

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2)253/14-15

(These minutes have been  
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PS/1/12

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

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

**Minutes of the fourteenth meeting  
held on Monday, 24 March 2014, at 2:30 pm  
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members Present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)  
Hon TANG Ka-piu (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Prof Hon Joseph LEE Kok-long, SBS, JP, PhD, RN  
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH

**Public Officers Attending** : Item I

Mr Stephen SUI, JP  
Commissioner for Rehabilitation  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Ms Angela LEE  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Food & Health  
(Health) 2  
Food and Health Bureau

Ms Ivis CHUNG  
Chief Manager (Allied Health)  
Hospital Authority

Ms Nancy KWAN  
Chief Social Work Officer (Rehabilitation and Medical  
Social Services) 2  
Social Welfare Department

**Attendance by  
invitation**

Item I

The Association of Parents of the Severely  
Mentally Handicapped

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Mr LEE Chi-yung  
Chairman

Hong Kong Parkinson's Disease Association

Ms CHAN Yin  
Chairperson

Alliance of Ex-mentally Ill of Hong Kong

Mr WONG Man-lip  
Executive Member Chairman

Hong Kong Association of the Deaf

Mr WONG Chun-man  
Vice Executive Director

Labour Party

Mr YIP Wing  
Community Officer

Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong

Mr MOK Yuen-kwan  
General Secretary

HK Stoma Association

Mr NG Sze-ku  
External Vice Chairman

MS 倡議小組

Mr YAN Chun-kit  
Committee

肌肉萎縮症倡議小組

Mr LAU Wai-ming  
President

Hong Kong Neuro-Muscular Disease  
Association Limited

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Miss SAE SOW Jintana  
Senior Organizing Officer

Hong Kong Pioneers Mutual Support  
Association Ltd

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Mr WONG Kei-wai  
Committee Member

Christian Oi Hip Fellowship Ltd

Ms LEUNG Mei-kuen  
Vice Chairman

Hong Kong Cancer Fund CancerLink Support  
Centre – Tin Shui Wai

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Ms CHOW Sau-fong  
Centre Supervisor

Hong Kong Bone Marrow Transplant Patients'  
Association

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Ms LEUNG Ka-yee  
Chairman

University of Hong Kong Sau Po Centre on  
Ageing

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Dr Donna WONG Kam-pun  
Research Fellow

**Clerk in Attendance** : Mr Colin CHUI  
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

**Staff in Attendance** : Miss Karen LAI  
Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Maggie CHIU  
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Action

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**I. Financial assistance on medications and medical/rehabilitation appliances**

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1074/13-14(01) to (03), CB(2)1145/13-14(01) to (02) and CB(2)1164/13-14(01) to (05) ]

The Joint Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

**II. Item(s) for discussion at the next meeting**

[LC Paper No. CB(2)272/13-14]

2. The Chairman said that the Joint Subcommittee would discuss the item "Guardianship system for mentally incapacitated persons" at its next meeting scheduled for 25 April 2014.

**III. Any other business**

3. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:30 pm.

Action

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
12 November 2014

**Proceedings of the fourteenth meeting of the  
Joint Subcommittee on Long-term Care Policy  
on Monday, 24 March 2014, at 2:30 pm  
in Conference Room 2 of the Legislative Council Complex**

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
<i>Agenda item I – Financial assistance on medications and medical/rehabilitation appliances</i>			
000125 - 000330	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000331 - 000538	The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1164/13-14(01)]	
000539 - 000652	Hong Kong Parkinson's Disease Association Chairman	Presentation of views that many patients suffering from Parkinson's Disease were young people not protected by the social security net. The medicine they needed, even included in the Drug Formulary ("DF"), were not provided by all public hospitals.	
000653 - 000938	Alliance of Ex-mentally Ill of Hong Kong Chairman	Expressing the view that new medicines, which had clinical evidence for better efficacy, could be prescribed for the benefit of more ex-mentally ill patients.	
000939 - 001208	Hong Kong Association of the Deaf Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1074/13-14(03)]	
001209 - 001457	Rehabilitation Alliance Hong Kong Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1145/13-14(01)]	
001458 - 001906	HK Stoma Association Chairman	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1164/13-14(02)]	
001907 - 002242	Labour Party Chairman	Presentation of views –  (a) the deputation urged the Administration to review the requirement that applicants for the Samaritan Fund ("SF") should apply for SF on a household basis;  (b) the deputation said that an application for financial assistance under the Community Care Fund ("CCF") for renting respiratory	

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		<p>equipment and other medical consumables was turned down for the reason that the applicant concerned had received such assistance under the Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund, a charitable fund supported by private donors, within three years prior to submitting application for the assistance under CCF; and</p> <p>(c) another level of Disability Allowance ("DA") should be introduced for offering people with disabilities allowance as per the actual expenditures for the purchase or renting of medical equipment.</p>	
002243 - 002540	MS 倡議小組 Chairman	<p>Presentation of views –</p> <p>(a) the meagre payments of DA could not support patients with chronic illness for their huge expenditures in medicine, daily medical consumables and travel expenses for medical appointments; and</p> <p>(b) many chronic patients opted not to apply for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") since they did not want to leave their families. The Administration should allow applications on an individual basis.</p>	
002541 - 002928	肌肉萎縮症倡議小組 Chairman	<p>Expressing the view that the existing safety net of SF was not adequate to support patients suffering from Neuro-Muscular Disease to live with dignity given their huge expenses for purchasing medical equipment and consumables, as well as receiving around-the-clock personal care services. The Administration was urged to relax the eligibility for SF, and review the scope of support under the assistance programmes of CCF.</p>	
002929 - 003224	Hong Kong Neuro-Muscular Disease Association Limited Chairman	<p>Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)1164/13-14(03)]</p>	
003225 - 003405	Hong Kong Pioneers Mutual Support Association Ltd Chairman	<p>Expressing the views that patients in need should be allowed to apply for SF on an individual basis and greater financial assistance should be provided for cancer patients to alleviate their financial burden on expensive cancer drugs.</p>	
003406 - 003650	Christian Oi Hip Fellowship Ltd Chairman	<p>Urging the Administration to provide more support and assistance for carers of ex-mentally ill persons and plan well for the development of</p>	

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		in-patient services in view of the ageing problems of ex-mentally ill persons.	
003651 - 004029	Hong Kong Cancer Fund CancerLink Support Centre – Tin Shui Wai Chairman	Presentation of views – [LC Paper No. CB(2)1164/13-14(04)]	
004030 - 004606	Hong Kong Bone Marrow Transplant Patients' Association Chairman	Presentation of views –  (a) the Administration should lower the threshold of the means test for SF (in particular applicants' asset and property) to allow people to be eligible for subsidies for self-financed drugs covered by SF;  (b) as currently means test for SF application was assessed on a household basis, the Administration should allow the household's expenditure on self-financed drugs to be tax deductible; and  (c) vouchers for vaccination and assistance for dental treatment should be provided for bone marrow transplant patients.	
004607 - 005139	University of Hong Kong Sau Po Centre on Ageing Chairman	Presentation of views – [LC Paper No. CB(2)1145/13-14(02)]	
005140 - 010747	Chairman Administration	Summing up of deputations' views by the Chairman  Response of the Administration to deputations' views that –  (a) the Government's public healthcare policy aimed to provide subsidized medical services in public hospitals/clinics and ensure equitable access by patients to standard drugs under DF. Patients in need could seek assistance for provision of self-financed drugs through subsidies under SF;  (b) the Hospital Authority ("HA") had enhanced the operational transparency of Formulary management including the process of considering drug applications for inclusion in DF and SF and the composition of the two committees namely the HA's Drug Advisory Committee and Drug Formulary	



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		<p>Committee;</p> <p>(c) the requirement that an application for SF should be on a household basis was across the board for all government-funded subsidy schemes. That said, HA had conducted reviews of SF in 2008 to include more deductible items for the annual disposable financial resources ("ADFR") (e.g. school fees of applicants' children) and in 2012 to further relax the eligibility for subsidies under SF by introducing the additional deductible allowance from disposable capital and reducing the patients' maximum contribution ratio from 30% to 20% of their ADFR;</p> <p>(d) property for self-use was not counted as part of applicants' ADFR under SF;</p> <p>(e) the number of mentally ill patients prescribed with new drugs by HA increased;</p> <p>(f) apart from the public healthcare system and the CSSA safety net, the Administration had launched initiatives to provide assistance for needy persons through assistance programmes under CCF. Two of the CCF programmes targeted for persons with severe physical disabilities to rent respiratory support medical equipment ("RSME") and purchase medical consumables would be regularized in 2014-2015 and incorporated into one-stop integrated support service ("ISS") co-ordinated by case managers;</p> <p>(g) to enhance community care and support for persons with disabilities for their re-integration into the community, the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") would introduce case management service in District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities ("DSCs"), as well as for the Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities ("HCS"), which was regularized in March 2014, and the ISS for persons with severe physical disabilities to be implemented in 2014-2015;</p> <p>(h) deputations' views regarding hearing aids for students would be conveyed to the Education Bureau ("EDB"), and elderly</p>	

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		<p>persons in need of hearing aids could apply for subsidies under SF and other charitable funds; and</p> <p>(i) the Administration would consider the eligibility of RSME dependents who had received Higher DA, but converted to receive Normal DA under the Social Security Assistance Scheme because they turned to receiving care in boarding schools under the purview of EDB.</p>	
010748 - 011647	Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung Hong Kong Bone Marrow Transplant Patients' Association Administration Chairman	<p>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung considered that the existing mechanism of SF could not achieve the Government's policy objective that no patients would be denied of medical treatment due to a lack of means. He urged the Administration to –</p> <p>(a) conduct a review of SF expeditiously to lower the threshold of means test to enable more patients with financial difficulties to purchase the medicine/equipment they needed; and</p> <p>(b) allow patients in need to apply for more than one funding (for example to receive DA and the Old Age Living Allowance at the same time).</p> <p>Elaboration by the deputation on the shared dosage of expensive drugs (e.g. \$100,000 per treatment cycle) by patients who could not afford the expensive drugs.</p> <p>Enquiry of the Chairman and reply of the Administration that it would accord high priority to looking into the situation and review the provision of assistance as appropriate.</p>	
011648 - 012310	Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung Administration Chairman	Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung expressed great disappointment at the lack of financial assistance for the needy patients. He took a strong view that the Financial Secretary should set up a fund for the provision of financial assistance on medications and rehabilitation appliances to address the hardship of grass-roots people.	
012311 - 012918	Mr POON Siu-ping Administration Chairman	<p>Enquiries of Mr POON Siu-ping –</p> <p>(a) the Administration's response to deputations' view that its assistance on medicine and medical appliance was based on the concept</p>	

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		<p>of who have the means should pay more and keeping expenditure within limits of revenue, and whether it had any plans to change the mindset; and</p> <p>(b) whether the Administration would consider introducing vouchers for stoma patients for the purchase of daily medical consumables.</p> <p>Reply of the Administration that –</p> <p>(a) the objective of its rehabilitation policy was to assist persons with disabilities re-integrate into the community. Apart from financial assistance, the Administration provided community support such as employment schemes to encourage the hiring of persons with disabilities;</p> <p>(b) given the limited public resources, the Administration upheld the principle of providing assistance for the most needy persons; and</p> <p>(c) regarding assistance for renting of RSME and purchase of medical consumables, persons with severe physical disabilities who are in need could apply for relevant subsidies under CCF, before its regularization in 2014-2015.</p> <p>The Chairman's enquiry on the Government's subsidies for services such as personal care and home modifications and the Administration's reply that it would regularize two of the CCF programmes targeted for assisting persons with severe physical disabilities to rent RSME and purchase medical consumables in 2014-2015, and which would be incorporated into one-stop ISS co-ordinated by case managers who would render various community care and support services to them.</p> <p>The Chairman's enquiry about the concerns raised by Mr YIP Wing of the Labour Party regarding his ineligibility for assistance under CCF since he had received subsidies from the Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund previously.</p> <p>The Administration's reply that the issues were considered on the planning of the related CCF</p>	

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		schemes.	
012919 - 013807	Prof Joseph LEE Administration Hong Kong Bone Marrow Transplant Patients' Association Chairman	<p>Concerns of Prof Joseph LEE about –</p> <p>(a) whether the shared dosages of drugs mentioned by the deputation would affect the treatment and the patients' recovery; and</p> <p>(b) whether the expensive cancer drugs were essential for proper treatment, or other medicines could be used for the disease.</p> <p>Explanation from the deputation on shared dosage of drugs by patients that there were enough dosages for the patients but the patient with financial difficulties had to wait for opportunities when the medicine had been prescribed to other patients who did not fully use up the quantity of medicine given to them.</p> <p>Regarding Prof LEE's concern mentioned in (b), the Administration replied that it depended on whether other drugs with proven clinical evidence on efficacy could be provided under DF or as self-financed drugs under SF. This apart, under the CCF Medical Assistance Programmes administered by HA, financial assistance would be provided to HA patients to purchase drugs which had not yet been brought into the SF safety net but had been rapidly accumulating medical scientific evidence and with relatively higher efficacy.</p>	
013808 - 014420	Deputy Chairman Administration Chairman	<p>Enquiries of the Deputy Chairman that –</p> <p>(a) the timetable for the review of DA currently undertaken by the Administration;</p> <p>(b) whether the review of DA would address the concerns raised by deputations, such as drawing up different levels of subsidies (without means test) for the purchase of medical consumables, equipment and appliances; and</p> <p>(c) whether the Administration would consider allowing means test for SF application on an individual basis to provide assistance for more patients with financial difficulties.</p> <p>Response of the Administration that –</p>	

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		<p>(a) DA, a non-means-tested allowance to help persons with severe disabilities to meet their special needs, was part of the Administration's measures to assist persons with disabilities. Other initiatives included community care services, employment assistance, home-care services and services offered by DSCs in different districts; and</p> <p>(b) the Administration did not rule out the possibility of addressing the concerns mentioned in (b); and</p> <p>(c) the Inter-departmental Working Group on Review of the Disability Allowance would complete the study on DA and related issues by the end of 2014, and the review findings would be reported to the Legislative Council. The Working Group had commissioned a university to study experience outside Hong Kong as further reference.</p>	
014421 - 015105	Chairman Administration	<p>Referring to deputations' views on the review of SF, the Chairman sought the Administration's response on ways to further enhance the transparency of Formulary management; its plan to relax the eligibility criteria for SF; and the SF coverage in regard to non-drug items.</p> <p>Reply of the Administration that –</p> <p>(a) HA held two meetings annually to brief patients' organizations on the new drugs included in DF and gauge their views on the use of new drugs;</p> <p>(b) the Administration had conducted reviews of SF in 2008 and 2012 to lower the thresholds of eligibility for SF; and</p> <p>(c) assistance for non-drug items under SF mainly covered rehabilitation appliances for discharged patients such as wheelchairs. Patients in need could apply for other assistance programmes/charitable funds for other daily medical consumables.</p> <p>The Chairman considered that notwithstanding the above enhancements, HA should review other issues raised by members/deputations and appoint patients' representatives to sit on relevant drug committees of HA to enhance operational</p>	

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		transparency of drug formulary management.	
015106 - 020036	Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung Administration Chairman	<p>Views of Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung that SF should provide assistance for patients with financial difficulties and the Administration's response that under the public healthcare system, the Government allocated a huge amount of funds to fulfill its commitment in taking care of the patients as far as possible; and as regards self-financed drugs, the Administration would consider –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) further relaxing the means test threshold of SF;</li> <li>(b) adding new drugs to the self-financed drug portfolio of SF; and</li> <li>(c) adding more medicines which were of proven efficacy and cost effectiveness to the list of drugs covered by the standard fees and charges in public hospitals and clinics.</li> </ul> <p>Remarks of the Chairman that the Administration should –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) further relax the financial assessment criteria for SF to benefit more needy patients and allow patients living with their family members to apply for assistance from SF on an individual basis;</li> <li>(b) enhance coordination between the schemes financed by various Funds on providing assistance on medications and rehabilitation appliances;</li> <li>(c) review the subsidies on expensive drugs for needy patients;</li> <li>(d) report to members on the findings of the review of DA to be completed in the end of 2014; and</li> <li>(e) consult the public on the introduction of case management model in DSCs and various community care and support programmes under the purview of SWD.</li> </ul>	
<i>Agenda item II – Item(s) for discussion at the next meeting</i>			
020037 - 020051	Chairman	Agenda item for the next meeting	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
		Closing remarks	

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
12 November 2014