

Chapter 6 – Summing Up

124. We have set out in preceding chapters our proposed directions for reforming the health care delivery system, enhancing quality assurance and improving the financing of our health care services. Upon implementation, these proposals, collectively, will make some fundamental and long-lasting changes to Hong Kong's health care system. For example :-

- (a) The focus of our delivery system will shift from provision of cure to improving the quality of life. The shift will be driven by new knowledge and our efforts to strengthen preventive care and to develop community care programmes centred on patients. The development of Chinese medicine will complement western medicine and will offer a greater choice of providers to the population.
- (b) The role of the Department of Health will change significantly. It will gradually phase out its direct services, and while quality assurance remains a responsibility of the professions, the Department will oversee the process to ensure that quality care is consistently maintained and delivered.
- (c) While a substantial and major part of the public health care system will continue to be financed by Government, financing of the public health care system will be supplemented by affordable individual contributions and medical savings in order to sustain continuing

improvements in quality and introduction of new technologies.

125. We said in Chapter 2 that the Hong Kong health care system should promote lifelong wellness and provide lifelong holistic care to individuals. These will be pursued through the strengthening of preventive and primary medical care and the development of a community-based health care service. We said that the health care system must be able to provide a high standard of service and support continuous medical development. The proposed continuous quality improvements through education, systems support and regulatory measures will help ensure that this aim is achieved. We said that we want the health care system to be an equitable one, accessible to all persons requiring treatment and affordable by the individuals. The two-tier safety net described in paragraph 114 will ensure that medical care is accessible to all, including those who have inadequate or no means. By prioritising public subsidies to areas of greatest needs, we ensure that services will continue to be affordable by individuals. We said that we want the system to be cost-effective in delivery of health services and financially sustainable in the long term. The many reform proposals to the health care delivery system and the cost containment mechanisms being implemented in the public sector will slow down the increase in cost. The proposal to save for our future medical and long term care needs will help make the system financially sustainable in the long term.

126. We have set out in the preceding chapters how to take these proposals further, and we expect to initiate some of the

implementation plans in the next two years, while others will be phased in over the coming decade. We look forward to your support and comments, which will assist us in developing various programme plans. We are confident that upon implementation of these proposals, we shall achieve in Hong Kong a world-class health care system, which can effectively support the individual's pursuit for good health and a good quality of life, and add value to the community's development.