

中華人民共和國
香港特別行政區政府
政務司司長辦公室



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CHIEF SECRETARY
FOR ADMINISTRATION'S OFFICE
Government of the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region
of the People's Republic of China

27 June 2008

Dr the Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Chairman to Panel on Welfare Services
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road, Central
Hong Kong

Dear Dr Cheung,

Panel on Welfare Services

Licensing scheme for residential care homes for persons with disabilities

Thank you for your letter of 14 May 2008, conveying the views of the Panel on Welfare Services (the Panel) on the progress of the licensing scheme for residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs).

Members may wish to note that pending the introduction of the licensing scheme for RCHDs, the Registration Office of Private Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities (the Registration Office) set up under the Social Welfare Department (SWD) will continue to take various measures to strengthen the monitoring of services provided by RCHDs, including stepping up visits to RCHDs, providing additional support to private RCHDs through enhanced training, extending the community rehabilitation and support services to residents living in private RCHDs, etc.

The Registration Office is also reviewing the Code of Practice for RCHDs (the Code) issued in 2002 in consultation with a Working Group comprising relevant stakeholders formed by SWD. SWD plans to revert to the Panel on Welfare Services on the revised Code upon the commencement of the new legislative session later in the year.

To speed up the process of the legislative work, we are taking parallel action to examine the legal and related issues pertaining to the licensing regime. We are also considering suitable complementary measures to address various concerns and possible implications arising from the introduction of the licensing scheme. It remains the Administration's aim to introduce a Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Bill into the Legislative Council in the 2008-09 session. To foster the preparatory work, SWD will continue to consult the above-mentioned Working Group in the course of finalising the revised Code and on issues related to the introduction of the licensing scheme for RCHDs.

Thank you once again for the Panel's interest in this important exercise.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Tang', with a stylized flourish at the end.

(Henry Tang)
Chief Secretary for Administration

c.c. Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Director of Social Welfare