

1.5pc extra for welfare from Lotteries Fund

BY SUSIE WELDON

SOcial welfare will receive an extra 1.5 per cent from the Lotteries Fund each year, Social Welfare Director Michael Cartland revealed yesterday.

The extra money has been made available after the Jockey Club agreed to forego 1.5 per cent of its annual management fee for operating Mark Six.

It raises the proportion of Lotteries Fund money going to social welfare from 3.5 per cent to 5 per cent each year.

Last year, the 3.5 per cent Lotteries Fund contribution amounted to \$164 million.

With the Government's capital injection of \$2.3 billion into the fund announced by Governor Chris Patten last week, the extra money means the Social Welfare Department will have a total of \$5.269 billion to spend over the next four years, Mr Cartland said.

This was a real growth of 6.2 per cent a year, he said.

Mr Cartland also revealed that talks were under way with the Education Department about the "unsatisfactory" operation of the school social worker system.

School social workers are not employed by schools but by social welfare agencies.

"The real problem is they are not integrated into the school system. They need to be brought into the school team," Mr Cartland said.

One option under discussion was to put the Education Department in charge of all school social workers.

This would fit in with the "whole school approach" to counselling being pushed by the Education Department.

However, Mr Cartland said such a change might lead to resistance from the agencies due to "empire-building".

He ruled out any speeding up of the current target of one school social worker per 2,000 students by 1994/95.