

LCQ11: Car parking spaces in public hospitals

Following is a question by the Hon Doreen Kong and a written reply by the Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, in the Legislative Council today (January 22):

Question:

According to the letter of reply dated May 15, 2018 from the Government to the Public Works Subcommittee of this Council, public hospitals adopt the ratio as stipulated in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) (i.e. one car parking space for every 3 to 12 hospital beds) to determine the number of car parking spaces, but such standards and guidelines were only updated in 2003. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows the total number of car parking spaces, the ratio of car parking spaces to hospital beds, the number of visitor car parking spaces, and the number of visitor car parking spaces specifically provided for persons with disabilities, in each public hospital at present;

(2) whether it knows the number of complaints about insufficient car parking spaces, as well as the number of vehicles impounded due to illegal parking, in public hospitals from 2017 to 2023, and if such situations involved cases of emergency transport of patients to the hospitals for medical treatment; and

(3) as there are views pointing out that the prolonged shortage of car parking spaces in Hong Kong is due to the fact that the authorities still use The Second Parking Demand Study Final Report published by the Transport Department in 2002 as reference for formulating relevant standards, including the existing HKPSG, whether the Government will conduct survey studies and reviews on the demand for, and the standard provision of, car parking spaces to cater for the needs of people seeking medical treatment and visitors of patients; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Transport and Logistics Bureau and the Hospital Authority (HA), the reply to the question raised by the Hon Doreen Kong is as follows:

(1) The parking spaces of hospitals under the HA are mainly provided to cater for hospital operations. Priorities are accorded to vehicles essential to hospital operations, including ambulances, non-emergency ambulance transfer

service vehicles, rehabilitation buses, vehicles from residential care homes for the elderly and persons with disabilities, government vehicles, vehicles for delivery and collection of medical equipment/facilities/supplies/waste, shuttles operating amongst cluster hospitals, and hospital maintenance/management/services vehicles, etc., as well as to the private vehicles of the hospital staff, in particular those who are on shift duties. Parking spaces of the public hospitals will only be available to visitors after the aforementioned operational needs have been met. Generally speaking, public hospitals are well supported by public transport facilities and the Government encourages the public to use public transport as far as possible to travel to and from public hospitals. In case of immediate needs for seeking medical treatment at public hospitals, the public may consider taking taxis, or using ambulance services depending on the degree of urgency. It may not be suitable to use private vehicles when urgent medical attention is needed.

The HA understands the demand for parking spaces by hospital visitors. In this connection, having taken into account factors such as the total number of parking spaces, the number of admissions and daily attendances at the Accident and Emergency department of hospitals, some visitor parking spaces are provided, including two to five visitor parking spaces allocated for the use of visitors with disabilities.

There are a total of 7 354 car parking spaces (Note 1) in all hospital clusters of the HA, including 422 general visitor parking spaces and 110 parking spaces for visitors with disabilities. The overall car parking spaces to hospital beds (Note 2) ratio is one car parking space to around 4.17 hospital beds. The numbers of hospital beds, parking spaces and visitor parking spaces thereof at public hospitals are at Annex.

(2) The number of complaints on inadequate parking spaces received by the HA and the number of vehicles impounded for parking contraventions from 2017 to 2023 are tabulated below. No case of emergency conveyance was involved.

Year	Number of complaints on inadequate parking spaces	Number of vehicles impounded for parking contraventions by visitors
2017	0	386
2018	2	594
2019	4	389
2020	0	274
2021	0	613
2022	2	341
2023	0	378

(3) The Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) provide guidance on the number of parking spaces for various development projects, including public hospitals. The Government regularly reviews and revises the parking

standards in the HKPSG timely to tie in with the transport management policies and parking demand. Following the most recent review of the parking standards, the Government revised the relevant guidelines in the HKPSG in August 2021.

According to the current guidelines in the HKPSG, the standard for the number of hospital parking spaces is one car parking space for every three to 12 beds. While these parking spaces are generally intended for meeting the operational needs of hospitals, the guidelines also recommend providing an appropriate number of car parking spaces for visitors. The HA is, when planning hospital projects, required to conduct a traffic assessment, which includes examining the overall parking needs of the relevant hospital projects and recommending an appropriate number of parking spaces. The Transport Department will provide advice on the relevant proposals to the relevant department(s) if necessary.

As mentioned above, the provision of visitor parking spaces at public hospitals depends on the operations of individual hospitals. At the same time, the HA takes into account factors such as the actual constraints, geographic environment and flow of people of individual hospitals as well as public transport facilities in the district concerned while making corresponding planning and arrangements. For some public hospitals (especially those located in older districts of the urban area) which have smaller footprint but are relatively accessible by public transport, the limited space should be prioritised for hospital operations or expansion purposes while the number of parking spaces, in particular that of visitor parking spaces, will be relatively smaller. Having regard to the operational needs of public hospitals and as per the arrangements described in part (1), the HA has already suitably increased the provision of car parking spaces when planning the First Hospital Development Plan.

To meet the needs of patients and visitors, the HA also supports the Government's relevant policies for improving the connectivity between public hospitals and public transport facilities and proactively participates in deliberations on relevant measures in order to improve the pedestrian walkways connecting to public hospitals and their walking environment. The HA also collaborates and communicates with the Highways Department and other relevant government departments with a view to enhancing the connectivity of hospitals to adjacent pedestrian walkways and public transport facilities in order to provide the public with more convenient hospital pedestrian accessibility facilities.

Note 1: The total number of car parking spaces is as of December 31, 2024.

Note 2: The total number of hospital beds is as of March 31, 2024.