

For information
on 8 March 2010

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES**

Pilot Scheme on Home Care Services for Frail Elders

**Pilot Scheme on Home Care Services for
Persons with Severe Disabilities**

Purpose

The Financial Secretary delivered his Budget Speech for the 2010-11 financial year on 24 February 2010. Apart from committing new resources to increase the supply of residential care places for elders and persons with disabilities (PWDs) in need of residential care, the Financial Secretary has announced the introduction of two new pilot schemes seeking to enhance the home care services for elders on the waiting list for nursing home (NH) places, and for persons with severe disabilities. This paper provides details on the two pilot schemes.

**Pilot Scheme on Home Care Services for Elders on the Waiting List
for NH Places**

Community care and support services for frail elders

2. It is the primary objective of the Government's elderly care policy to help elders age in place, which is in line with the wish of most elders. To this end, the Government provides a range of subsidised supporting services, including centre-based day care services provided by the 59 Day Care Centres/Units for the Elderly and home-based services provided by the 85 service teams. They cover personal care, nursing care, rehabilitation exercises, meal delivery and escort services, etc. Users include both elders who wish to stay in the community and those who are on the waiting list for subsidised residential care places.

3. We have also introduced a number of new initiatives in recent years to help elders age in place, including the Integrated Discharge Support Trial Programme for Elderly Patients which assists elderly hospital dischargees and their carers in pre-discharge planning and post-discharge home care; and the Home Environment Improvement Scheme for the Elderly which helps elders without family support and living in dilapidated flats improve their home conditions. Both schemes are very well received.

4. The Government will continue to allocate resources to enhance community care services for the elderly. As announced in the 2010-11 Budget, the Government will increase the provision of day care places, and try out better home care services, especially for elders waiting for NH places through a pilot scheme. Details of the pilot scheme are elaborated in paragraphs 5 to 8 below.

Pilot scheme on home care services for elders on the waiting list for NH places

5. At present, about 29% of elders on the waiting list for NH places are staying at home. Among them, about 36% are using community care services subsidised by the Government. Considering that the majority of elders waiting for NH places are severely impaired, we plan to introduce, in the form of a pilot scheme, a new package of intensive and tailor-made home care services for elders on the waiting list for NH places, so as to better serve their special needs and help relieve the pressure of their carers. In the end, the elders may be able to stay at home for as long as possible.

6. In view of the relatively large elderly population in Kowloon, we will invite elders residing in the region (covering Wong Tai Sin, Sai Kung, Kwun Tong, Yau Tsim Mong, Kowloon City and Sham Shui Po districts) who are waiting for NH places to join the pilot scheme. The services will be delivered through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or social enterprises with experience in elderly care and established service networks in the districts concerned. Compared with the existing Enhanced Home and Community Care Services (EHCCS), the new services will place greater emphasis on the rehabilitation and nursing care elements to cater for the special care needs of the users. Similar to the EHCCS, they will be subsidised by the Government according to a fee-charging scale to be set by the Social Welfare Department (SWD).

7. A one-off funding of \$55 million will be sought from the Lotteries Fund (LF) for implementing this pilot scheme. In order to allow potential service operators to make suggestions on the service content and delivery model, SWD will invite service proposals through a non-committal Expression of Interest exercise. In the light of the proposals received, we will finalise the detailed service specifications and invite qualified operators to submit formal service proposals.

8. The pilot is expected to commence within 2010-11 and will last for three years, serving about 510 elders in total. There will be an interim review and then a final review upon the completion of the pilot scheme.

Pilot Scheme on Home Care Services for Persons with Severe Disabilities

Community care and support services for PWDs

9. The policy objective of the Government in providing community care and support services for PWDs is to make available training and support to PWDs according to their needs, to assist them in developing their potential, to enable them to continue to live independently at home and to prepare them for full integration into the community. These services also aim at strengthening the carers' caring capacity and relieving their stress.

10. At present, the majority of PWDs on the waiting list for subvented residential care places are receiving various day training and vocational rehabilitation service, day care and community support services provided by NGOs under SWD's subvention. These include services in day activity centres, sheltered workshops, supported employment and integrated vocational training centres; community support services providing, inter alia, day care service for persons with severe disabilities; specialised home-based training and support service; community rehabilitation day centres; parents/relatives resource centre; transitional care and support centre for tetraplegic patients; community mental health link; community mental health care services etc.

11. To provide one-stop service for strengthening the support for

PWDs residing in the community and their family members, we have since January 2009 set up 16 district support centres for PWDs through re-engineering the community support services. Along the same direction and following the setting up of the first Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness (ICCMW) in Tin Shui Wai in March 2009, the Government will provide additional recurrent funding for expanding the ICCMW across the territory to provide district-based, one-stop and integrated community support services for persons with mental health problems and their family carers.

12. As announced in the 2010-11 Budget, the Government will continue to increase the provision of day training and vocational rehabilitation services places for PWDs. We will also introduce a pilot scheme on home care services for persons with severe disabilities in 2010-11. Details of the pilot scheme are elaborated in paragraphs 13 to 17 below.

Pilot scheme on home care services for persons with severe disabilities

13. Demand for residential care services is increasing. Some 6 500 PWDs are on the waiting lists for various types of residential care service and the situation is most acute for those with severe disabilities. By end-September 2009, the number of persons with severe physical and/or mental disabilities on the waiting lists were 1 970 for hostel for severely mentally handicapped persons (HSMH), 407 for hostel for severely physically handicapped persons (HSPH) and 345 for care and attention home for severely disabled persons (C&A/SD). The average waiting time for these services in 2008-09 was 4.3 years, 9.4 years and 3 years respectively.

14. Given the conditions of persons with severe physical and/or mental disabilities and the level and intensity of care they require, the Government is mindful of their special caring needs and the immense pressure faced by their family carers in caring for them at home. To strengthen the support for this most vulnerable group, the Financial Secretary will earmark \$163 million under LF to implement a three-year pilot scheme for providing persons with severe disabilities who are living in the community and are on the waiting lists for subvented residential care services with home-based care services.

15. Under this pilot scheme, PWDs who are on the waiting lists for

subvented residential care service at HSMH, HSPH and C&A/SD will be provided with a package of home-based support services to meet their care and training needs. These enhanced support services seek to facilitate these PWDs' continued living at homes while waiting for residential care services, and help relieve the stress of their family carers. Under the pilot scheme, we will try out the new package of home-based support services in Tuen Mun and Kwun Tong districts with the largest number of persons with severe disabilities (273 and 264 persons respectively) waiting for such services.

16. The enhanced services will be delivered by NGOs which are operating rehabilitation services in the respective districts through invitation of proposals. Under the scheme, the NGO operator is required to provide a package of home-based support service including personal care and escort service, occupational therapist/physiotherapist rehabilitation training service and nursing care service to the service users. A monthly fee following the prevailing fee scale of the centre-based Day Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities will be charged under the pilot scheme. Hourly rates will be applicable to those service users who would like to purchase the service on a daily or hourly basis.

17. A one-off funding of \$163 million will be sought from LF for implementing this three-year pilot, which is expected to serve a total of about 540 persons with severe disabilities in its full operation. Taking into account the lead time for securing LF funding and identification of NGO operators, the pilot scheme will commence in the fourth quarter of 2010-11 and end in the third quarter of 2013-14. There will be an interim review and then a final review upon the completion of the pilot scheme.

Advice Sought

18. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
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