Welfare

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : The Administration estimates that the number of supervision cases per worker in 2007-08 will be less than the previous year. Is the estimation based on the increase of only 2.1% in the number of domestic violence cases in 2007-08 estimate as compared with the 2006-07 revised estimate? If yes, will the Administration allocate more resources to meet the targeted number of supervision cases per worker, which is reduced to 41, when the number of domestic violence cases exceeds the estimation. If so, what is the expenditure involved?

Asked by: Hon. WONG Kwok-hing

Reply: The projected average number of supervision cases per worker in the Family and Child Protective Services Units (FCPSU) in 2007-08 is derived from the revised estimate of the number of cases in 2006-07 plus a projected increase due to various reasons including enhanced publicity and early identification, and the enhanced manpower that will be available in the year. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep in view the caseload of FCPSU workers.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007

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

Reply Serial No.

S-HWFB(WW)28

Question Serial No.

S104

Head : 170 - Social Welfare Department

Programme : (3) Services for Elders

Controlling Officer : Director of Social Welfare

Director of Bureau : Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

Question : According to the information provided in the reply to the question of serial number HWFB(WW)205, an additional recurrent funding of \$20 million was secured in 2006-07 to increase the service volume of the Integrated Home Care Services (IHCS) teams. However, the services were launched only in January 2007. Would the Administration please inform this Committee of the reasons for that and whether the funding of \$20 million has been fully utilised in 2006-07? If not, what would the Administration do with the remaining amount?

Asked by : Hon. KWOK Ka-ki

Reply : There is a lead time for launching the additional capacity of the non-frailty tested home care services because the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has conducted extensive consultation with the 60 IHCS teams to ensure effective use of the additional resources. The additional capacity has started coming into place since January 2007.

The expenditure for the additional capacity of the non-frailty tested home care services in 2006-07 will be absorbed by SWD. The \$20 million additional recurrent funding will start appearing in the 2007-08 Estimate.

Signature	_____
Name in block letters	Paul TANG
Post Title	Director of Social Welfare
Date	24 March 2007