

# LCQ16: Healthcare services provided by Central Government-Aided Emergency Hospital

Following is a question by the Hon Judy Chan and a written reply by the Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

Since April 2023, the Hospital Authority (HA) has started using the Central Government-Aided Emergency Hospital (CGAEH) located in the Lok Ma Chau Loop for the provision of ambulatory services, and has launched the Ambulatory Diagnostic Radiology Service Pilot Programme (the Pilot Programme) to invite patients with suitable clinical conditions to switch to CGAEH to receive radiological diagnostic services. Subsequently, HA has gradually expanded the services of CGAEH, including extending the service scope of the Pilot Programme to cover patients referred by all public hospitals in Hong Kong, introducing Magnetic Resonance Imaging services for thyroid eye disease, and providing imaging examination services with the use of two Ultrasonography machines and three Computed Tomography scanners. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) whether it knows the number of patients who received radiological diagnostic services at CGAEH each year since the launch of the Pilot Programme, together with a breakdown by the hospital cluster to which the patients belonged;
- (2) whether it knows the waiting situation for and the number of cases handled by HA's radiology services in each of the past three years, together with a breakdown by hospital cluster;
- (3) whether it knows the number of various types of medical equipment in CGAEH since its operation and the dates on which they were commissioned;
- (4) whether it knows the existing and future medical services provided by CGAEH;
- (5) whether it knows the patronage of the shuttle bus provided by HA for transportation to and from CGAEH in the past year; and
- (6) as a member of the public who belongs to a hospital cluster outside the New Territories has told me that even though the Pilot Programme has now been extended to cover patients referred by all public hospitals in Hong Kong, he has not yet been arranged to receive radiological diagnostic services at CGAEH, whether the Government knows if there are similar cases; if there are, of the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Hospital Authority (HA), the consolidated reply to the question raised by the Hon Judy Chan is as follows:

The Central Government-Aided Emergency Hospital (the Emergency Hospital) located in the Lok Ma Chau Loop was commissioned for construction by the Central Government during the fifth wave of the COVID-19 epidemic in Hong Kong and handed over to the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region on December 30, 2022, for operation and management. With Hong Kong having returned to normalcy, the Government handed over the Emergency Hospital to the HA for planning of day hospital services, with the New Territories East Cluster (NTEC) tasked with the management and operation of the hospital, so as to make good use of resources gifted by the Central Government. The Government and the HA will dovetail with the progress and need of land use development in the Loop and continue to arrange optimal use of relevant resources.

The HA subsequently launched the Ambulatory Diagnostic Radiology Service Pilot Programme (the Programme) in April 2023, with a view to shortening the waiting time of patients and alleviating the pressure on the radiology services of public hospitals. The Programme was first implemented in the NTEC and subsequently extended to patients of all public hospitals in Hong Kong. Under the Programme, various cluster hospitals actively select suitable patients who are waiting for investigations, including non-emergency and non-hospitalised patients with stable conditions who are self-ambulatory, and invite them to participate in the Programme on a voluntary basis, so that various clusters can make available resources to expedite handling of urgent cases with a view to shortening the waiting time. Invitations are issued by various cluster hospitals, rather than patients making applications themselves. Those who do not fulfil the above criteria will not receive invitations.

As at the end of December 2024 since the inception of the Programme, more than 24 000, 5 300 and 5 600 patients have undergone Computed Tomography (CT), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), and Ultrasonography services in the Emergency Hospital respectively. The waiting time (median) of patients participating in the Programme (investigations undergone and appointments booked) has also improved, with the waiting time for CT patients shortened from 108 weeks to about 25 weeks (Note), that for MRI patients from 118 weeks to about 36 weeks (Note), and that for Ultrasonography patients from 165 weeks to about 56 weeks (Note). The number of patients receiving diagnostic radiology services in the Emergency Hospital by clusters is set out at Annex I. The HA's waiting situation for radiological services and number of cases handled by clusters are set out at Annexes II and III.

Apart from the above diagnostic radiological services, the HA has also progressively rolled out other services in the Emergency Hospital over the past year or so, including endoscopy, sleep study, microbiological tests and 25-hydroxyvitamin D analysis, and will commence intravitreal injection service with a view to optimising the use of medical facilities in the hospital. The quantity of major medical equipment in the Emergency Hospital

and their commissioning dates are set out at Annex IV.

To facilitate patients using the services, the Emergency Hospital provides free shuttle buses to transport patients between designated MTR stations and the hospital. Except public holidays, there are about 10 shuttle bus trips daily between Sheung Shui MTR station and the hospital from Mondays to Saturdays, and about eight shuttle bus trips daily between Yuen Long MTR station and the hospital, as well as between Siu Hong MTR station and the hospital on Tuesdays and Thursdays. At present, the monthly number of shuttle bus passenger exceeds 10 000.

Note: Waiting time is counted from when a patient joins the waiting list at a public hospital.

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## **Effective Exchange Rate Index**

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Wednesday, March 19, 2025 is 106.3 (same as yesterday's index).

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## **LCQ21: Promoting development of Hong Kong's capital market**

Following is a question by the Hon Robert Lee and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

Recently, six departments of the Central Authorities jointly announced the Implementation Plan on Promoting the Inflow of Medium to Long-term Capital into the Market, so as to steadily expand the scale of investment and improve the supply and structure of funds in the capital market. Moreover, it has been reported that as pointed out by the Governor of the People's Bank of China, the proportion of the country's foreign exchange reserves allocated to Hong Kong's assets will be substantially increased to support the development of Hong Kong's capital market. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the Government has discussed with the relevant Mainland authorities the specific details (such as the target level of the allocation

proportion, the types of assets to be allocated and the amount involved) and the implementation timetable for increasing the allocation of the country's foreign exchange reserves to Hong Kong's assets; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) whether the Government will study with the Mainland regulatory authorities the establishment of a mechanism for channelling capital, so as to promote the investment of the country's foreign exchange reserves and some of the Mainland medium to long-term capital (such as the National Social Security Fund, commercial insurance funds and pension funds) in Hong Kong's capital market;

(3) whether the Government will actively consider making good use of the funds under its control, such as charitable trust funds, university endowment funds and funds managed by different government departments, to jointly increase investment in Hong Kong stocks, so as to play a leading role and boost market confidence; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(4) as it has been reported that the Deputy Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) has recently proposed to promote the publication of a White Paper on Hong Kong's Capital Market (the White Paper), whether the SAR Government will implement the formulation of the White Paper; if so, whether it will study collecting various financial institutions' views in areas such as market regulation, transaction costs and corporate governance?

Reply:

President,

In consultation with the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) and Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX), my consolidated reply to the four parts of the question is as follows:

During his remarks at the Asian Financial Forum in January 2025, the Governor of the People's Bank of China said that a thriving capital market serves as the core and backbone of Hong Kong as an international financial centre. It will encourage quality enterprises to get listed and issue bonds in Hong Kong, and continuously enhance and expand the connectivity mechanisms between the Mainland and Hong Kong for stocks, bonds, wealth management products and interest rate swaps. It will also deepen the financial co-operation within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and increase the allocation of our country's foreign exchange reserves in assets in Hong Kong, so that the financial development in Hong Kong will embrace a broader future. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and financial regulators will continue to co-ordinate closely with relevant Mainland authorities as always to support the integration and healthy development of the Mainland and Hong Kong capital markets. We will also discuss with the Mainland further expansion and enhancement arrangements for mutual market access between capital markets of the two places, so as to better meet the

needs of residents in both places for cross-market and diversified asset allocation, as well as attract more Mainland and international fund flows into Hong Kong.

The Government very much welcomes and is grateful to the increase in allocation of the national foreign exchange reserves in assets in Hong Kong, which is a recognition of Hong Kong's investment environment and the quality of our products. The specific details (such as funding distribution or timetable) will be considered by relevant Mainland institutions and announced as necessary. The Government and financial regulators have been maintaining communication with the Mainland financial regulators on financial market matters and will fully support related work. In fact, we need to strengthen our efforts in optimising the market and utilising our own attractiveness to encourage more Mainland and overseas institutions and individual investors to participate in trading Hong Kong stocks. In the face of challenges from the external environment in the past few years, the Government has been striving to continuously improve market liquidity through taking forward specific enhancement measures. Specifically, the Government set up the Task Force on Enhancing Stock Market Liquidity in 2023 to review the factors affecting market liquidity and put forward improvement recommendations on different areas such as listing regime, market structure, trading mechanism, etc. The Government together with the SFC and HKEX have taken forward various measures, including enhancing the specialist technology listing regime, reforming GEM, facilitating listing of overseas issuers, implementing arrangements for trading under severe weather, establishing the regime for share repurchase and treasury, narrowing the trading spread, etc. We have also been actively attracting overseas capital through different channels, including consolidating traditional sources of funds and opening up new capital sources.

As our country's economy demonstrates resilience with breakthroughs in key technologies, and as the enhancement measures that we have implemented begin to bear fruit, the sentiment and trading in the Hong Kong stock market have improved since last year. From the beginning of this year, stock market trading has become even more active, with average daily turnover until February exceeding \$220 billion, an increase of close to 70 per cent over that of 2024. Last year, Hong Kong was one of the world's four largest initial public offering (IPO) markets, with total IPO funds raised exceeding \$87 billion, up nearly 90 per cent year-on-year. As of the end of February this year, HKEX was processing over 100 listing applications, demonstrating increasing confidence of companies in raising funds in Hong Kong. HKEX and the SFC will continue their efforts in strengthening the competitiveness of the stock market by facilitating corporate financing, promoting product innovation, and improving trading and risk management efficiency.

As regards investment of funds under the Government, funds established by the Government or operated by Government departments have specific purposes and management mechanisms. The relevant funds need to formulate appropriate investment strategies based on factors such as its size, overall risk tolerance, liquidity needs, etc, so as to achieve target returns, cash flow or specific policy objectives through different asset allocations. It is

not appropriate to formulate uniform asset allocation recommendations or restrictions for the investment of relevant funds.

The Government has been implementing various reforms for the development of the capital market, including establishing listing avenues for new economy and technology enterprises with weighted voting rights structures, facilitating overseas issuers to raise funds in Hong Kong, etc. As also mentioned in the 2025-26 Budget, the key to consolidating and enhancing the strengths of Hong Kong as an international financial centre lies in institutional innovation, product innovation, a critical mass of enterprises and financial connectivity. To dovetail with the latest economic trends and corporate needs, HKEX and the SFC are taking forward a comprehensive review of the listing regime, which will review listing requirements and post-listing ongoing obligations, evaluate listing-related regulations and arrangements to improve the vetting process, optimise the thresholds for dual primary listing and secondary listing, and review the market structure, including exploring the establishment of an over-the-counter trading market. HKEX and the SFC will conduct in-depth review in each area, with a view to putting forward enhancement proposals in different areas by batches when they are ready within this year for market consultation. Meanwhile, the Government will also collect market views through various channels from time to time, including the financial regulators and the Financial Services Development Council, so as to formulate relevant development strategies in a timely manner.

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## **LCQ8: Traffic planning for area around Sussex Lodge, Tseung Kwan O**

Following is a question by the Hon Stanley Li and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

It is learnt that the continued population growth in the Clear Water Bay Road area in recent years, coupled with the large number of people travelling to Sai Kung and Clear Water Bay Beach at weekends, has resulted in serious traffic congestion at the roundabout on Clear Water Bay Road near Ying Yip Road outside Sussex Lodge, Tseung Kwan O (TKO) (the roundabout). Some residents are hoping for the construction of a carriageway connecting Clear Water Bay Road or Tai Au Mun Road to Wan Po Road so that vehicles can be diverted to TKO Area 137, the Cross Bay Link, TKO, and Tseung Kwan O–Lam Tin Tunnel. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the Government has conducted a comprehensive and systematic

assessment of traffic flows at the roundabout and along Clear Water Bay Road; if so, whether it can provide specific data and predictive analysis reports on traffic flows in this area for the past five years and the next five years, including information on vehicle types, peak traffic periods, etc.;

(2) whether the Government has considered implementing temporary traffic control measures in the vicinity of the roundabout to alleviate the existing traffic congestion problem; if so, of the specific measures and their implementation timetable; if not, the reasons for that;

(3) whether the Government will assess the feasibility of using a smart traffic system to relieve traffic congestion at the roundabout; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(4) regarding the request to construct a carriageway connecting Clear Water Bay Road or Tai Au Mun Road to Wan Po Road, whether the relevant government department(s) has/have commenced a feasibility study; if so, of the details, including the current stage and the expected completion date of the study, the time required for the preliminary works of the carriageway project, and the official commencement date of construction; if not, the reasons for that; and

(5) whether the Government has currently formulated strategies to promote coordinated development between urban planning and carriageway construction in the areas surrounding Clear Water Bay Road and Tai Au Mun Road?

Reply:

President,

In respect of the questions raised by the Hon Stanley Li regarding the transport planning in the vicinity of Sussex Lodge in Tseung Kwan O, having consulted the Transport Department (TD) and the Highways Department (HyD), my consolidated reply is as follows.

Currently, the neighbourhood of Clear Water Bay Road and Tai Au Mun Road is a low-density residential area, primarily connected to the Tseung Kwan O town centre via the Clear Water Bay Road/Ying Yip Road roundabout (i.e. the roundabout in front of the Sussex Lodge). While the traffic on Clear Water Bay Road and Tai Au Mun Road is relatively busy in the morning peak hour (approximately from 7.30am to 8.30am), the vehicular flow is generally smooth in other periods. Based on the traffic impact assessments under other developments in the Tseung Kwan O region submitted in recent years, the Design Flow to Capacity (DFC) ratios of the roundabout in front of Sussex Lodge during the morning peak hour are as follows:

Year	DFC ratio (Note) during morning peak hour
2023	0.85
2026	0.92 (estimated)
2031	0.92 (estimated)

Note: DFC ratio shows the operational performance of a roundabout/priority junction. A DFC ratio below 1.0 implies that there is sufficient capacity; above 1.0 implies that the roundabout/priority junction is overloaded.

As there is so far no large-scale development in the vicinity of Clear Water Bay Road and Tai Au Mun Road under planning in future, the TD, after evaluation, considers that the capacity of the concerned roundabout and its connecting roads remain sufficient to meet the demand. Nevertheless, the TD will closely monitor the situation, and review the relevant traffic demand as well as implement appropriate traffic improvement measures as necessary in keeping with the developments in the area. Based on the TD's on-site traffic surveys, during the morning peak hour, a significant portion of the northbound traffic on Clear Water Bay Road turns left at the roundabout into Hang Hau Road, heading towards the Tseung Kwan O town centre and other destinations. To alleviate the above situation, the TD and the HyD have planned to introduce an exclusive left-turn lane at the roundabout towards Hang Hau Road. This measure will enable the Clear Water Bay Road northbound vehicles to enter Hang Hau Road more quickly without entering the roundabout, thereby reducing the traffic volume circulating inside the roundabout and improving convenience for vehicles traveling in all directions. When this exclusive left-turn lane is introduced, the TD assessed that the DFC ratio of the roundabout in the morning peak hour could be reduced to approximately 0.7 by 2031. The TD and the HyD have commenced the preparatory works in September 2024. Considering that the construction works involve relocating underground utilities and tree transplantation or removal, it is anticipated that the works will be completed by late 2027/early 2028.

To minimise the impact on the nearby traffic due to the temporary traffic arrangements during the construction works, the works will be carried out in phases. Currently, the HyD is undertaking preliminary excavation for trial pits, discussing with relevant utility undertakers the relocation of underground utilities, and carrying out tree assessments, etc. As different phases of the works involve underground utility relocation and tree transplantation or removal, the TD and the HyD will carefully assess the construction progress and formulate temporary traffic measures for subsequent phases based on the latest traffic conditions.

On the other hand, the TD has made reference to the traffic management measures at other roundabouts, such as the possibility of installing traffic signals at the concerned roundabout. However, due to site constraints, the roundabout has a relatively small diameter. The roundabout and its connecting roads lack sufficient space to accommodate the vehicular queues for temporary stopping if traffic signals or real-time adaptive traffic signal systems are to be installed. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, the TD will continue to review and consider viable improvement options.

Regarding the town planning for the peripheral areas of Tseung Kwan O in future, such as the large-scale development project in Tseung Kwan O Area 137, the primary traffic demand to the urban area will be catered by the proposed Tseung Kwan O Line Southern Extension, and the major roads including Wan Po Road, Tseung Kwan O Cross Bay Link and Tseung Kwan O-Lam Tin Tunnel. As such, it is expected that the additional traffic demand would not have

significant impact on Clear Water Bay Road or Tai Au Mun Road. The Government currently has no plan to construct a road connecting Tseung Kwan O Area 137 to Clear Water Bay.

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## **LCQ6: Immigration and customs clearance measures that facilitate inbound tourism**

Following is a question by the Hon Yiu Pak-leung and a reply by the Secretary for Transport and Logistics, Ms Mable Chan, in the Legislative Council today (March 19):

Question:

There are views pointing out that enhancement of the immigration arrangements for visitors is crucial to attracting more high value-added and high-end visitors to Hong Kong. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) as there are quite a number of views that it will further promote inbound travel of high-end visitors if the co-location or other innovative immigration and customs clearance arrangements are adopted for private jet and cross-boundary helicopter passengers, whether the authorities have initiated discussions with the relevant Mainland departments in this regard; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(2) as there are views pointing out that the large-scale arts, cultural and sports events to be held at the Kai Tak Sports Park will attract internationally renowned superstars and high-end visitors to come to Hong Kong and drive up the demand for helicopter services, whether the authorities have considered opening up the heliport of the Government Flying Service Kai Tak Division for operating the relevant cross-boundary flights as well as flights within Hong Kong; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(3) as it is learnt that there are often long queues of people at the immigration counters of the Hong Kong International Airport during peak hours, which brings negative impact on the experience of visitors, of the authorities' specific plans in place to expedite the adoption of automated systems using innovative technologies to enhance the efficiency of passenger clearance, and whether the authorities will consider providing fast tracks for business travellers, with a view to offering more expeditious immigration services?

Reply:

President,

In recent years, the market landscape for cross-boundary helicopter services has been evolving. With the rapid development of road, rail and maritime networks connecting cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, continuous increase in cross-boundary passenger flow, as well as the emergence of new technologies (e.g. Advanced Air Mobility), the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) is keeping a close watch on the development trend and market demand for local and cross-boundary helicopter services, and will review the development of related facilities continuously, taking into account the views of the industry and the utilisation of existing heliports.

In consultation with the Security Bureau, the reply to the Hon Yiu's question is as follows:

(1) The Memorandum of Understanding under the Air Services Arrangement between the Mainland and the HKSAR was expanded in 2019 to enhance cross-boundary helicopter services between Hong Kong and eligible take-off/landing points within the whole Guangdong Province, thereby greatly enhancing the choice of potential take-off/landing points and the flexibility of services. At present, helicopter take-off/landing points in Hong Kong and the Guangdong Province that fulfill the relevant customs, immigration and quarantine (CIQ) arrangements include Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport, Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) and the cross-boundary heliport at the rooftop of the Hong Kong-Macao Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan.

The HKSAR Government will continue to work closely with the Mainland authorities to facilitate the development of cross-boundary commercial helicopter services, including studying the feasibility of setting up more take-off/landing points that fulfill relevant arrangements. To support the said development, the two governments may also explore the adoption of convenient and efficient clearance modes, with a view to enhancing passenger clearance efficiency.

The Hong Kong Business Aviation Centre at HKIA is equipped with security and CIQ facilities. To enhance the transit convenience for business jet and cross-boundary helicopter passengers, HKIA launched the Business Jet & Commercial Flight Wing-to-Wing Transfer Service in March last year, which allows relevant passengers arriving at HKIA to directly proceed to transfer to commercial flights, and vice versa. As the service can save about one-third of the transit time for travellers, it will help promote their use of business jet and cross-boundary helicopter services and transit through Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government and the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) will continue to closely monitor the market demand and the operation of relevant facilities.

Since 2019, several Mainland helicopter operators in the market conducted trial flights between Hong Kong and Shenzhen/Guangzhou. For example, in September last year, the first cross-boundary helicopter flight

between Guangzhou and Hong Kong took place. The HKSAR Government will continue to facilitate trial flight activities, with a view to implementing cross-boundary helicopter services between Hong Kong and Guangdong as soon as possible.

(2) Regarding the "heliport" site at the end of the former Kai Tak runway, when seeking funding approval from the Legislative Council for the works project of the Kai Tak Division of the Government Flying Service in 2018, the HKSAR Government has indicated that it will reserve the flexibility to co-locate cross-boundary helicopter service facilities at the site in future, if necessary. The Division has been designed to ensure that necessary equipment can be provided to support the future co-location of the site with the cross-boundary heliport.

As mentioned above, the HKSAR Government is closely monitoring the development trend and market demand for helicopter services, and will review the development of related facilities in a timely manner.

(3) The Immigration Department (ImmD) has been striving for innovation in enhancing the clearance efficiency of e-Channels and expanding the service target group in order to provide immigration services of the highest quality to members of the public and visitors.

Firstly, Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Business Travel Card holders and eligible frequent visitors can choose to enroll for the e-Channel service and perform self-service immigration clearance. The ImmD has also launched the Smart Departure service, which uses facial recognition technology to verify the identity of passengers, allowing eligible visitors to use the self-service departure service at HKIA and various ports.

For visitors from the Mainland and Macao, the ImmD lowered the eligible age of holders of the Mainland's electronic Exit-Entry Permits for travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao to use the e-Channel service from 16 years old or above to 11 years old or above in April 2023. The ImmD also launched the Mutual Use of QR Code between HKSAR and Macao SAR Clearance Service jointly with the Macao authorities in July last year, allowing eligible residents of both places to use QR Codes to pass through the automated clearance channels.

The ImmD will also flexibly deploy manpower, operate additional counters and channels during peak hours to ensure smooth passenger flow at HKIA. Looking ahead, the ImmD will continue to use innovative technologies to enhance the level of clearance facilitation.

At the same time, the AAHK is committed to enhancing passenger experience and operational efficiency, including –

(i) introducing the facial recognition technology-based application Flight Token in October 2022 to speed up the whole departure process. Coupled with the concurrent launch of Flight Token e-Channels by the ImmD, Flight Token allows registered passengers of designated airlines to show their faces for identity verification without the need to repeatedly present their travel

documents and boarding passes throughout the departure process;

(ii) introducing a new smart security screening system in July 2024, which obviates the need for passengers to take out liquids, aerosols or gels, and electronic devices such as laptops from their carry-on luggage during security screening, thereby further enhancing the overall efficiency of security screening; and

(iii) HKIA provides Courtesy Channel in the Arrival Halls and Departure Halls to facilitate security screening and immigration clearance for visitors invited by the AAHK or the airlines.

We will continue to closely monitor the market demand and the operation of relevant facilities, with a view to continuously maximising the convenience for visitors. Thank you, President.