

SFH speaks on increase of medical students

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, at the Legislative Council Complex today (May 31):

Reporter: Professor, the Government has proceeded to increase the number of medical students. How many places will the Government increase?

Secretary for Food and Health: The Government has published the Report of Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development last year. In the report, it is stated that some healthcare professionals will be facing manpower shortage in terms of the demand of healthcare services in the coming years. Therefore, we have recommended an increase of the number of students in medical, nursing and dentistry as well as some other allied health professionals in the coming triennium. The final number will be announced by the Education Bureau. Of course, there are a number of factors we have to consider when deciding the number of places to be increased in the coming triennium. First of all, according to the report, we have a supply shortage. Secondly, the teaching facilities of the universities. So, in the recent Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary has already pledged resources for the three universities to build up more teaching facilities in preparation for the increase in the number of these healthcare professional students. Thirdly, the training curriculum of many of these healthcare professionals involves clinical practicum. Therefore, we also have to liaise with practicum sites, such as hospitals under the Hospital Authority, in order to provide adequate clinical education for all these students. All these factors have to be taken into consideration before we decide on the final number of students to be increased. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)