

Transcript of remarks by US for Health at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Under Secretary for Health, Dr Libby Lee, at a media session after attending a radio programme this morning (July 29):

Reporter: Two simple questions. Do you have a target for identifying patients with diabetes or high blood pressure during the pilot scheme, so we can evaluate the effectiveness of the programme? The second question is that you said the proposal to change the "Conditional Discharge" mechanism would not deter people with mental illness from seeking help, could you explain why?

Under Secretary for Health: So the first question is about chronic diseases. When we planned the programme, we basically in-built the evaluation system there. We in-built two layers of evaluation. When we designed the programme, we defined the number of patients, and the number of eligible people, that is those aged more than 45 years old without hypertension or diabetes. And then we calculated the approximate response rate and we estimated the approximate number. For the evaluation, we have two tiers. The first tier is about the whole programme, the recruitment rate, the participation rate, etc. The third one is the long-term healthcare outcome. When we have introduced this programme, could we actually bring down the hypertension or diabetes rate, making people actually be more aware of the diseases? So in the programme we will have the evaluation. When we have started, maybe in a year or two, we can actually know the result.

Another question is about the mental health. For the "Conditional Discharge", we have to stress again, the "Conditional Discharge" is targeted only at the mental patients with violence behaviour or tendency. It actually does not include other kinds of psychiatric diseases. The "Conditional Discharge" is a community support for these patients if their diseases have stabilised during the admission, and they are able to be discharged to their own place for rehabilitation. We want them to have certain kind of conditions and support, so that's why we introduced the "Conditional Discharge". We believe that it won't actually deter that much of the mental patients from seeking help, because it only covers those patients with severe violence behaviour or tendency. Even so if the mental patients with violence behaviour or tendency, not everyone require "Conditional Discharge". The medical team will do the assessments before the discharge and plan whether they need a discharge order or not.

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