

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2)1319/07-08

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seen by the Administration)

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**Panel on Welfare Services**

**Subcommittee on Elderly Services**

**Minutes of the third meeting  
held on Tuesday, 22 January 2008, at 8:30 am  
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

**Members present** : Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung

**Member absent** : Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

**Public Officers attending** : Item I

Mr Eugene FUNG  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour & Welfare  
(Welfare) 3

Miss Joyce CHAN  
Assistant Secretary for Labour & Welfare (Welfare) 3A

Mrs Kathy NG  
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly)

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**Clerk in attendance** : Miss Betty MA  
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

**Staff in attendance** : Ms Maisie LAM  
Council Secretary (2) 2

Miss Maggie CHIU  
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

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**I. Residential care services for the elderly**  
[LC Paper No. CB(2)835/07-08(01)]

The Subcommittee deliberated (Index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

2. Members expressed grave concern about the long waiting time for subsidized residential care services. They pointed out that although the number of subsidized residential care places had increased by 60% from 16 000 in 1997 to about 26 000 in 2007, the average waiting time for a care and attention (C&A) place in a subvented/contract residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) and a nursing home (NH) place stood at about 32 months and 42 months respectively. They considered the current waitlisting situation of subsidized residential care services unacceptable, and strongly urged the Administration to draw up a specific timetable and plan to increase the number of and shorten the waiting time for subsidized residential care places.

3. Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour & Welfare (Welfare) 3 (PAS/LW(W)3) made the following responses -

- (a) subsidized residential care places for the elderly were meant for those who had long-term care (LTC) needs but could not be adequately taken care of at home. However, elders with LTC needs did not necessarily age in RCHEs. They could also age in the community with a range of subsidized community care and support services;
- (b) there was no means-test for subsidized residential care places. It should also be noted that as the pre-application care need assessment under the Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism (SCNAM) was only introduced in November 2003, not all elders currently on the Central Waiting List (CWL) had undergone the required assessment. The eligibility of some of them for subsidized residential care places had yet to be assessed and confirmed;

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- (c) the average waiting time for a subsidized C&A place in private RCHEs participating in the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme (EBPS) was about 10 months;
- (d) some of the elders on CWL were staying in non-subsidized residential care places while waiting for subsidized places. Some of those staying at home while waiting for subsidized residential care places were also receiving subsidized home-based community care services or day care services; and
- (e) apart from increasing the supply of subsidized residential care places (the overall supply of which had increased by about 60% in the past 10 years), the Social Welfare Department had been upgrading the level of care of subsidized residential care places through converting the self-care hostel and home for the aged places into C&A places providing continuum of care up to NH level. The Department would continue with its efforts in responding to the demand for subsidized residential care places. For instance, an additional 743 subsidized residential care places would be provided in 2007-2008.

4. Members considered that the measures put in place by the Administration were inadequate to meet the strong demand for subsidised residential care places in view of the ageing population. While recognizing that most elders did not object to age in the community, some members pointed out that there were practical difficulties for those elders with LTC needs to be taken care of at home due to various reasons. For instance, some elders were left unattended if their family members had to work during daytime. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that the subsidized home-based community care services for elders with LTC needs were extremely inadequate. To his knowledge, elders were provided with Enhanced Home and Community Care Services and Integrated Home Care Services (Ordinary Cases) on an average of only 2.5 times per week and 2.6 times per month respectively.

5. Notwithstanding that the average waiting time for a subsidized C&A place in private RCHEs participating in EBPS was only about 10 months, members noted with concern that some elders preferred to wait for a subsidized C&A place in a subvented/contract RCHE which was currently about 32 months. They considered that the waitlisting situation was primarily due to the worry about the quality of life of elders staying in private RCHEs.

6. To alleviate the waitlisting situation for the subsidized residential care services, members made the following suggestions –

- (a) the Administration should draw up a pledge for the allocation of subsidized residential care places to elders on CWL, and formulate a long-term plan and specific timetable to increase the supply of subsidized care places;

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- (b) priority should be accorded to shorten the average waiting time for NH places for elders with severe impairment level;
- (c) the Administration should ensure that the quality of RCHEs would meet the licensing requirements;
- (d) although elderly who had financial difficulties could apply for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) to cover the monthly fees of residential care places, the Administration should review and increase the level of CSSA payments to elders living in non-subsidized residential care places with a view to enabling these elders to have more choices for quality private RCHEs. Alternatively, the Administration should review the existing arrangement of deducting the monthly CSSA payments for those elders staying in private RCHEs if they received financial support from their family members to meet part of the monthly fees; and
- (e) more resources should be allocated for subsidized community care and support services to assist elders to age in the community.

7. The Chairman further suggested that the Administration should consider categorizing the various types of RCHEs in accordance with their quality and monthly fees and introducing a means-test mechanism for the allocation of different types of subsidized residential care places.

8. Responding to members, PAS/LW(W)3 said that the Administration was fully aware that subsidized residential care places were in huge demand. Having regard to an ageing population, increasing continuously the supply of residential care places alone would not be sufficient to meet the wide range of growing needs. The Administration would continue to promote shared responsibility of individuals, their families and the society in meeting the needs of elders, and encourage a balanced mix of public and private elderly care services to widen the choices for quality self-financing and private residential care places providing differential services. PAS/LW(W)3 advised that in consultation with the Elderly Commission (EC), it would consider the long-term planning of elderly services. PAS/LW(W)3 assured members that the Administration would continue to bid for more resources for increasing the supply of subsidized care places and was committed to enhancing the quality of RCHEs. A three-pronged approach was adopted to enhance the quality of RCHEs, namely licensing control, capacity building, and monitoring and enforcement. He added that the Administration would continue to enhance the subsidized community care and support services to assist elders to age in the community.

9. Members expressed dissatisfaction at the Administration's response on having had yet to consult EC on the long-term planning of elderly services as the latter had discussed the subject matter for almost 10 years. PAS/LW(W)3

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advised that EC had just started discussion on residential care services for the elderly in late 2007, and would need some time to study the subject. Members considered that it would be useful if a forum could be arranged for members to exchange views with EC before the latter had taken a position on the matter.

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10. At the request of the Chairman and Dr Fernando CHEUNG, the Administration agreed to provide the following information to the meeting –

- (a) the number of elders who were on the waiting list before introduction of SCNAM and still had not undergone the care need assessment; and
- (b) the number of elders who had applied for subsidized residential care places before the introduction of SCNAM and were subsequently assessed and confirmed to be eligible for subsidized residential care places, as well as the number of elders who were found not eligible.

11. Owing to time constraints, members agreed to follow up discussion on the provision of residential care services for the elderly at the next meeting scheduled for 19 February 2008. Members further agreed that deputations should be invited to give views at the next meeting.

**II. Any other business**

12. Having regard to the tight work schedule, members agreed that the Subcommittee would focus its discussion on the provision of residential care services and community support and care services for the elderly at future meetings. Noting that the Panel on Health Services had discussed the subject of health care services for the elderly at its meeting on 12 November 2007, members considered that it would be more appropriate for the Panel on Health Services to follow up the subject matter if necessary.

13. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:43 am.

**Proceedings of the third meeting of the  
Subcommittee on Elderly Services  
on Tuesday, 22 January 2008, at 8:30 am  
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
000000 - 000154	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000155 - 001042	Administration	Briefing by the Administration on the residential care services for the elderly [LC Paper No. CB(2)835/07-08(01)]	
001043 - 001847	Chairman Ms LI Fung-ying Administration	<p>Concerns about the plans and measures to shorten the waiting time for subsidized care and attention (C&amp;A) places in a subvented/contract residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) and nursing home (NH) places</p> <p>The Administration's response that -</p> <p>(a) some elders on the Central Waiting List (CWL) were staying in non-subsidized residential care places or receiving subsidized home-based community care services or day care services while waiting for subsidized residential care places;</p> <p>(b) the waiting time for subsidized C&amp;A places in private RCHEs participating in the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme (EBPS) was about 10 months, but most elders preferred waiting for subvented RCHE places; and</p> <p>(c) it would continue its efforts to steadily increase the supply of subsidized places, and encourage a balanced mix of quality public and private places as well as enhance the home care services to promote ageing in the community</p>	
001848 - 002410	Mr TAM Yiu-chung Administration Chairman	<p>Views of Mr TAM Yiu-chung that the Administration should -</p> <p>(a) project the number of additional subvented RCHE places required in the coming years;</p> <p>(b) enhance the quality of private RCHEs and provide further subsidized home-based community care services or day care services; and</p> <p>(c) bid for new resources in the 2008-09 Budget to enhance the residential care services for the elderly</p> <p>The Administration's responses -</p> <p>(a) the ratio of residential care places to the elderly population in Hong Kong was relatively higher than overseas countries;</p> <p>(b) the Administration would provide more subsidized home care, day care and respite care services for elders to support "ageing in the community"; and</p> <p>(c) the Administration had and would bid for additional</p>	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
		resources to increase the supply of subsidized residential care places in each year	
002411 - 003519	Mr Alan LEONG Administration Chairman	<p>The Administration's responses to questions raised by Mr Alan LEONG -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) reasons for elders on CWL preferred to wait for subvented RCHE places including a lack of family members to take care of them at home, higher monthly fees for quality private RCHE places;</li> <li>(b) of the 279 complaints against RCHEs received in 2007, about 30% of the complaint items were substantiated following the investigation conducted by the Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly of the Social Welfare Department (SWD);</li> <li>(c) the processing time for each complaint case varied according to the complexity of individual cases; and</li> <li>(d) successful prosecutions had been taken against 50 RCHEs involving 55 offences under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance/Regulation since 1996. With effect from 15 December 2005, SWD would publicize on its website information about RCHEs which were successfully prosecuted under the Ordinance and its subsidiary legislation; and 12 cases were involved insofar.</li> </ul>	
003520 - 004038	Dr Fernando CHEUNG	<p>Reasons for elders applying for subvented RCHE places -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) subsidized home-based community care services for elders with LTC needs were inadequate;</li> <li>(b) given that the requirement for elders to apply for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) on a household basis had affected the eligibility of some needy elders, they had to stay in RCHEs so that they could apply for CSSA on an individual basis and use the CSSA payments to cover the monthly fees of the RCHE place; and</li> <li>(c) concerns about the quality and standards of the private RCHEs</li> </ul>	
004039 - 004748	Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Mr LEE Cheuk-yan about the long-term plan for increasing the supply of residential care places</p> <p>The Administration's advice that -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) it would continue to consider the long-term planning of elderly services with a view to responding to the challenges of an ageing population in consultation with the Elderly Commission (EC); and</li> <li>(b) it would continue to facilitate elders to "age in the community"</li> </ul>	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
004749 - 005642	Mr Albert HO Administration	<p>Concerns raised by Mr Albert HO about the long waiting time for subsidised NH places and the ratio of public and private elderly care services</p> <p>The Administration's explanation that it would encourage a balanced mix of public and private elderly services to widen the choices for quality self-financing residential care places and enhance subsidized community care and support services for elders to age in the community</p>	
005643 - 010915	Chairman Administration	<p>The Administration's response to enquiry raised by the Chairman about the criteria for admission to subsidized residential care places –</p> <p>(a) there was no means-test for the subsidized residential care places; elders who satisfied the pre-application care need assessment launched in November 2003 under the Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism (SCNAM) were eligible for subsidised residential care services. Those who had applied for long-term care (LTC) services before November 2003 were required to undergo an assessment before admission to confirm their eligibility for the service; and</p> <p>(b) elders who had LTC needs were also provided with subsidized home-based community care services and subsidized day care services to facilitate elders to age in the community. The Administration would continue to consider the long-term planning of residential care services for the elderly in consultation with EC</p> <p>Request of the Chairman for information on the number of elders on CWL who had not undergone the pre-application care need assessment under SCNAM</p>	Admin to provide information
010916 - 012037	Miss CHAN Yuen-han Administration Chairman	Miss CHAN Yuen-han's request for a long-term and specific policy on the provision of residential care places for the elderly, and the Administration's advice that it would need some time to consult EC as the latter had just started studying the subject since the end of 2007	
012038 - 012642	Ms LI Fung-ying Chairman Administration	<p>Views of Ms LI Fung-ying that the Administration should accord priority to shorten the waiting time for subsidized NH places</p> <p>The Administration's response that while it would endeavour to provide more C&amp;A and NH places, it was difficult to provide a specific timetable at this juncture as it had just started the discussion with EC about the matter</p>	
012643 - 013311	Dr Fernando CHEUNG Administration	<p>Views of Dr Fernando CHEUNG that additional resources should be allocated to increase the capacity of subsidized home-based community care services to reduce the long waiting time</p> <p>The Administration's advice that additional funding had been secured in each financial year to increase the capacity</p>	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
		of the home-based community care services for the elderly	
013312 - 013957	Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Administration Chairman	Views of Mr LEE Cheuk-yan that the Administration should review the existing arrangement of deducting the monthly CSSA payments for those elders who stayed in private RCHes if they received financial support from their family members to meet part of the monthly fees  The Administration's responses -  (a) the average monthly CSSA payment for some 24 000 elderly recipients living in non-subsidized residential care places was about \$5,000 per person per month; and  (b) the average monthly fee paid by elders living in private RCHes participating in EBPS was about \$1,600 to \$1,700 and the average unit cost paid by the Government was about \$6,000 per person per month	
013958 - 014559	Miss CHAN Yuen-han Chairman	Suggestion of Miss CHAN Yuen-han to invite deputations to give views on residential care services for the elderly at the next Subcommittee meeting	
014600 - 015224	Chairman	Views of the Chairman that the Administration should -  (a) categorize the various types of RCHes and introduce a means-test mechanism for the allocation of subsidized residential care places; and  (b) take into account the average life expectancy of the elders of severe impairment level in setting the target waiting time for subsidized NH places	
015225 - 015926	Dr Fernando CHEUNG Chairman Administration Miss CHAN Yuen-han	Invitation of deputations and representatives of EC to attend the next meeting of the Subcommittee  Request for information on (i) the number of elders who were on the waitinglist before introduction of SCNAM and still had not undergone the care need assessment; and (ii) the number of elders who had applied for subsidized residential care places before the introduction of SCNAM and were subsequently assessed and confirmed to be eligible for subsidized residential care places, as well as the number of elders who were found not eligible	Admin to provide information
015927 - 020920	Chairman Mr LEE Cheuk-yan Dr Fernando CHEUNG Ms LI Fung-ying	Date of the next meeting and item for discussion	