



DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Sunday, March 31, 1974

INCREASE IN MEDICAL SUBVENTIONS

\$55.6 Million More For Recurrent And Capital Costs To Institutions

Twenty-three assisted medical institutions in the voluntary sector, and seven private hospitals receiving rates refunds, are to get a total of \$165.7 million to help meet their recurrent and capital expenditure in the new financial year beginning tomorrow (April 1).

This represents an increase of \$28.5 million on the approved estimate for the financial year ending on March 31, or \$55.6 million on actual expenditure incurred during the financial year 1972-73.

The 23 institutions include two recently-opened hospitals, the Yan Chai in Tsuen Wan, and the United Christian in Kwun Tong.

The largest beneficiary is the Tung Wah group of hospitals, whose approved annually recurrent estimate for the present financial year is \$59.3 million, but which will be receiving \$77.2 million in the new financial year.

The United Christian Hospital, which has no approved annually recurrent estimate this year because it was still under consideration, will get the next biggest slice of the total subvention, provisionally assessed at \$13.2 million.

Under special expenditure, the Kwong Wah Hospital of the Tung Wah group will receive \$7.9 million for a new clinical pathology building, and the main Tung Wah Hospital the remaining balance of \$3.5 million for its new centenary block.

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Sunday, March 31, 1974

- 2 -

In recurrent expenditure itself, there is a net increase of \$41.2 million over the approved estimate for the 1972-73.

The 23 assisted institutions are subvented on the basis of three types of grant -- the deficiency grant, the cost-per-bed, and the lump sum.

In the case of a deficiency grant, the subvention is designed to meet the difference between a subvented institution's approved expenditure for a programme of activities approved by the Government, and its income from other sources.

The grant used to ensure that services, which the Government would otherwise be providing, are in fact provided. The Financial Secretary is represented on the boards of deficiency grant institutions, and they are required to work to approved detailed budgets.

Institutions subvented on the deficiency grant basis include the following: -

Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital
Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Addicts
Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
United Christian Hospital

The cost-per-bed and the lump sum are varieties of a discretionary grant. These grants are designed to assist the institutions concerned to meet the cost of specific types of medical services, or of hospital beds which the Government considers on medical grounds should be brought into the public sector to meet the needs of those unable to afford unsubsidised in-patient treatment.

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Sunday, March 31, 1974

- 3 -

In this way, these grants help certain institutions provide services to the extent that these services play their part in the overall provision of medical and health services in Hong Kong.

The grant is calculated either having regard to the cost up to a determined ceiling on the number of subventable beds -- cost-per-bed -- or having regard to the estimated income and expenditure of the institutions concerned and to the extent to which its activities are considered to be subvention-worthy -- lump sum.

Institutions subvented on the cost-per-bed basis include the following: -

Caritas Medical Centre
Haven of Hope Tuberculosis Sanatorium
Hong Kong Anti-Cancer Society
Hong Kong Anti-Tuberculosis and Thoracic Diseases Association
Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital
Our Lady of Maryknoll Hospital
Pok Oi Hospital
Society for the Relief of Disabled Children
The Hong Kong Association for Mentally Handicapped Children
and Young Persons Ltd.
Yan Chai Hospital

Institutions subvented on the lump-sum basis include the following: -

Cheshire Home
Family Planning Association of Hong Kong
Hong Kong Red Cross : (1) Blood Bank
(2) John F. Kennedy Centre
(3) Margaret Trench School
(4) Princess Alexandra Residential School
(5) Tsz Wan Shan School

/Hong Kong

Sunday, March 31, 1974

- 4 -

Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation
Leprosy Mission, Hong Kong Auxiliary
St. John Ambulance Brigade
Bureau of Hygiene and Tropical Diseases
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
School Medical Service

The seven private hospitals receiving rates refunds are: -

Adventist Sanatorium and Hospital
Baptist Hospital
Evangel Medical Centre
Matilda and War Memorial Hospital
Precious Blood Hospital
Canossa Hospital
St. Teresa's Hospital.

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/5

Sunday, March 31, 1974

- 5 -

SPECIAL HOLIDAY TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS IN NEW TERRITORIES

Motorists travelling to various parts of the New Territories should find their journey times reduced with the introduction next Friday (April 5) of special holiday traffic arrangements on two major roads -- Castle Peak Road and Clearwater Bay Road.

On Castle Peak Road, an experimental traffic management scheme is being implemented on Sundays and public holidays to reduce traffic congestion.

Initially it will be in operation for two months and during this time, goods vehicles will not be permitted to travel on Castle Peak Road between its junction with Sha Tsui Road in Tsuen Wan and Causeway Road in Tuen Mun between the hours of 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

A spokesman for the Transport Department said today that the scheme, which was first announced early in February, was intended to reduce congestion caused by slow moving lorries and by heavy vehicles breaking down.

It would also give priority to passenger transport for a few hours to enable people to have reasonably quick access to beaches and other recreational areas along this section of Castle Peak Road.

He emphasised that with the implementation of the scheme there would still not be a total ban on the movement of goods vehicles to and from the western side of the New Territories; alternative routes are available on Tai Po Road, Route Twisk, and on Castle Peak Road outside the restricted hours.

Also on Friday (April 5) the annual summer Clearwater Bay Road restrictions on goods vehicles will come into operation.

/From April 5

Sunday, March 31, 1974

- 6 -

From April 5 until October 28, 1974, all goods vehicles travelling in an easterly (uphill) direction will be prohibited from using Clearwater Bay Road from its junction with Lung Cheung Road to Fei Ngor Shan Road on Sundays and public holidays between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, unless authorised in writing by the Commissioner for Transport.

This measure, which has operated successfully during the past few summers, is also aimed at reducing congestion caused by slow moving vehicles on this section of road.

Owners of goods vehicles requiring to use these sections of Castle Peak Road and Clearwater Bay Road during the restricted hours should apply in writing to the Transport Department. Permits will only be issued where movement of goods vehicles during the restricted hours is absolutely necessary.

Appropriate traffic signs will be erected to guide motorists.

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/7

Sunday, March 31, 1974

- 7 -

PRICE INCREASE FOR SOFT DRINKS JUSTIFIED

The Director of Commerce and Industry, Mr. David Jordan, has agreed that heavy cost increases justify a rise in the price of soft drinks.

In February 1973 the Beverage Manufacturers Association of Hong Kong demonstrated to the Government that unless the duty on table waters was abolished a price increase would be inevitable.

They undertook, however, that if the duty was abolished they would keep their prices unchanged at least until April 1, 1974. They also said that even after April 1, 1974 they would not increase their prices for at least another year unless they encountered exceptional increases in costs.

The cost inflation of 1973 has however seriously affected the beverage manufacturers. The price of sugar, for instance - a major ingredient of soft drinks - increased 90 per cent between February 1973 and March 1974. Wages and other costs have also increased substantially.

After a detailed examination of these cost increases it was clear to the Director that the scale of increases had been such that a price increase was justified.

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/8

Sunday, March 31, 1974

- 8 -

NEW CLEARWAY RESTRICTION HOURS

Clearway restriction hours on certain roads in Kwun Tong will be re-adjusted on Tuesday (April 2).

Affected by the re-arrangements are Kwun Tong Road and the adjacent sections of Elegance Road, Hip Wo Street and Hoi Yuen Road.

With effect from that day the restriction hours will be daily between 7 a.m. and 10 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., instead of 7.30 a.m. to 10 a.m. and from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The associated clearway restrictions on public light buses on parts of Choi Shek Lane, Ngau Tau Kok Road, Shing Shun Road, Ting Fu Street and Hong Ning Road will be changed in the same way.

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NEW DIB FORMAT FROM TOMORROW

Note to Editors: Today's English edition of the Daily Information Bulletin is the last to appear in its present form. As from tomorrow (Monday, April 1) the DIB will appear in a new format and will be received by those who completed and returned their applications by the February 27 deadline.

The new DIB format is being adopted as an economy measure in view of the worldwide paper shortage.

From tomorrow, the new DIB will consist of printed news items in the same form as they are sent through the teleprinter.

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/9

Sunday, March 31, 1974

- 9 -

REHABILITATION WEEK LEADS TO GREATER PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, said today that he hoped that Hong Kong's Rehabilitation Week would lead to practical results.

The week-long programme of activities with its theme of Opportunity for Ability, shall have helped to make the community more aware of what the disabled can do, he said.

He noted that more than 5,000 people had visited the Exhibition staged on three days last week at the City Hall and that in addition the Joint Council for the Physically and Mentally Handicapped had organised a mobile display which drew large numbers of visitors.

"The disabled look to us for opportunities to take part in normal working life. The public have now been able to see for themselves the remarkable skills which these less fortunate citizens can practice," Sir Murray said.

"We now need the co-operation of the public and particularly of employers in affording the handicapped an opportunity to show what they can do."

His Excellency also noted that people with a wide range of disabilities had recently been placed in jobs as clerks, machine sewers, apprentices, type setters, assemblers and as a lift operator and a telephonist.

He pledged that the Job Placement Unit of the Rehabilitation Division of the Social Welfare Department would continue to play an active and positive role in promoting the placement of handicapped people and in seeking to secure the fullest co-operation of employers in this.

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