

LCQ11: Minimum area of floor space for each resident in nursing homes for elderly persons

Following is a question by the Dr Hon Fernando Cheung and a written reply by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, in the Legislative Council today (December 5):

Question:

At present, there are 45 registered nursing homes for elderly persons (NHEPs) in Hong Kong. The Private Healthcare Facilities Bill (the Bill) proposed to bring NHEPs within the ambit of the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance (Cap. 459) and its Regulation. When the Council went into Committee during its scrutiny of the Bill on the 15th of last month, the Government moved an amendment to delete a clause which sought to provide that the minimum area of floor space for each resident (area/resident) for NHEPs shall be 6.5 square metres. The amendment and the amended Bill were subsequently passed. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the following information in respect of each of the aforesaid 45 NHEPs: (i) the net operational floor area, (ii) the number of places offered and (iii) the area/resident;

(2) given that the current legislation has not provided for the minimum area/resident for NHEPs, of the measures put in place by the Government to ensure that the area/resident in NHEPs will not fall below 6.5 square metres;

(3) whether it will issue a code of practice to operators of NHEPs on the minimum area/resident and other matters; if so, of the timetable of the relevant work; and

(4) of the respective additional numbers of (i) NHEPs and (ii) places for elderly person therein in each of the past 10 years?

Reply:

President,

(1) There are at present 45 nursing homes for elderly persons registered under the Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Maternity Homes Registration Ordinance (Cap. 165). Among these homes, some are concurrently registered under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance (Cap. 459). A list of the 45 aforementioned nursing homes for elderly persons, as well as the numbers of beds registered under Cap. 165 in these homes, are at Annex A.

(2) and (3) Upon implementation of the provisions on nursing homes under the Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance, the Government will, in light of the requirements under the Code of Practice for Private Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Maternity Homes currently in force, suitably incorporate the relevant regulatory standards pertaining to nursing homes in the existing Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons).

(4) The numbers of nursing homes for elderly persons registered under Cap. 165 and the numbers of beds registered under Cap. 165 therein in each of the past 10 years are at Annex B.