

LC Paper No. CB(2)1130/14-15 (These minutes have been seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/WS

Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 12 January 2015, at 10:45 am in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex

Members present	:	Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che (Chairman) Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman) Hon Albert HO Chun-yan Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming Hon CHAN Chi-chuen Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP
Member absent	:	Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Public Officers attending	:	Miss Annie TAM, JP Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
		Labour and Welfare Bureau

	Ms Jane LEE Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty) Labour and Welfare Bureau
	Mr Peter NG Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Youth and Corrections) Social Welfare Department
	Item IV
	Ms Joyce TAM, JP Commissioner for Rehabilitation Labour and Welfare Bureau
	Mr FONG Kai-leung Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Rehabilitation & Medical Social Services) Social Welfare Department
Clerk in attendance	: Mr Colin CHUI Chief Council Secretary (2) 4
Staff in attendance	: Ms Catherina YU Senior Council Secretary (2) 4
	Miss Maggie CHIU Legislative Assistant (2) 4
	Ms Tess HUI Clerical Assistant (2) 4

I. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting [LC Paper Nos. CB(2)341/14-15(01) and CB(2)515/14-15(01)]

Action

Members noted that the following papers had been issued since the last meeting -

- (a) Referral from the Public Complaints Office on policies relating to street sleepers [LC Paper No. CB(2)341/14-15(01)]; and
- (b) E-mail from 爭取資助院舍聯席 requesting for the Panel to discuss policies on supporting carers of persons with disabilities and provision of diversified subvented residential care homes for persons with disabilities [LC Paper No. CB(2)515/14-15(01)].

II. Items for discussion at the next meeting [LC Paper Nos. CB(2)553/14-15(01) to (02)]

2. <u>Members</u> agreed to discuss, at the next regular meeting on 9 February 2015, the following three items proposed by the Administration –

- (a) Setting up a new contract residential care home for the elderly in the public rental housing ("PRH") development at Fo Tan, Shatin Areas 16 & 58D;
- (b) Revision of fees under the Adoption Ordinance (Cap. 290); and
- (c) Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Services Voucher for the Elderly.

3. <u>Dr Helena WONG</u> said that the Panel should discuss the item "Provision of child care services and after school care services" as early as possible.

Special meeting on 20 January 2015

4. <u>The Chairman</u> said that a special meeting had been scheduled for 20 January 2015 from 10:45 am to 12:45 pm to receive views from deputations on Elderly Services Programme Plan. Given that more than 40 deputations had indicated their interest to attend and express views at the meeting, he suggested that the meeting should be held from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm instead. <u>Members</u> agreed.

III. Updated progress of Child Development Fund

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)553/14-15(03) to (04)]

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, <u>Permanent Secretary for Labour</u> <u>and Welfare</u> ("PS(LW)") briefed members on the latest progress of Child Development Fund ("CDF") projects and the enhancement measures for pursuing new projects to be funded under an additional financial commitment of \$300 million pledged by the Chief Executive ("CE") in his 2014 Policy Address.

Implementation of school-based pilot projects

6. In response to Mr POON Siu-ping's enquiry about the progress of the preparation for rolling out more school-based pilots in the 2015-2016 academic year, $\underline{PS}(\underline{LW})$ said that seven school-based pilot projects involving 10 schools were rolled out in 2014 and positive responses were received. As some schools had indicated that they wished to make use of the summer vacation to prepare for school-based projects, the Administration would invite schools to submit proposals for operating more school-based pilot projects in early 2015. The Administration aimed to award the projects in July 2015 for launching them around the start of the 2015-2016 school year.

Evaluation of CDF projects

7. Mr POON Siu-ping asked how the Administration would evaluate the effectiveness of the targeted savings programme and follow up the saving habits of participants after they had completed the projects. PS(LW) responded that non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") and schools operating CDF projects ("operating NGOs and schools") were requested to impress upon participants the objectives of CDF i.e. to promote their long-term development and encourage them to meet their monthly savings target of a maximum of \$200 throughout the two-year targeted savings programme. Operating NGOs and schools would monitor the participants' savings situation. Depending on the participants' financial situation, they would have the flexibility to set a savings target lower than \$200. Participants who encountered temporary financial difficulty might seek assistance from emergency funds from operating NGOs and schools for meeting their monthly savings target. Participants were required to take forward their personal development plans ("PDPs") in the third year of the programme. Operating NGOs and schools were required to monitor the implementation of PDPs.

8. Mr TANG Ka-piu and Mr Albert HO asked whether the Administration would conduct studies to evaluate the long-term changes of the participants' attitude towards financial management and to find out whether their financial situation had improved after their completion of the projects. Mr TANG also enquired about the time span of these studies. PS(LW) responded that the Administration had commissioned the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to conduct a longitudinal study ("the Longitudinal Study") to track the development of the participants of the first batch of CDF projects in the three-year project period. The study was completed in end-2012 and the Labour and Welfare Bureau briefed members on the study findings at the meeting held on 16 April 2013. Having regard to the views of members and the Steering Committee on CDF, a consultancy study on the longer term development of CDF project participants after their completion of the project would be conducted. The Administration had invited proposals from consultants to conduct this new study. She hoped that the study could commence in 2015 and be completed in one year's time.

Size of CDF projects

9. Noting that only some 2 000 children had benefited from each batch of CDF projects, Mr Ronny TONG said that the Administration should provide information on the total number of needy children so that members could judge whether the coverage of CDF was adequate. He also asked whether the number of participants provided by the Administration were rolling figures of the three-year projects. PS(LW) responded that the figures referred to the number of participants for each batch of the projects and every participant could only participate once. She said that each CDF project comprised three key components, namely, PDP, mentorship programme and targeted savings. Participants were required to take part in all these three components. CDF had so far benefited around 7 000 children and the number of beneficiaries would increase to around 22 000 with the additional financial commitment of \$300 million as announced in the 2014 Policy Address. Given that CDF's target participants generally came from low-income families, children at appropriate age range from families under the upcoming Low-income Working Family Allowance ("LIFA") Scheme would also be CDF's target beneficiaries.

10. <u>PS(LW)</u> further said that according to the 2013 poverty statistics, there were over 100 000 children aged below 18 who were living below the poverty line. The entry age range of CDF projects was however 10 to 16. Given that the school setting was advantageous in identifying and

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recruiting suitable participants, the Administration had been piloting the school-based approach to extend the reach of CDF projects.

11. Having regard to the substantial number of children in poverty, <u>Mr Ronny TONG</u> was gravely concerned about the inadequate coverage of CDF and sought information on the ratio of CDF's target participants to the number of children in poverty. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that the Administration would provide the required information to members after the meeting. <u>Mr TONG</u> opined that the ratio was crucial to the review of CDF and should be readily available.

12. Sharing a similar concern about the inadequate coverage of CDF, <u>Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung</u> opined that the Administration should strengthen its assistance for children from a disadvantaged background such as implementing 15-year free education.

13. Pointing out that about one fourth of the population of children aged below 18 was in poverty, <u>Dr Fernando CHEUNG</u> was also of the view that the scale of CDF was far too small. He opined that the amount of targeted savings was not large enough for participants to accumulate asset and hence could not help them escape poverty. <u>The Chairman</u> shared the view that the amount of targeted savings was of little help to participants.

14. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that currently seven schools and about half of the NGOs providing youth services were operating CDF projects. With more NGOs and schools operating CDF projects in future, the reach of CDF could be extended.

15. Pointing out that the quota for CDF projects in some PRH estates, e.g. Yat Tung Estate in Tung Chung, fell short of the demand, <u>Mr TANG Ka-piu</u> expressed concern about how CDF's objective to promote the longer-term development of children from a disadvantaged background could be achieved. He considered it necessary to expand the project size as well as increase the private sector matching donation and the Government's contribution. He also took the view that housing problem was one of the major causes of poverty. In this connection, he asked whether the Administration had studied the difference in the ability to meet the monthly savings target between the participants who were living in private housing and those living in PRH.

16. $\underline{PS}(\underline{LW})$ responded that many of the operating schools were located in districts with PRH estates and the school principals were supportive of

CDF projects. The Administration hoped that with the implementation of more school-based pilots in the 2015-2016 academic year and the rolling out of more NGO-run projects, more underprivileged children could benefit from CDF.

Duration of CDF projects

17. <u>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung</u> declared that the organization to which he belonged had participated in the operation of CDF projects. He acknowledged the usefulness of CDF projects in helping participants' overall development and suggested that, to benefit more needy children, the Administration should consider shortening the project period from three years to two years.

18. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that with a shorter project period, participants would have less time to accumulate savings and to draw up their PDPs.

Allocation of places of CDF projects

19. <u>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung</u> said that some members had previously suggested that more places should be given to primary students for participating in CDF projects as it would be rather difficult for older children to change their saving habits. According to his understanding, the quota allocated to primary and secondary students remained the same in the upcoming CDF projects. He called on the Administration to increase the quota for primary students.

20. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that there were advantages for children to start building a savings habit at a younger age while, elder children were often more prepared in drawing up and implementing their PDPs. As such, children aged between 14 and 16 would constitute no less than 50% of the participants.

Resources for operating NGOs and schools

21. Given that operating NGOs had already devoted a lot of efforts to organizing training programmes, <u>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung</u> said that they were facing great pressure in sparing time for soliciting donations. He called on the Administration to consider relieving the work of operating NGOs in securing donations so that they could focus on helping participants' personal development. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that operating NGOs and schools had been seeking donations from the private sector. For those operators which had difficulties in appealing for donations, they

could seek assistance from the Child Development Matching Fund (a community organization set up by the private sector), or contact the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") for information about organizations which might be interested in giving donations to CDF projects.

22. While the administrative fee per participant would be increased by 10% for the first batch of new projects launched beyond 2015, <u>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung</u> considered the administrative fee insufficient to cover the costs incurred by operating NGOs. Taking into account the inflation and the new "one-plus-one" approach under which each selected NGO would be awarded two consecutive projects in one go and could proceed to launch the second project without further bidding, he considered that the administrative fee should be further increased.

23. <u>The Chairman</u> held strong view on the amount of administrative fee per participant (i.e. \$2,200) which, to him, was insufficient. He said that many frontline staff of operating NGOs and schools had reflected that they had to spend a lot of time on administrative work. As schools were closed after office hours and parents of participants could only avail themselves after work, frontline staff had great difficulties in looking for suitable venues to organize activities for parents of participants. As such, they could only spend a little time on assisting participants. He urged the Administration to take into account the resources NGOs and schools required for operating CDF projects in setting the administrative fee.

24. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that the administrative fee per participant had been increased from \$1,500 to \$2,000 in 2014 and would be further increased by 10% for projects to be launched beyond 2015. The Administration noted that some operating NGOs and schools could still need to pay part of the administrative costs out of their own resources. The Administration would keep in view the situation.

Objectives of CDF

25. <u>Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung</u> said that according to some operating NGOs, some participants had not spent their savings on implementing PDPs but on supporting their families. To ensure that the objective of personal development could be achieved, the Administration should consider requiring participants to use private sector donation only for implementing PDPs. The Administration should also specify the amount of savings a participant must spend on PDPs.

26. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that CDF projects sought to guide participants to formulate and implement PDPs using the tripartite contribution from their own savings, private sector matching donation and Government's special financial incentive. Participants should spend the sum on implementing their PDPs rather than on daily necessities. Operating NGOs/schools should refer participating families to SWD for assistance if they had financial difficulties.

27. <u>Dr Helena WONG</u> and <u>Mr Albert HO</u> opined that as CDF's target beneficiaries were children from a disadvantaged background, it would be difficult for their families to spare \$200 a month for the saving programme. <u>Mr HO</u> said that what these families needed most was the Administration's financial assistance for meeting their imminent needs. Noting that only 16.3% of 332 children of the first batch projects who were captured in the Longitudinal Study had used up all the targeted savings in the third year to implement their PDPs, <u>Dr WONG</u> cast doubt on the effectiveness of CDF in alleviating inter-generational poverty. In her view, the Administration should reduce the administrative and training provisions so that more funds could be used for helping participants.

28. Noting that the Government's special financial incentive only accounted for about 15% of the \$300 million commitment for CDF projects, <u>Dr Fernando CHEUNG</u> said that such a percentage was disproportionately low. He called on the Administration to draw on the experience of child development projects implemented in the United Kingdom, the United States and Taiwan which had set the targeted savings at such levels that would enable participants to escape poverty.

29. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that with the additional \$300 million earmarked for CDF, the total commitment would be increased to \$600 million. She said that CDF projects in Hong Kong comprised of targeted savings, PDP and mentorship programme while the child development projects in some overseas jurisdictions only consisted of one of the three components. The proportion of funding given to support targeted savings in CDF would therefore be incomparable to the overseas targeted savings projects. She stressed that it was not the objective of CDF to address the immediate financial hardship of needy families. Instead, the content of CDF projects was designed to provide a positive impact on the participants' social skills, help them build up a positive attitude, enhance their problem-solving ability and build up their self-confidence. The results of the Longitudinal Study also indicated that CDF projects were conducive in promoting the long-term development of participants.

30. <u>PS(LW)</u> further said that CDF was not the only means to help alleviate inter-generational poverty. Other poverty alleviating measures were and would be available, e.g. LIFA would be launched to provide financial assistance to eligible low-income working families, with a particular focus on their children.

31. <u>Mr TAM Yiu-chung</u> said that the sustainability of CDF and systematic guidance on the participants' personal development were important. <u>PS(LW)</u> responded that CE had announced in his 2014 Policy Address that an additional \$300 million would be earmarked for CDF to ensure its sustainability. The increase in commitment by \$300 million to \$600 million would be included and reflected in the draft Estimates of 2015-2016 financial year.

32. <u>Mr Frankie YICK</u> said that the financial hardship of CDF's beneficiaries should be dealt with through other financial assistance measures. While sharing the view that the reach of CDF projects should be extended, he considered that CDF had accomplished its objectives.

Provision for and contents of training programmes

In response to the enquiries of Dr Helena WONG and Mr TANG 33. Ka-piu about the contents of training programmes, PS(LW) said that the topics usually covered were self-awareness, personal and career development, financial management, social network building and communication skills. To enable a participant and his or her parents to benefit most from the training provision of \$22,000, Mr TANG Ka-piu said that they should be allowed to choose the training programmes they PS(LW) responded that operating NGOs and schools were wanted. required to provide training programmes for mentors, participants and their parents, and the Administration had specified the minimum requirements on the number of training sessions. Operating NGOs and schools would design appropriate training to cater for the needs of the parents of the participating children. A participant could make use of the targeted savings to implement his or her PDPs.

34. To facilitate members' better understanding of the operation of CDF projects and of whether the training provision was adequate, <u>the</u> <u>Chairman</u> said that the Administration should provide members with detailed information on the training programmes and activities organized by operating NGOs and schools. Members could also visit the operators to better understand how CDF projects were being

operated. He also requested the Administration to provide hardcopies of Admin the report of the Longitudinal Study to the Panel.

> 35. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung said that mentors were required to attend training programmes for every batch of CDF projects. Given that the contents of these training programmes were similar, he took the view that experienced mentors should be exempted from attending training programmes. $\underline{PS(LW)}$ responded that the Administration appreciated the mentors' efforts and would explore the option of requiring experienced mentors to attend refresher courses instead.

Public awareness of CDF projects

36. Dr Helena WONG said that the Alliance for Children Development Right ("the Alliance") had interviewed 317 families whose children were targeted beneficiaries of CDF projects and many of these families said that they were not aware of CDF projects. These families hoped to send their children to attend summer courses but could not afford the course fees. She suggested that summer course vouchers should be provided for children from a disadvantaged background.

37. PS(LW) responded that the Administration had taken steps to enhance public awareness and understanding of CDF projects as detailed in paragraph 11 of the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(2)553/14-15(03)). The Administration would continue to promote CDF and arrange value-added activities for CDF participants to help broaden their horizon and enrich their social experience.

(Post-meeting note: The bilingual report of consultancy study on CDF pioneer projects, the ratio of CDF's target participants to the number of children in poverty, and information on the training programmes and activities organized by NGOs and schools operating CDF projects were issued to members vide LC Paper Nos. CB(2)746/14-15 and CB(2)1122/14-15(01) respectively.)

(The Deputy Chairman took the chair at this juncture in the absence of *the Chairman.*)

IV. Progress on the implementation of home care service for persons with severe disabilities

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)553/14-15(05) to (06)]

38. At the invitation of the Deputy Chairman, <u>Commissioner for</u> <u>Rehabilitation</u> ("C for R") briefed members on the implementation of home care service for persons with severe disabilities ("HCS").

Utilization of HCS

39. Noting that there were 2 900 persons waiting for residential care homes for persons with severe disabilities ("RCHPSD") but only 1 118 persons with severe disabilities had benefited from HCS, <u>Dr KWOK</u> <u>Ka-ki</u> asked why the quota for HCS was not fully taken up.

40. Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Rehabilitation & Medical Social Services) ("ADSW(R&MSS)") responded that the reasons for some persons with severe disabilities not using HCS were that they were being taken care of by their family members or domestic helpers, were admitted to private residential care homes for persons with disabilities or were using other home care services for the elderly. Some of them did not wish to receive home-based services from strangers. He further said that as at November 2014, there were some 3 000 persons waiting for RCHPSD and only about 20% of HCS users were waiting for RCHPSD. Majority of HCS users were not on the waiting list for RCHPSD. HCS could facilitate persons with severe disabilities who were not waiting for RCHPSD to live at home. The Administration had distributed pamphlets and sent letters to social workers who made referrals and private RCHPSD to promote HCS. The Administration would further strengthen the publicity for HCS. Mr POON Siu-ping was of the view that the Administration should think of more effective ways to promote HCS.

41. Given that HCS had been expanded to all districts in Hong Kong and covered persons with severe disabilities not waiting for subsidized residential care services, <u>Mr TANG Ka-piu</u> said that the Administration should disseminate information on the number of surplus quota in each district to family service centres, Members' district offices, hospitals, etc. to optimize the utilization of HCS. In this connection, <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> said that the Administration would provide information on the number of users receiving services from each of the six HCS operators when the regularized HCS Scheme had been implemented for one full year.

42. Expressing concern about the low usage of HCS, <u>the Deputy</u> <u>Chairman</u> said that the Administration should step up the publicity to increase target beneficiaries' awareness of HCS and promote HCS to all the 18 District Councils in Hong Kong. The Administration should also gauge views on HCS from the 18 District Councils.

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43. <u>Dr Fernando CHEUNG</u> said that while many persons with disabilities were satisfied with the content of HCS, those who were using integrated and enhanced home care services had reservations in using HCS because its fees were higher than those of integrated and enhanced home care services. The Administration should consider rationalizing the fee levels and the scope of various types of services for persons with disabilities so as to increase the utilization of HCS.

44. <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> responded that the fee levels for HCS were set with reference to those for rehabilitation services and services provided by day care centres for the elderly. When service users had financial difficulties in paying the fee, a fee remission mechanism was in place for HCS users. In the past nine months, 212 users were offered fee remission. 173 and 39 users received full and partial fee remission respectively.

45. In response to Dr KWOK Ka-ki's enquiry about the professional support for HCS users who had behavioural or mental health problems, <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> said that HCS's target beneficiaries were persons with severe physical disabilities or intellectual disabilities. HCS did not cover persons with mental health problems. He said that autistic behaviour was regarded as challenging behaviour under HCS and around 200 such cases were being followed up.

Appeal/review mechanism for assessments for HCS

46. In response to Mr POON Siu-ping's enquiry about the appeal or review mechanism for assessments made for HCS, <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> said that unsuccessful applicants could request for reassessments of their applications. The Administration would also refer these applicants to district support centres for persons with disabilities or integrated family service centres for suitable services.

Funding for HCS operators

47. <u>Mr TANG Ka-piu</u> said that HCS provided flexibility for persons with disabilities who were not eligible for elderly services. Expressing concern that some HCS operators might not have sufficient funds to recruit allied health professionals to cope with the increased demand for HCS, he sought information on the funding mode for HCS operators. <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> responded that the Lump Sum Grant Subvention System was adopted for the provision of HCS. Given that the number of target users had substantially increased after the regularization of HCS, the lump sum grant was provided for HCS operators in full for them to meet the operating costs and recruit the required manpower. The Administration would adjust the subvention in subsequent years in the contract period, if necessary, having regard to the actual utilization of the subvention of the respective service teams.

48. <u>Mr TANG Ka-piu</u> said that from the planning perspective, the Administration should consider engaging the existing HCS operators for the provision of HCS upon expiry of the current contracts. <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> responded that subject to satisfactory performance of the existing HCS operators, the Administration would consider renewing their contracts.

Review of home and community care services for persons with disabilities

49. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that the Administration should ensure that the various types of subsidized home care services for persons with disabilities were moving towards the same direction, i.e. to facilitate users to live at home or in the community independently and in dignity. In considering the provision of services for persons with disabilities, the Administration should take into account users' needs for home care and day care services as well as the extent of support the users' families could provide. He called on the Administration to draw up a work plan for conducting a holistic review of policies on home and community care services ("HCCS") for persons with disabilities and rationalize such The Administration should start with a review on CCS for services. persons with disabilities and set a policy direction for such services. ADSW(R&MSS) responded that the Administration would examine existing services comprehensively to enable their smooth implementation.

50. <u>The Deputy Chairman</u> was of the view that the Administration should examine HCCS for persons with disabilities and amalgamate these services, if necessary, so as to fill the service gaps and deploy resources more effectively. The Administration should involve service providers, users and their carers in the process. She requested the Administration to provide the Panel with a paper on its review of HCCS for persons with disabilities.

51. <u>C for R</u> responded that the Administration conducted reviews on services for persons with disabilities from time to time. The Administration was concerned about the utilization of HCS and was monitoring the situation. SWD had been actively promoting HCS and

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soliciting views from service providers and users since the regularization of HCS on 1 March 2014. The Administration would take into account members' views in conducting the review of HCS.

Case management

52. Noting that different case management systems were adopted for HCS, Integrated Support Service for Persons with Severe Physical Disabilities and District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities, Dr Fernando CHEUNG opined that such a bloated approach ran counter to the spirit of case management. <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> responded that only one case manager would be assigned to a service user. Case management services were provided for users according to the services they received. Users of services provided by HCS or district support centres would only receive case management services from either one of the service units. SWD had set up a case management working group ("Working Group") in July 2014 to draw up guidelines for case managers to avoid providing overlapping services for users.

53. Dr Fernando CHEUNG opined that case managers should have an overview of services available for persons with disabilities and be able to deploy the resources required for meeting the users' service needs. As case managers were required to coordinate services provided for users, they should not be related to service providers to avoid a possible conflict of interests. He urged the Administration to review the existing case management system. C for R responded that members' views would be referred to the Working Group which comprised heads of NGOs, representatives from the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, representative organizations of persons with disabilities, service users and their parents.

Age distribution of HCS users and usage rate of services under the HCS Scheme

54. Noting that there were 579 HCS applicants under assessments, <u>Mr POON Siu-ping</u> enquired about the numbers of successful and unsuccessful applications and the age distribution of HCS users. <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> responded that persons on the waiting list for RCHPSD were not required to undergo assessments for HCS. Of the 579 applicants who had undergone assessment, 485 applicants (84% of the total number of applicants) were assessed to be eligible for HCS and 434 of them were receiving HCS. The remaining 51 eligible applicants considered that they did not require HCS at this stage. 94 applicants (16% of the total number

of applicants) did not pass the assessments. As at end November 2014, 7% of HCS users were special school students aged between six and 15; 74% were aged between 15 and 60 and 19% were aged above 60.

55. In response to Dr Fernando CHEUNG's enquiry about the utilization rate of different services under the HCS Scheme, <u>ADSW(R&MSS)</u> said that the statistics on service utilization were set out in paragraph 11 of the Administration paper (LC Paper No. CB(2)553/14-15(05)). In terms of hours, HCS had provided a total of 75 600 service hours from March to end-November 2014, representing an average of 67.7 hours (2.5 sessions a week) per user. The services provided included rehabilitation training, nursing care services and home respite service.

V. Any other business

56. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:31 pm.

Council Business Division 2 <u>Legislative Council Secretariat</u> 25 March 2015