

**For information  
on 25 October 2013**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES  
PANEL ON HEALTH SERVICES  
JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON LONG-TERM CARE POLICY**

**Respite Services for the Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the respite services for the elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

**Respite Services for the Elderly Persons**

2. “Ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up” is the underlying principle of our elderly care policy. This is also the cherished wish of most elderly persons. The Administration is providing a range of day care and home care services to the elderly with long term care needs, with a view to supporting them to age in place. Carers play a vital role in taking care of elderly persons who age at home. Apart from offering carer training, counselling and referral services to support carers, the Administration is providing respite services for the elderly with a view to offering temporary relief to the carers when needs arise.

3. There are two kinds of Respite Service for Elders, namely temporary day care service and short-term residential service for the elderly. The service aims at providing support to carers, relieving their stress and allowing them to take a short break when needed be, thereby encouraging and assisting elderly people to age in the community for as long as possible.

4. Our day respite service is being provided by 66 subvented day care centres/units for the elderly (DEs/DCUs) across the territory. As at September 2013, SWD designated 123 day respite places at these DEs/DCUs. Individual DEs/DCUs can also make use of any casual

vacancy to provide respite service. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) will continue to designate day respite places in the newly established subvented DEs/DCUs.

5. In addition to the 11 designated residential respite places provided by subvented residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs), SWD also makes use of the casual vacancies of the subsidised places in all subvented nursing homes and care-and-attention homes, as well as those in contract homes to provide residential respite service. Since March 2012, all private RCHEs participating in the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme have joined force in offering residential respite service.

### **Respite Service for Persons with Disabilities**

6. One of the strategic development directions set out in the Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan is to empower persons with disabilities and their carers to become valuable social capital. Towards this direction, we provide a series of support service for carers of persons with disabilities, including respite services, with a view to relieving their stress in taking care of their family members with disabilities.

7. Our residential respite service (RRS), attached to subvented residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs), is providing short-term residential care service for persons with disabilities aged 15 or above. The service in some of the RCHDs also covers children with disabilities aged from 6 to 14. It is aimed at strengthening the support for persons with disabilities living in the community and relieving the burden of their family members and/or carers who need a short break from the caring duties. RRS is provided by subvented RCHDs through designated places and casual vacancies for persons with disabilities in need of a certain level of personal and/or nursing care not beyond the level provided by the particular type of residential service.

8. As at September 2013, a total of 65 residential respite places in 24 RCHDs were designated for RRS purpose, among which 55 places provided by 21 RCHDs also catered for children with disabilities aged from 6 to 14. In addition, SWD has arranged with 63 RCHDs to provide a maximum of 183 residential respite places, including 67 places for those aged 6 to 14, through casual vacancies.

9. The 16 District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities (DSCs), subvented by SWD, provide one-stop community support services for persons with disabilities and their families and/or carers through a district-based approach. To relieve the stress of their families and/or carers, the 16 DSCs provide occasional care and support services, both centre-based or home-based, to persons with disabilities throughout the territory.

10. SWD has, since March 2011, launched a three-year Pilot Scheme on Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities (Pilot Scheme) to provide a package of home-based personal care, rehabilitation training and nursing care service for persons with severe disabilities who are living in Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin, Kwai Tsing and Tuen Mun districts and on the waiting list for subvented residential care services. This Pilot Scheme also includes home respite service under which home care workers provide care, supervision and companionship to persons with severe disabilities at their homes. The Pilot Scheme has proved to be a success and has been well received by the users. The service will be regularised in March 2014 upon the expiry of the Pilot Scheme, and at the same time be extended to persons with severe disabilities in all districts, irrespective of whether they are on the waiting list for residential care services.

### **Advice Sought**

11. Members are invited to note the contents of the paper.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau  
Social Welfare Department  
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