

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Setting out a five-year plan for elderly services”
moved by Hon TAM Yiu-chung
at the Legislative Council meeting
of Wednesday, 8 June 2011**

Motion as amended by Hon WONG Sing-chi and Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou

That, at present, the trend of the ageing of the society in Hong Kong is accelerating, this Council urges the Government to plan in full speed and formulate as early as possible a more comprehensive elderly policy, and also set out a five-year plan for elderly services, so as to set specific development objectives and pledges for elderly services every five years, with a view to rectifying the serious problems of imbalance between supply of and demand for services, a large number of persons waiting for services and prolonged waiting time, as well as strengthening the care for the needs of elderly persons' living, and vigorously improving people's livelihood; the relevant measures should include:

- (a) to establish a five-year plan and service pledges in respect of residential care services for the elderly and community care for the elderly, and strive to increase the number of residential care places for the elderly and community care places for the elderly; to review the Standardized Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services; to provide elderly services subsidies for elderly persons by making reference to the mode of the existing education voucher scheme; and to enhance complementary measures for the elderly policy of 'ageing in place';
- (b) to abolish the absence limit in respect of application for Old Age Allowance ('OAA') to enable elderly persons to spend their twilight years on the Mainland without worries, and allow elderly recipients of Disability Allowance to also receive OAA, so as to improve their living;
- (c) to intensify the policy of portable elderly welfare benefits; to provide allowances to elderly persons who return to their hometowns to live, enabling those elderly persons who choose to spend their twilight years in their hometowns to receive a monthly living supplement; to proactively study in conjunction with the relevant Mainland departments the introduction of medical insurance schemes for Hong Kong elderly persons living on the Mainland, and consider collaborating with the Mainland to run hospitals or provide out-patient services, so as to serve the Hong Kong people living on the Mainland;

- (d) to propose the introduction of an entirely new ‘elderly maintenance grant scheme’ in addition to OAA and Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (‘CSSA’) Scheme, so as to provide financial assistance to elderly persons who are not eligible for applying CSSA to help them improve their living;
- (e) to increase the amount of Elderly Healthcare Vouchers to \$1,000, lower the age requirement to 65, streamline administrative arrangements, and encourage the participation of more doctors; and to relax the elderly drug subsidization policy;
- (f) to expedite resource allocation from the Community Care Fund for providing tooth filling and restoration allowances to the elderly, and strengthen elderly dental care services, including the establishment of dental clinics in the 18 districts, introduction of elderly dental care services and opening public dental clinics for elderly persons’ use, etc.;
- (g) to expedite the establishment of public Chinese medicine clinics in the 18 districts, and establish additional elderly health centres and increase their membership;
- (h) to devote resources to strengthen occupational training related to the elderly care service industries, so as to increase manpower for elderly services and care and enhance practitioners’ professional knowledge and quality;
- (i) to formulate a comprehensive and long-term elderly housing policy, examine afresh the current land planning for earmarking sites for elderly housing purposes, proactively study the introduction of the ‘mixed use development’ concept in private and public housing, and design a residence model which integrates elderly housing and complementary facilities;
- (j) to expedite the implementation of a ‘mortgage scheme for the elderly’ (i.e. ‘reverse mortgage’), so as to assist elderly persons with private properties in enhancing their finances and improving living environment and lives in twilight years, and launch a scheme on ‘making use of residential properties to provide for the twilight years of the elderly’ for elderly property owners who have no means of living and do not have any children;
- (k) to implement the elderly-friendly policy in all public places, effectively enforce the requirements of barrier-free facilities, and provide various types of facilities for elderly persons to facilitate their entry and exit;

- (l) to motivate various transport operators to offer comprehensive and permanent fare concessions to elderly persons; to enrich elderly persons' retirement life by introducing 'recreation and sports vouchers for the elderly' and waiving admission fees for elderly persons in all exhibition halls under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, and set up an 'elderly employment fund', so as to assist healthy elderly persons in sustaining their employment and giving full play to their abilities; and
- (m) to ensure that the elderly will be able to maintain a reasonable standard of living, and establish a universal retirement protection system;
- (n) focusing on the varying quality of private residential care homes for the elderly at present, to take the operating conditions of the sector seriously, and study providing the market with venues which are suitable for operating private residential care homes for the elderly by perfecting the land planning and housing policy; at the same time, to ensure that purchase prices are able to meet the costs of providing quality services; and to promote the voluntary accreditation system for private residential care homes for the elderly, so as to encourage the sector to upgrade its quality;
- (o) focusing on the continuous increase in the number of dementia patients in the society and the impact on the healthcare, social welfare, law, public order and ethics, etc., to take the gravity of the problem seriously and formulate corresponding proposals, so as to protect dementia patients and their family members;
- (p) to encourage local radio stations to provide dedicated channels for the elderly, and also to encourage television stations to produce more elderly programmes, so as to provide senior citizens with more free audio-visual entertainment;
- (q) through publicity and education, to proactively advocate the spirit of respecting, loving and caring for the elderly; and
- (r) focusing on the incessant return of Hong Kong elderly persons from the Mainland to Hong Kong in recent years, to formulate a more comprehensive strategy so as to assist such poor and helpless elderly persons in settling down in Hong Kong again and living their twilight years without worries.