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Panel on Welfare Services

**Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services
for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly**

**Updated background brief prepared by the Legislative Council
Secretariat for the meeting on 28 March 2011**

Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness

Purpose

This paper gives a brief account of past discussions of the Panel on Welfare Services ("the Panel") and the Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly ("the Subcommittee") on the implementation of the service mode of Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness ("ICCMW").

Background

2. According to the Administration, the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") has since 2001 launched a number of new initiatives to enhance community support services for persons with mental health problems as well as their families and carers with a view to helping them improve their social adjustment capabilities for early and better re-integration into the community. These measures include -

- (a) psychogeriatric outreach services for the elderly;
- (b) post-discharge community support to frequently re-admitted psychiatric patients;
- (c) recovery support programme for psychiatric patients in the community;

- (d) Community Rehabilitation Day Services;
- (e) Community Mental Health Link;
- (f) Community Mental Health Care; and
- (g) Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness.

At present, service users receive various community support services from different rehabilitation agencies and service units operated by non-governmental organisations ("NGOs").

3. To provide one-stop, integrated and accessible community health support services to discharged mental patients, persons with suspected mental health problems, their families and carers and residents living in the district, SWD set up the first ICCMW in Tin Shui Wai in March 2009. The integrated services of ICCMW range from early intervention to prevention of relapse through public education, counselling, outreaching visits and, where required, direct liaison with the Hospital Authority ("HA") for urgent medical consultation to meet the varying needs of service users.

4. In the 2009-2010 Policy Address, the Government announced that it would provide additional recurrent funding for expanding the service mode of ICCMW to all the 18 districts in the territory in 2010-2011.

Deliberations by members

5. At the Panel meetings on 8 June and 11 July 2009 when the subject of community care support services for ex-mentally ill persons was discussed, members were advised that ICCMW at Tin Shui Wai, which had commenced services since March 2009, was the first pilot integrated centre providing one-stop community support and social rehabilitation services for discharged mental patients, persons with suspected mental health problems and their families/carers living in the district. In response to members' enquiry about the timetable for extending the service mode of ICCMW across the territory, the Administration advised that SWD would evaluate the effectiveness of the new model in Tin Shui Wai and in the light of operational experience, consider its possible extension to other districts. ICCMW at Tin Shui Wai was expected to serve 450 cases and 1 200 families and carers in a year.

6. At the Panel meeting on 22 October 2009, members were advised that the Government would expand the integrated service model across the territory by revamping the existing community mental health support services subvented by SWD through setting up ICCMWs in all 18 districts, strengthen the manpower of these centres to provide comprehensive and accessible services to persons in need, and dovetail with HA's Case Management Programme to provide timely support for patients with severe mental illness living in the community.

7. Consequent upon the formation of the Subcommittee, members followed up the discussion on the provision of community care services for PWDs at the Subcommittee meetings on 31 May and 13 July 2010. Members supported in general the setting up of ICCMW to provide one-stop community health support services to discharged mental patients, persons with suspected mental health problems, their families and carers and residents living in the community, as well as the launch of the pilot CMP to provide timely support for patients with severe mental illness living in the community. Members, however, were concerned about the plan for extending the new initiatives to all the districts.

8. On the setting up of ICCMWs, the Administration advised that SWD would consolidate the existing resources of community support services at an annual funding allocation of about \$65 million, together with an additional annual provision of about \$70 million, i.e. a total of \$135 million, to revamp the existing community support services, including Community Mental Health Intervention Project, Community Mental Health Link, Community Mental Health Care Services, Community Rehabilitation Day Services and Training and Activity Centres for Ex-mentally Ill Persons, and set up ICCMWs in all the 18 districts in 2010-2011. Members were further advised that to prepare for the setting up of ICCMWs, SWD had worked together with concerned NGO operators and stakeholders on the operational logistics, including the demarcation of service boundaries, drawing up service output indicators and realignment of workflow of referrals to ICCMWs and among service units of HA and SWD. These ICCMWs were expected to commence service in October 2010.

9. The Administration further advised that cross-sectoral and cross-service collaboration for effective delivery of ICCMW services had been set up. At the headquarters level, a coordination group co-chaired by SWD and HA had been formed in early 2010 to oversee collaboration strategies arising from the implementation of the ICCMW services. District task groups were set up in districts with relatively more

ex-mentally ill persons, such as Kwun Tong, Kwai Tsing and Yuen Long, to be followed by other SWD districts later in 2010. These groups, co-chaired by District Social Welfare Officers and HA's cluster heads of psychiatric services and comprising representatives of ICCMW and concerned government departments, were tasked to develop strategies and resolve operational issues in respective districts.

10. At the meeting on 24 January 2011, the Subcommittee discussed and received views from 12 deputations on the progress of implementing the services of ICCMW. Members were advised that there were 24 service points providing ICCMW services across the territory. Apart from the ICCMW in Tin Shui Wai which had secured permanent accommodation, SWD had also obtained the operators' agreement to convert five Training and Activity Centres for Ex-mentally Ill Persons into ICCMWs and secured two public housing estate premises in Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon East respectively for use as ICCMW premises. For some ICCMWs which had no suitable premises in their service areas for the time being, the operators would provide services including outreaching visits, group services, casework counselling, activities and community education through existing facilities and network in their respective districts.

11. Concern was raised by members and deputations about the availability of premises for setting up ICCMWs in all the 18 districts. Members took the view that the Administration should identify suitable sites for ICCMWs across the territory. They considered that adequate resources and staffing should be provided to the service providers and that the service requirements be stipulated in the relevant funding and service agreements with the service operators.

12. The Administration advised that it was mindful that in the absence of permanent accommodation, the service performance of individual ICCMWs would, to a certain extent, be affected. Hence, in formulating the Funding and Service Agreements ("FSAs") for ICCMWs, SWD had reached a mutual understanding with the service operators in that a flexible approach would be adopted in dealing with the service requirements stipulated under FSAs, taking into account the work progress for ICCMW accommodation.

13. The Administration further advised that to solve the problems relating to ICCMW premises in the long run, it was identifying suitable premises in various districts through long, medium and short term planning. For long term planning, SWD would continue to keep in close contact with relevant government departments in order to reserve premises for ICCMW

purpose at the planning stage of new development or redevelopment projects. In the medium and short term, the Administration would closely monitor the availability of government property and school premises which would become vacant as a result of service reengineering. It would also explore the possibility of converting vacant public housing units into ICCMWs. This apart, the Administration was considering other possible alternatives in order to identify suitable premises as early as possible for those ICCMWs which had yet to secure permanent accommodation. SWD was consulting relevant government departments on the feasibility of the operators' proposals for setting up ICCMWs on commercial premises.

14. Members were also advised that the Chief Executive had undertaken in the 2010-2011 Policy Address to further strengthen the manpower of ICCMWs to enable them to handle more cases.

15. The Subcommittee will further discuss the progress in securing permanent premises for providing services of ICCMW at the meeting on 28 March 2011.

Relevant papers

16. A list of relevant papers and documents is in the **Appendix** for members' reference. The papers and documents are available on the Legislative Council website at <http://www.legco.gov.hk/>.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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Appendix

Relevant papers on Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Welfare Services	8 June 2009 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Welfare Services	11 July 2009 (Item II)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Welfare Services	22 October 2009 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly	31 May 2010 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly	13 July 2010 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly	24 January 2011 (Item I)	Agenda