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民政事務局

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GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT
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22 September 2015

Legislative Council Secretariat
(Attn: Ms Kay CHU)
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms Chu,

Subcommittee on Poverty meeting on 21 July 2015

At the Legislative Council Subcommittee on Poverty meeting held on 21 July 2015, a Member requested the Community Care Fund Task Force to provide information on assistance programmes which have been implemented for three or more years but have not yet been regularised, and reasons for not regularising such programmes. Attached please find the requested information (see Annex) for Members' reference.

Please contact the undersigned for any enquiries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Au Yeung'.

(Nick Au Yeung)
for Secretary for Home Affairs

Encl.

Community Care Fund
Assistance Programmes which have been Implemented for
Three or More Years but have not yet been Regularised
(as at 31 August 2015)

- (1) Subsidy for patients of Hospital Authority for specified self-financed cancer drugs which have not yet been brought into the Samaritan Fund safety net but have been rapidly accumulating medical scientific evidence and with relatively higher efficacy
- The programme was implemented on 1 August 2011. It provides financial assistance to Hospital Authority patients to use specified self-financed (SFI) cancer drugs, which have not yet been brought into the Samaritan Fund (SF) safety net but have been rapidly accumulating medical scientific evidence and with relatively higher efficacy, for the treatment of designated types of cancer. The prevailing mechanism for SF applications, including referral procedures, financial assessment criteria, and processing/ approving of applications, has been adopted.
 - As far as the programme is concerned, regularisation means incorporation of the relevant subsidy into the SF safety net. Drugs supported by the SF are those which had accumulated sufficient medical scientific evidence and with proven efficacy, whereas those supported by the programme are SFI cancer drugs which have been rapidly accumulating medical scientific evidence and with relatively higher efficacy. As the programme's evaluation criteria for drug coverage are different from the those of SF, regularisation of the programme is not appropriate. Having said that, the programme interfaces with the SF. Under the prevailing mechanism, SFI cancer drugs subsidised by the programme will be covered by the SF safety net when they have accumulated sufficient scientific and clinical evidence. For instance, Rituximab for Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia and Dasatinib for Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia have been repositioned from the programme to the SF with effect from 13 April 2013.

(2) Subsidy for the severely disabled persons aged below 60 who are non-CSSA recipients, requiring constant attendance and living in the community

- The programme was implemented in September 2011 to provide a special care subsidy to persons with severe disabilities aged under 60 who are living in the community, requiring constant attendance and not receiving the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance for assisting them to purchase care goods/ services or for other purposes related to caring needs. The programme was extended thrice in November 2012, November 2013 and November 2014 respectively.
- There are three levels of subsidy: those with household income at or less than 100% of the Median Monthly Domestic Household Income (MMDHI) to receive “full grant” of the subsidy (\$2,000 per month); those in the range of above 100% to 125% of the MMDHI to receive “three-quarters” of the subsidy (\$1,500 per month) and those in the range of above 125% to 150% of the MMDHI to receive “half grant” of the subsidy (\$1,000 per month).
- The evaluation result of the programme which was reported to the Commission on Poverty in May 2013 concluded that the programme would not be incorporated into the Government’s regular assistance programme for the following reasons:
 - The beneficiaries mainly used the subsidy for medical consultation, drugs and daily household expenses. Existing measures have already provided a long-term protection to the persons with severe disabilities on their needs in these aspects e.g. Medical Fee Waiver Mechanism, Samaritan Fund, Higher Disability Allowance (the current monthly rate is \$3,160) etc.;
 - the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has been continuously enhancing the subvented services for persons with severe disabilities to meet their specific needs, e.g. provision of training and day care service through District Support Centre for Persons with Disabilities and Day Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities, and regularisation of the Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities (this Home Care Service has been regularised since March 2014); and
 - SWD will also implement an integrated support service programme (ISS) for persons with severe physical disabilities, and will by then regularise two related Community Care Fund

(CCF) assistance programmes for persons with severe physical disabilities so as to relieve their burden arising from respiratory support medical equipment and medical consumables, and to enable them to continue staying in the community (the ISS has been implemented since November 2014 together with the regularisation of the two related CCF assistance programmes).

(3) Relocation allowance for eligible residents of sub-divided units in industrial buildings who have to move out as a result of the Buildings Department's enforcement action

- The programme was implemented in October 2011. It provides a one-off relocation allowance to households living in sub-divided units in industrial buildings who have to move out as a result of the Building Department's enforcement action. The subsidy amount is determined by the sizes of the households, that is \$2,500 for 1-person households, \$5,500 for 2-3-person households and \$7,100 for 4-or-more-person households respectively.
- The evaluation of this programme, which includes an evaluation on the feasibility of regularisation, is ongoing.

(4) After-school care pilot scheme

- In March 2015, the Commission on Poverty decided to extend the After-school care pilot scheme (the Scheme) for the last time to the 2015/16 school year. The reasons are as follows:
 - Apart from the Scheme, there are currently many assistance programmes organised by schools and non-governmental organisations (NGO) to provide after-school learning and support to economically needy primary and secondary students. These include Education Bureau's (EDB) recurrent programme "School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes" and "The Hong Kong Jockey Club Life-wide Learning Fund". In the 2014/15 school year, the former had a budget of \$240 million and the latter a budget of \$78.79 million. In addition, in early 2015, the Government allocated around \$400 million to the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged, of which \$200 million has been earmarked for launching more after-school learning and support programmes to facilitate the whole-person development of primary and secondary students from grassroots families;

- it has been stated in the 2014 Policy Address that the Government would, in the long term, integrate various after-school learning and support programmes, so as to better utilise the resources and enhance the effectiveness in the provision of after-school support. From December 2014 to February 2015, EDB organised six focus group meetings on after-school support attended by 37 schools and NGOs. Attendees in general supported the direction of integration. They considered that this would increase the flexibility of resource use and reduce the extra administrative workload on schools;
- starting from the 2014/15 school year, the Government has increased the recurrent funding to the “School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes” by \$35 million per year. This additional amount is on par with the average annual spending of \$34 million under the Scheme from the 2012/13 to 2014/15 school years; and
- elements of the Scheme that have been shown to be affective have been gradually embedded in the “School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes” starting from the 2014/15 school year. These include (i) allow more flexibility under the School-based Grant¹. The discretionary quota has been increased from 10% to 25%, so that more students who are not eligible but are still considered economically needy and required additional school care services may benefit; (ii) provision of incentive funding to schools with a previous utilisation rate of 80% or more when calculating the School-based Grant. The objective is to encourage schools to fully utilise the Grant and to deploy their resources flexibly with a view to enhancing the opportunities of needy students to participate in after-school activities; and (iii) schools can make partial use of the School-based Grant to purchase necessary supplies and equipment, as well as to cover individual students’ travel cost in attending after-school activities.

¹ “School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes” is divided into two parts – “School-based Grant” and “Community-based Project Grant”. Schools can make use of the School-based Grant to organise after-school activities according to schools’ needs, or integrate the funding with other existing resources to supplement the needs of eligible students in after-school activities. Community-based Project Grant is open for NGOs to apply. Based on the distribution of needy students in various districts, the NGOs will organise district-based activities for financial needy students in the district.