

For Discussion
On 18 February 2005

LEGCO PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

Supplementary Information on Support and Assistance for Tetraplegic Patients Living in the Community

PURPOSE

This is a supplementary paper to provide further information [in addition to those already stated in Paper No. CB(2)538104-05(07)] on the support and assistance for tetraplegic patients living in the community and their families.

BACKGROUND

2. The above subject item was deferred from the January to February's Meeting for discussion. This paper provides supplementary information for Members.

ENHANCED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES TO TETRAPLEGIC PATIENTS

Additional Cash Allowance

3. As a new initiative under CE's 2005 policy address, we propose to provide CSSA recipients suffering from 100% disability or requiring constant attendance and are

living in the community with a monthly supplement of \$100, in addition to their existing cash allowance.

Care and Attention Allowance

4. As pointed out in para 3 of Paper No.CB(2)538104-05(07), in addition to the monthly allowance up to \$4,296 (or more in exceptional cases), SWD would also consider discretionary grant to cover other one-off expenses related to the hire of helper including insurance, agent fee, air ticket, government tariff and long service award.

5. On the use of C & A Allowance for the hire of foreign domestic helper by CSSA recipients, Immigration Department clarified that SWD's approval document of the C & A Allowance can be accepted as financial evidence for processing of the applications.

Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund

6. The extensive coverage of Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund would help meet the various special needs of tetraplegic patients living in the community. The Fund has so far received 40 applications. 18 cases have been approved and about \$680,000 have been granted.

Training of Service Providers and Care Staff

7. To enhance the skills and knowledge of staff members of the Integrated Home Care Services (IHCS) teams in providing care and support services to tetraplegic patients, eight courses were conducted for over 450 staff of IHCS teams, comprising professional staff of social workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and care staff. Briefings and visits to rehabilitation facilities were also arranged.

Grants for Purchase of Medical Consumables

8. Under the CSSA scheme, a special grant can be given to recipients, including tetraplegic patients, to cover the cost of recurrent medical or surgical appliances and hygienic items, subject to medical recommendation and supporting documents of an estimate or a proper receipt of the expenditure. To enhance communication and

facilitate processing among professionals, the referral procedures had been streamlined and new referral forms had been used since July 2004 exclusively for application of special grants to cover medical consumables required by tetraplegic patients.

MEETINGS AND SHARING SESSIONS WITH THE SELF-HELP GROUPS

9. Since May 2004, over 10 meetings and sharing sessions had been conducted with tetraplegic patients and the 4 self-help groups to address their concerns and answer questions on financial assistance and support services provided to tetraplegic patients living in the community. A list of the meetings held is at Annex 1.

10. A recent meeting was held on 13 January 2005, during which they were explained the procedures in obtaining medical assessment from out-patient clinics and on the extension of C & A Allowance to ensure continuation of payment.

11. Contact list of coordinators in Social Security Field Unit and officer-in-charges of medical social service units were provided to the four self-help groups to further improve direct communication on operational matters.

ADVICE SOUGHT

12. Members are invited to note the above supplementary information.

Social Welfare Department
February 2005

**SUMMARY OF MEETINGS AND SHARING SESSIONS HELD TO
TACKLE THE CONCERNS OF THE SEL-HELP GROUPS**

- Meeting of the 4 self-help groups with Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services) (AD(RM)) of the Social Welfare Department on 6 May 2004 where 45 members of the self-help groups attended.
- Meeting of the 4 self-help groups with Secretary of Health, Welfare and Food (SHWF), Director of Social Welfare (DSW) and Commissioner of Rehabilitation (C for R) on 29 June 2004 where 50 members of the self-help groups attended.
- Sharing meeting on welfare services for tetraplegic patients was held on 9 July 2004 for medical social workers and staff of social security field units to update them on new service provision and financial assistance for tetraplegic patients.
- Meeting with Assistant Director of Immigration Department, C for R and AD(RM) on 28 July 2004 to discuss on operation matters related to hiring of foreign domestic helper by the tetralpepic patients under the C & A allowance.
- A visit to 4 tetraplegic patients in Kowloon Hospital was made by SHWF on 17 August 2004.
- Meeting with the 4 self-help groups with SHWF, C for R, representatives from the Immigration Department and Chairman of the Yan Chai Hospital Board on 20 August 2004 where 40 members of the self help group attended.

- Meeting with representatives of Housing Department, medical and allied health team of Kowloon Hospital and medical social workers with AD(RM) on 27 August 2004 to discuss on the furnishing requirement of the public housing units that suited the needs of the severely disabled.
- SHWF attended the Founding Ceremony of Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund on 17 September 2004 together with representatives of the self-help groups and AD(RM) of SWD and C for R.
- Medical social worker of Kowloon Hospital and worker of Wong Tai Sin Social Security Field Unit had attended a sharing meeting held by the 4 self-help groups on 25 September 2004 to share with their members on the new service provision and financial assistance for tetraplegic patients.
- Senior Social Security Officer had attended a sharing meeting held by the 1st Step Association on 26 November 2004 to share update provision on C & A Allowance for tetraplegic patients.
- Sharing meeting on assistance for tetraplegic patients was held on 30 November 2004 for medical social workers and staff of social security field units to update them on new service provision and financial assistance for tetraplegic patients.
- Sharing meeting with medical social workers from 7 hospitals and 9 representatives of the 4 self-help groups was held on 13 January 2005 to discuss on operational matters of obtaining medical assessment for out-patient clinics, and for extending the payment of C & A Allowance to tetraplegic patients.