

LEGCO PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

District-based Trial Scheme on Carer Training

Purpose

This paper reports to Members the “District-based Trial Scheme on Carer Training” (the Trial Scheme) which was launched by the Government in October 2007, the participants’ feedback to the Trial Scheme, and the latest progress in extending the Trial Scheme to cover the whole territory.

Background

2. The Government highly values the contributions of carers of elders, for they play an important role in supporting elders to age in the community. Through the 156 elderly centres and the 54 Day Care Centres/Units throughout the territory, the Government has been providing an array of support services to carers, including counselling and training, provision of information, assistance in forming carers’ mutual-assistance groups, loan and demonstration of rehabilitation equipment, etc. In addition, all subvented residential care homes for the elderly and Day Care Centres/Units provide respite residential or day care services for elders in need, thereby rendering relief to carers.

The Trial Scheme

Objective

3. To further enhance support to elders and their carers at the district level, the Government and the Elderly Commission (EC) launched the

Trial Scheme in October 2007 with a view to achieving the following objectives:

- (a) to equip individuals with basic elderly care skills and a caring mindset to prepare for an ageing population through training programmes, and to engage those who have completed training to work as volunteers / paid carer-helpers to provide carer services; and
- (b) to encourage partnership and capitalise on the synergy between the District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and community organisations with a view to widening the community network for assisting elders and carers.

Scope

4. The Trial Scheme was launched as a pilot in three of the administration districts according to the Social Welfare Department's district boundaries, namely Eastern and Wan Chai, Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung, and Kowloon City and Yau Tsim Mong. DECCs in these districts were invited to submit proposals to apply for one-off seed money of \$50,000 each for organising elderly care training programmes and providing carer services in collaboration with the community organisations in their respective districts.

5. A total of 11 DECCs participated in the Trial Scheme. Under the Trial Scheme, each DECC was required to:

- (a) conduct at least three rounds of training for at least 60 participants in total in accordance with a prescribed curriculum within a period of 12 months;
- (b) ensure that each round of training would comprise at least 21 training hours;
- (c) collaborate with at least one local community organisation; and

- (d) submit an evaluation report by December 2008 to report on the results of the Trial Scheme and the use of the seed money.

— A list of the participating DECCs in the Trial Scheme is at **Annex**.

The Training Programme

(a) Participants

6. Individuals who were interested in equipping themselves with basic elderly care skills were encouraged to participate. This included family members who needed to take care of elders at home and individuals who aspired to become carer-helpers. There were no entry requirements.

(b) Contents of the training programme

7. The training programme covered the following aspects:

- Understanding elders and enhancement of communication skills with elders;
- Daily personal care for elders;
- Care for frail elders;
- Common ailments in elders and basic care skills;
- Care for demented elderly; and
- Knowledge in elder abuse and depression.

(c) Training materials and trainers

8. Participating DECCs were encouraged to make use of the training materials produced by the Department of Health. They were also welcomed to develop their own training materials based on their own

experience in serving elders. Trainers could be in-house experts or professionals from outside institutions or agencies.

(d) Carer services

9. Under the Trial Scheme, participating DECCs were encouraged to develop carer service by engaging those who have completed the training programmes to work as volunteers or paid carer-helpers. Carer-helpers provide simple assistance to elders or their carers, such as helping the elders to go to bed or toilet, to take medicine, and to provide temporary stand-in services for carers.

Evaluation and feedback to the Trial Scheme

10. We collected feedback to the Trial Scheme through meetings with the participating DECCs, distributing questionnaires to participants of the training programmes, and the evaluation reports submitted by the DECCs. The results are summarised below.

No. of Participants

11. A total of 968 individuals participated in the Trial Scheme, including carers, housewives, retired people and domestic helpers. The number of participants has far exceeded the target number of 660.

No. of Participating Community Organisations

12. A total of 58 community organisations partnered with the participating DECCs in the organisation of carer training programmes and provision of carer services. These community organisations mainly assisted in promoting the Trial Scheme and in recruiting participants. This has helped extend the network of DECCs at the community level.

Provision of Carer Services

13. All the 11 DECCs have developed carer services under the Trial Scheme. About 66% of the participants who have completed the

training programme have joined the pool of carer-helpers. In total, 6571 hours of carer services were provided and 6 122 headcounts of elders were served. The scope of services includes escort service, temporary care, accompanying elders for outdoor or leisure activities and medical appointments, and emotional support through home visits, etc. While many of the DECCs have provided carer services for free, some have developed fee-charging services, mainly for providing escort service and temporary care. The DECCs are required to plough back any revenue generated from the Trial Scheme to carer training and carer services.

Conclusion and the Way Forward

14. In respect of the training programme, both the number of participants trained and the training hours have exceeded the original targets. It is also encouraging to note that district networks for supporting elders have been bolstered, which will be conducive in promoting a caring mindset for the elderly in the community and the development of volunteerism at the district level.

15. For carer services, the participating DECCs have developed different service modes according to their district characteristics, users' needs and customers' affordability. Most participants who have completed the training courses joined the pool of carer-helpers. We believe they can supplement the existing community care services for elders, and provide another personalised form of care to elders and their carers.

16. In view of the positive response to the Trial Scheme and to keep up with the momentum, the Chief Executive announced in his 2008 Policy Address that the Trial Scheme would be extended to cover the remaining districts in the territory.

17. In December 2008, the Social Welfare Department invited the remaining DECCs to submit proposals for the carer training programme. A total of 22 DECCs responded and each of them was granted with seed money of \$50,000 in January 2009. The newly joined DECCs will launch the first round of training in March 2009. It is expected that

another 1500 individuals will be trained in a year's time.

Advice Sought

18. Members are invited to note the arrangements of the Trial Scheme and the progress of its extension to cover the whole territory.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau
Social Welfare Department
February 2009**

**List of District Elderly Community Centres
Participating in the District-based Trial Scheme on Carer Training**

A	<u>Eastern and Wan Chai District</u>
1	The Hong Kong Society for the Aged Eastern District Elderly Community Centre
2	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) Fong Shu Chuen District Elderly Community Centre
3	St. James' Settlement Wan Chai District Elderly Community Centre
4	Wan Chai Methodist Centre for the Seniors
B	<u>Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung District</u>
5	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Wong Tai Sin District Elderly Community Centre
6	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Choi Hung Community Centre for Senior Citizens
7	Ho Chui District Community Centre for Senior Citizens (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen)
8	Haven of Hope District Elderly Community Service – Kin Ming Centre
C	<u>Kowloon City and Yau Tsim Mong District</u>
9	TWGHs Wong Cho Tong District Elderly Community Centre
10	The Salvation Army Yau Ma Tei Multi-service Centre for Senior Citizens
11	Mong Kok Kai Fong Association Chan Hing Social Service Centre