

## LCQ21: Implementation of amendments made to Nurses Registration Ordinance

Following is a question by Professor the Hon Joseph Lee and a written reply by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, in the Legislative Council today (March 18):

Question:

It is learnt that since 1997, the nursing sector has been advocating the enhancement of the credibility, transparency and governance capabilities of the Nursing Council of Hong Kong (NCHK) as well as the achievement of the aim of professional autonomy through the introduction of amendments to the Nurses Registration Ordinance (Cap. 164). In June 1997, the former Legislative Council passed the amendments to the Ordinance, which included the addition of section 3(2)(ca) to stipulate that six of the members of NCHK shall be elected among registered nurses and enrolled nurses in a manner provided for by the Ordinance. However, that provision has not yet been implemented so far. In addition, the Government indicated in May 2018 that according to legal advice, further amendments to Cap.164 were needed before the subsidiary legislation for the election of the aforesaid six members could be introduced. The authorities would invite NCHK to submit proposals to follow up the recommendations in the Report of the Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development published by the Government in 2017 and related matters. The issue of that provision not having been implemented would then be dealt with together. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council of the latest progress of the follow-up work undertaken by the authorities for implementing that provision, as well as the timetable for the implementation of that provision?

Reply:

President,

In June 2017, the Government published the Report of the Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development (the Strategic Review). The Food and Health Bureau subsequently wrote to invite the Nursing Council of Hong Kong (NCHK) in April and July 2018 respectively to follow up and submit proposals on the development of nursing specialties and the recommendations put forward in the Strategic Review, which include ensuring lay involvement in the NCHK, making continuing professional education and/or continuing professional development a mandatory requirement, and reviewing the mechanisms for complaint investigation and disciplinary inquiry, etc.

The NCHK is following up on the above issues. After receiving proposals from the NCHK, the Government will conduct a comprehensive review of the Nurses Registration Ordinance having regard to the situation of the nursing

profession, present circumstances, international practices, and possible legislative amendments arising from the implementation of the proposals. The issue of the outstanding provisions of the Nurses Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 1997 will then be dealt with together.