

## Health Bureau responds to media enquiries on interest of tertiary institutions to offer medical programmes

In response to media enquiries on the interest of tertiary institutions to offer medical programmes, a spokesman for the Health Bureau (HHB) gave the following response today (July 8):

The HHB is aware that a number of local tertiary institutions have publicly indicated their interest in offering medical programmes. The HHB keeps an open mind towards any initiatives conducive to nurturing local medical students and increasing healthcare manpower supply. In terms of healthcare manpower training, it is essential that any new medical programme must secure sufficient manpower and facilities for teaching and training to ensure teaching quality, and must contribute to increasing the supply of local doctors for meeting the rising demand for healthcare services in Hong Kong.

The Government will consider medical programme proposals from any tertiary institutions in accordance with the established mechanisms for local tertiary institutions to offer programmes. In reviewing medical programme proposals, the HHB will take into account factors such as the development needs of the healthcare system, the local healthcare manpower projection, the demand and supply of teaching and training manpower, and the relevant teaching and training facilities including teaching hospitals. The HHB will also discuss with relevant bureaux on ancillaries such as the development of tertiary institutions, financial resources required, and land supply for university campuses before making further consideration. The introduction of medical programmes and provision of training facilities involve enormous public money. The programmes have to be accredited and recognised by the Medical Council of Hong Kong so that the graduates can possess the qualifications to become registered local medical practitioners.

Since the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) expressed its interest in introducing medical programmes last year, the HHB and the HKUST have all along maintained communication. The HHB has so far received from the HKUST a few pages on the initial ideas and slideshows introducing the initial ideas. The HHB has learned from the HKUST that the plan is still in its planning stage, while detailed proposals are still being formulated. At present, the HKUST has yet to formally submit detailed proposals of the relevant plan to the Government. It is too early to comment on the relevant plan at the current stage.