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**Panel on Welfare Services and Panel on Health Services**

**Joint Subcommittee on Long-term Care Policy**

**Updated background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat  
for the meeting on 23 April 2013**

**Community care services for persons with disabilities**

**Purpose**

This paper gives a brief account of past discussions of the Panel on Welfare Services ("the Panel") on the provision of subsidized community care services, including home care services, for persons with disabilities ("PWDs").

**Background**

2. According to the Administration, the overall objective of the rehabilitation policy is to support full integration of PWDs into the community. To this end, the Administration provides a series of rehabilitation services, community support and training to facilitate PWDs to live independently, and/or to live with their families and friends in the community. For those who cannot live on their own and cannot be adequately cared for by their families, the Administration has taken measures to meet their residential care needs, to improve their quality of life and to help them develop independent living skills.

**Deliberations by members**

3. Members in general considered that as the supply of subsidized residential care places for PWDs could not meet the needs of PWDs in the

community, the Administration should strengthen the community support services to better accommodate the needs of PWDs. The Administration advised that apart from increasing the number of subsidized residential care places, it had provided community support for PWDs on the waiting lists for various types of subsidized residential care places and their family carers. The majority of PWDs on the waiting lists for subsidized residential care places were receiving various day training, vocational rehabilitation and community support services provided by non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") under Social Welfare Department ("SWD")'s subvention. These included services at day activity centres and sheltered workshops, services at supported employment and day care services for persons with severe disabilities, etc. Through the provision of rehabilitation services in accordance with individual needs, PWDs were given the necessary support and assistance which enabled them to continue to live in the community while relieving the burden on and the stress of their families or carers.

#### New service mode for enhancement of community support services for PWDs

4. At the Panel meeting on 14 December 2009 when members discussed the initiatives announced in the Chief Executive ("CE")'s 2009-2010 Policy Address, the Administration advised that at present, the Government provided over 16 300 places for day and vocational rehabilitation training for PWDs and the total expenditure in this respect amounted to over \$760 million in 2008-2009. In 2010-2011, it would provide additional places for pre-school training, day training, vocational rehabilitation and residential care services, in accordance with the directions set out in the 2007 Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan to strengthen day training and vocational rehabilitation service.

5. Members were further advised that the Administration had introduced a new service mode for enhancement of community support services. In January 2009, SWD set up 16 District Support Centres for PWDs ("DSCs") to provide one-stop service for strengthening the support for PWDs residing in the community and their family members through re-engineering the home-based training and support service. This apart, as undertaken in the 2009-2010 Policy Address, the Administration would expand the service mode of the first Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness ("ICCMWs") in Tin Shui Wai across the territory in 2010-2011 to provide district-based, one stop and integrated community support services for persons with mental health problems and their family carers.

6. Members noted with concern the difficulties in finding suitable premises for setting up DSCs and recruiting relevant professionals such as clinical physiologists and physiotherapists for service delivery. They urged the Administration to identify and reserve suitable sites for setting up welfare facilities and project staff requirement prior to the implementation of new service initiatives. Likewise, while appreciating the efforts made by the Administration in securing premises for ICCMWs in all 18 districts of the territory, members attributed the slow progress to the hasty implementation of the new service mode without consultation with the stakeholders and enlisting local residents' support for setting up ICCMWs in the vicinity. The Administration assured members that it would continue to organize service briefings and activities to enhance local residents' understanding of ICCMWs' service, and to enlist local support with a view to securing permanent accommodation for the remaining ICCMWs as soon as possible.

#### Pilot scheme on home care services for persons with severe disabilities

7. At its meeting on 8 March 2010, the Panel noted that some 6 500 PWDs were on the waiting lists for various types of subsidized residential care service and the situation was 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, 407 for hostel for severely physically handicapped persons and 345 for care and attention home for severely disabled persons. The average waiting time for these services in 2008-2009 was 4.3 years, 9.4 years and 3 years respectively. In the light of this, the Administration advised that, as announced in the 2010-2011 Budget, a one-off funding of \$163 million would be sought under the Lotteries Fund for implementing a three-year pilot scheme on home care services for persons with severe disabilities, which was expected to serve a total of about 540 persons with severe disabilities upon its full operation.

8. On the details of the pilot scheme, the Administration advised that a new package of home-based support services would be tried out in Tuen Mun and Kwun Tong which had the largest number of persons with severe disabilities (273 and 264 persons respectively) waiting for subvented residential care services at hostel for severely mentally handicapped, hostel for severely physically handicapped persons and care and attention home for severely disabled persons. To meet their care and training needs, the support services included personal care and escort service, occupational therapy/physiotherapy rehabilitation training service and nursing care service. Taking into account the lead time for securing funding and identification of

NGO operators, the pilot scheme would commence in the fourth quarter of 2010-2011 and end in the third quarter of 2013-2014.

9. The Administration also advised that the enhanced support services sought to facilitate PWDs' continued living at home while waiting for residential care services, and help relieve the stress of their family carers. While welcoming the pilot scheme, members were of the view that the service quotas were not adequate to serve PWDs in need. Some members considered it necessary to expand the pilot scheme expeditiously to cover all eligible persons with severe disabilities in the 18 districts, irrespective of whether they were on the waiting lists for subvented residential care services. The Administration advised that it would conduct a review on the scheme to assess its long-term feasibility. Should the review findings be encouraging, the Administration would consider extending the scheme to other districts after the three-year pilot period.

10. In addition, members took the view that the Administration should under no circumstances regard community care services as a substitute for the provision of subsidized residential care services. The Administration assured members that PWDs who joined the pilot scheme would remain on the waiting lists for subsidised residential care services. As undertaken in the CE's 2009-2010 Policy Address, the Government would provide 939 additional places in the coming two years, including the setting up of two integrated rehabilitation service centres in Kwai Chung and Ho Man Tin in the coming year, providing a total of 490 residential places.

11. At the Panel meeting on 21 October 2011, members were advised that the pilot scheme had been tried out in Tuen Mun and Kwun Tong since March 2011 and expanded to neighbourhood districts, i.e. Kwai Tsing and Wong Tai Sin, in September 2011. The Administration would continue to monitor the operation of the pilot scheme, and conduct a mid-term review for further improvement and refinement of the implementation details as appropriate.

12. When members discussed the initiatives announced in the CE's 2013 Policy Address at the Panel meeting on 21 January 2013, the Administration advised that the services provided by the three-year pilot scheme would be regularized in March 2014 and extended to all the districts in Hong Kong thereby facilitating PWDs' full integration into the community. The Administration would also extend the coverage of service targets to include persons with severe disabilities who were not on the waiting lists for residential care home services.

### Other initiatives

13. Members were advised that apart from the regularization of home-based care services, the Community Care Fund ("CCF") provided a Special Care Subsidy to persons with severe disabilities from low-income families. CCF also planned to introduce a new programme to subsidize persons with severe disabilities to rent respiratory support medical equipment. In addition, SWD and the Hospital Authority were studying the feasibility of introducing a case management-oriented service programme to support persons with severe physical disabilities who were in need of constant nursing care and were not receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance. The programme was designed to enable them to live in the community by relieving their financial burden in terms of medical equipment, consumables and care services.

### **Relevant papers**

14. A list of relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
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## Appendix

### Relevant papers on community care services for persons with disabilities

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Paper</b>
Panel on Welfare Services	14 December 2009 (Item IV)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Welfare Services	8 March 2010 (Item IV)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly	31 May 2010 (Item I)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly	13 July 2010 (Item II)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services for Persons with Disabilities and Elderly	28 March 2011 (Item I)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Welfare Services	21 October 2011 (Item I)	<a href="#">Agenda</a> <a href="#">Minutes</a>
Panel on Welfare Services	21 January 2013 (Item I)	<a href="#">Agenda</a>