

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

SB133

(Question Serial No. 0050)

Head: (30) Correctional Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): ()

Programme: (2) Re-integration

Controlling Officer: Commissioner of Correctional Services (WONG Kwok-hing)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Security

Question:

It is mentioned under the Programme that the Correctional Services Department facilitates the re-integration of persons in custody (PICs) into the community as law-abiding citizens. In this regard, please inform this Committee of the following:

- a. regarding the provision of psychological and counselling services for PICs and those under supervision after release, what are the average waiting time and number of persons awaiting the services;
- b. further to the above, what are the respective numbers of clinical psychologists, educational psychologists, social workers and professional counsellors providing psychological and counselling services for PICs and those under supervision after release, and the expenditure involved;
- c. please set out the respective numbers of PICs opted for pursuing programmes for Diploma Yi Jin, Diploma for Applied Education, Higher Diploma, Sub-degree, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree or higher qualifications in the past 5 years; further to the above, whether the Government has followed up on their employment situation and provided support for them?

Asked by: Hon KWOK Ling-lai, Lillian (LegCo internal reference no.: 2)

Reply:

- a) The Psychological Services Section (PSS) of the Correctional Services Department (CSD) provides psychological and counselling services for persons in custody (PICs) and those under supervision after release to improve their mental health and rectify their offending behaviours. At present, the average waiting time for the first appointment for clinical psychological services provided by CSD is 3 to 5 working days, and follow-up services will be provided thereafter having regard to the actual situation and needs of the service recipients. CSD does not maintain statistics on the number of persons awaiting the services.

- b) The posts and numbers of staff in PSS of CSD assigned to provide psychological and counselling services for PICs and those under supervision after release (as at 1 March 2024) are tabulated below:

Post	Number of staff
Senior Clinical Psychologist	2
Clinical Psychologist	18
Other staff in PSS	32

As the provision of psychological and counselling services for PICs and those under supervision after release is part of CSD's work to facilitate their re-integration into the community, CSD does not maintain a breakdown of the expenditure involved.

- c) In the past 5 years, a total of 57 young PICs (i.e. those aged below 21) took the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) and 33 adult PICs were awarded 32 bachelor's degrees and 2 master's degrees. The numbers of the relevant PICs and the qualifications attained are tabulated below:

Year	Qualifications attained ^{Note 2}		
	HKDSE	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree
2023	18	8	1
2022	12	5	-
2021	7	5	-
2020	9	9	-
2019	14	5	1
Total	60 ^{Note 1}	32	2
	(involving a total of 57 young PICs)	(involving a total of 33 adult PICs)	

^{Note 1}: In the past 5 years, a total of 3 young PICs sat for HKDSE more than once.

^{Note 2}: CSD does not maintain a breakdown of PICs taking other individual programmes.

At the end of October 2023, CSD set up the Ethics College at Pak Sha Wan Correctional Institution and Lo Wu Correctional Institution, providing a one-year full-time Diploma of Applied Education programme with a total of 75 places for voluntary enrolment by 60 adult male PICs and 15 adult female PICs.

CSD has earlier signed Memorandums of Understanding with the Hong Kong Metropolitan University and 8 University Grants Committee-funded universities respectively to provide more comprehensive support for students in custody, including arranging credit transfers for students in need to help them continue their studies after release.

As regards employment follow-up, CSD will arrange for PICs due for discharge within 3 months to participate in the Pre-release Re-integration Orientation Course to provide them with the latest employment information, equip them with interview skills, and offer them job-matching service as well as formulate appropriate rehabilitation programmes taking into account factors such as their interests, strengths and academic qualifications,

so as to facilitate their smooth re-integration into society after release. For rehabilitated persons under statutory supervision, supervising officers of CSD will follow up on their employment situation and provide support. As for rehabilitated persons who are not subject to statutory supervision, CSD will refer them to non-governmental organisations for follow-up and assistance according to their needs.

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