

Progress Report
Motion Debate on
“Formulating a new mechanism for importing non-locally trained
doctors”
Legislative Council Meeting on 18 November 2020

Purpose

This report sets out actions taken by the Administration in regard to the motion debate on “Formulating a new mechanism for importing non-locally trained doctors” held at the Legislative Council (LegCo) on 18 November 2020. The motion carried by the LegCo is attached at [Annex](#).

Actions Taken

2. With the rapid ageing of the local population and increasing demand for healthcare manpower, it is an indisputable fact that the public healthcare system is facing a severe shortage of doctors. This could be fully reflected by its per capita doctor ratio, which lags behind other advanced economies. Currently, Hong Kong has a ratio of two doctors per 1 000 population, far below the ratio in Singapore (2.5), Japan (2.5), the United States (2.6), the United Kingdom (3.0) and Australia (3.8). While the Government has substantially increased the number of medical training places over the past decade, in view of the time required for training a doctor and the constraints in enhancing the training capacity of the medical schools, we cannot solely rely on increasing the number of local training places to solve the manpower problem. The Government therefore agrees that there is a need to attract more qualified non-locally trained doctors to practise in the public healthcare sector of Hong Kong to help expand the pool of doctors.

3. As announced by the Chief Executive in the Question and Answer Session in the LegCo on 4 February 2021, the Government has decided to introduce the Medical Registration (Amendment) Bill to LegCo in the current legislative session to create a new pathway under the existing Medical Registration Ordinance (Cap. 161) in order to allow qualified non-locally trained doctors to come back and practise in our public healthcare sector.

4. There are three key features in the legislative proposal. First, non-locally trained doctors admitted must be Hong Kong permanent

residents. Second, the applicant must have graduated from a recognised non-local medical school and must have registered as medical practitioner or obtained specialist qualification with the local authorities in the respective jurisdictions. Third, all approved applicants must serve in the public sector for a long period of time, so as to address the shortage of doctors in the public sector.

Way Forward

5. The Government will gauge public views (including the medical sector and patient groups) on the proposal. We plan to submit the Medical Registration (Amendment) Bill to the LegCo in the second quarter this year.

Food and Health Bureau
March 2021

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Formulating a new mechanism for importing non-locally trained
doctors”
to be moved by Hon Tommy CHEUNG**

Wording of the Motion

That this Council urges the Government to expeditiously formulate a new mechanism for importing experienced and quality non-locally trained doctors, so as to alleviate the shortage of doctors in the public healthcare system and effectively respond to the demand for healthcare services arising from an ageing population in Hong Kong.