

立法會
Legislative Council

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LC Paper No. CB(2)1614/14-15
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of special meeting
held on Monday, 23 March 2015, at 8:30 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 Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen
Hon CHAN Han-pan, JP
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon POON Siu-ping, BBS, MH
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP

Members absent : Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan

Public Officers attending : Item I
Miss Annie TAM, JP
Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr Donald CHEN, JP
Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr Steve TSE
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Special
Duties)
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Miss Cecilla LI
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly)
Social Welfare Department

Ms Maria LAU
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Social Security)
Social Welfare Department

Dr CK LAW
Principal Investigator
Consultant Team

**Attendance by
invitation** : Item I

Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong

Ms CHEUNG Fan-lan
Deputy Spokesperson of Welfare Services

Carer Alliance for the Dementia

Ms CHEUNG Yuet-kam
Chairperson

Liberal Party Youth Committee

Mr Mark FU
Vice Chairman

香港安老服務協會

Mr LO Wei-kai
First Vice Chairman

長者服務大聯盟

Mr LI Wei
Chief-Secretary

爭取資助院舍聯席

Mr LAM Lai-shing

The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped

Mr LEE Chi-yung
Chairman

葵涌邨居民權益關注組

Mr CHEUNG Kai-bing
Secretary

Labour Rights' Commune

Ms Florence CHEUNG
Member

The Salvation Army Carer Association

Ms HO Wai-kuen
Vice-Chairperson

Society for Community Organization

Mr NG Wai-tung
Community Organizer

Elderly Rights League (HK)

Ms TSUI To-chi
Organizer

New People's Party

Mr CHENG Chit-pun
Community Development Officer

關注家居照顧服務大聯盟

Ms Alice Ishigami LEE Fung-king

Hong Kong Social Security Society

Miss CHEUNG Nga-lam

香港長者活力協會

Mr SZETO Shiu-fai
Member

Mr LAM Hon-wai

Ms POON Tip-mui

Ms WONG Yuk-ching

Ms TSUI Yee-nui

將軍澳民生關注會

Ms MAK Yuen-lin
Representative

Mr KWONG Wing-tai

張榮燦先生

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

Staff in attendance : Ms Catherina YU
Senior Council Secretary (2) 4

Ms Kay CHU
Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

Miss LEE Wai-yan
Clerical Assistant (2) 6

Action

I. Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)770/14-15(06) to (07), CB(2)820/14-15(01), CB(2)1062/14-15(01) to (05), CB(2)1107/14-15(01) to (02), CB(2)1143/14-15(01) to (08) and CB(2)1149/14-15(01) to (02)]

At the invitation of the Chairman, Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare ("PS(LW)") briefed members, with the aid of a powerpoint presentation, on the background and progress of the Elderly Commission ("EC")'s study on the feasibility ("Feasibility Study") of introducing a pilot scheme on residential care service ("RCS") voucher for the elderly ("RCS Voucher Scheme").

(At 8:42am, the Deputy Chairman took the chair in the absence of the Chairman.)

2. The Deputy Chairman invited deputations/individuals to present their views. A total of 23 deputations/individuals expressed their views which were summarized in the **Appendix**.

(At 9:33am, the Chairman took the chair when deputations were giving their views.)

The Administration's response to deputations' views

3. Dr CK LAW, Principal Investigator of the Consultant Team, advised that whilst the community had consensus on the policy objective of facilitating "ageing in place", the problem of long waiting time for subsidized RCS should be addressed. According to the preliminary findings of the Feasibility Study, over half of the elderly persons on the Central Waiting List ("CWL") for subsidized RCS would choose to stay in the community even if subsidized places were available to them at the time of the interview. For elderly persons who were living in non-subsidized places and waiting for subsidized RCS, one-third of them had indicated that they did not want to switch to another residential care home for the elderly ("RCHE"). One of the main purposes for exploring the feasibility of introducing an RCS Voucher Scheme was to provide more options to enable eligible elderly persons to choose RCS that suited their needs. The Consultant Team also noted that the Administration would continue its efforts in increasing the supply of subsidized RCS places. Regarding concerns about case management services to be provided under the RCS Voucher Scheme, he advised that the Consultant Team was exploring the

Action

provision of the aforesaid services by a dedicated team set up under the Social Welfare Department and would put forward recommendations in this regard for the Administration's consideration. Public views collected would be consolidated and submitted to the Working Group on Long Term Care Model under EC.

4. PS(LW) responded that in the light of the policy objective of "ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up", the Administration would continue to enhance community care services ("CCS") for elderly persons, strengthen support for carers and make long-term planning for elderly services by formulating the Elderly Services Programme Plan. At the same time, the Administration sought to address the long waiting time for subsidized RCS by continuing its effort to secure suitable sites for the construction of contract homes and follow up on the projects under the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses. In addition, the Administration planned to explore implementing the proposed RCS Voucher Scheme to enable elderly persons, including among others those who were on CWL and living in non-subsidized places under the assistance of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA"), to receive better services. The RCS Voucher Scheme was also expected to provide incentive for private RCHEs to upgrade their service standard and allow more choice and greater control over the services to elderly persons and their family. The Consultant Team would give recommendations on the design of the RCS Voucher Scheme to EC for consideration.

Discussion

Objectives of RCS Voucher Scheme

5. Noting that for elderly persons who were more flexible with the location of the RCHE, the average waiting time for subsidized places provided under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme ("EBPS") could often be around seven months or less, Mr TANG Ka-piu doubted the need to implement the RCS Voucher Scheme. PS(LW) explained that currently the Administration had to pay RCHEs in EBPS for bought places irrespective of whether the places were occupied or not, and the eligible elderly persons could only limit their choice of RCHEs to those participating in EBPS. To enhance flexibility in the provision of RCS and provide more choice of RCS for elderly persons, the Administration had made reference to the Pilot Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong and proposed to implement the RCS Voucher Scheme on a pilot basis. Under the RCS Voucher Scheme, the Administration did not have to

Action

pay for unoccupied RCS places. In addition, elderly persons were able to choose services provided by eligible private and self-financing RCHEs which might better suit their needs, thereby incentivizing particularly private RCHEs to upgrade their service standard to attract more elderly persons to use their services.

6. Mr TANG Ka-piu noted that some elderly persons on CWL might not be able to decide on their own whether the RCS Voucher Scheme was suitable to them, such as elderly persons with dementia who did not have any family members and had already been admitted to private RCHEs. He wondered how the RCS Voucher Scheme could help them. PS(LW) said that borrowing the experience under the Pilot Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong, responsible workers would help explain the details of the proposed Scheme to the elderly persons and their families so that they would make informed decisions. The elderly persons would not be relocated to a new living environment without their consent.

Quality of service providers participating in RCS Voucher Scheme

7. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that according to the Director of Audit's Report No. 63, the level of service in terms of size and staffing requirements of private RCHEs was substantially lower than that of subvented/contract RCHEs. Even if the EA2 places of RCHEs in EBPS had been upgraded to EA1 places, their services were still not comparable to those of subvented/contract RCHEs. As service standard was the major concern of elderly persons when they chose RCHEs, and elderly persons who were living in private RCHEs generally did not intend to change their living environment, he wondered whether the RCS Voucher Scheme could provide enough incentive for RCHEs in EBPS to upgrade their service standard.

8. Noting that there were some 11 000 vacant non-subsidized care-and-attention ("C&A") places, Mr TANG Ka-piu wondered how the issue of the 3 000 RCS vouchers could help improve the service quality of private RCHEs. To give further consideration in this regard, he requested the Administration to provide, before the Panel's special meeting on RCS Voucher Scheme scheduled for 28 March 2015 ("Panel's next special meeting"), the breakdown of the average living space per person and staffing provision for the 11 000 vacant non-subsidized C&A places, as well as the actual amount of the monthly CSSA payment received by the 5 968 elderly persons who were living in non-subsidized places in private RCHEs while waiting for subsidized C&A places. PS(LW) advised that the Administration accorded importance to the

Admin

Action

effectiveness of the RCS Voucher Scheme. EC had been invited to give recommendations on the design of the RCS Voucher Scheme with emphasis on enhancing the transparency, case management services and monitoring mechanism, etc. to help upgrade service standard of private RCHEs through the implementation of RCS Voucher Scheme.

(Post-meeting note: The Administration's response was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)1144/14-15(01) on 27 March 2015.)

Implications of RCS Voucher Scheme on community care services

9. Mr TANG Ka-piu held the view that sufficient provision of CCS could help reduce the demand for RCS. In this connection, he said that some service providers under the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly ("CCS Voucher Scheme") reflected that as the proposed RCS voucher value would be about two times of the CCS voucher value, some participants of CCS Voucher Scheme might have the incentive to switch to the RCS Voucher Scheme. He called on the Administration to consider increasing the CCS voucher value to the level of RCS voucher value for better development of CCS. PS(LW) stressed that it was not the Administration's policy intention to replace CCS by RCS. While enhancement of CCS could reduce the demand for RCS, the Administration noted at the same time that there were elderly persons waiting for subsidized RCS and the waiting time was long. The Administration would continue its effort to increase the supply of subsidized RCS places through a multi-pronged approach. The RCS Voucher Scheme was proposed to be launched on a pilot basis to enable elderly persons, including among others those who had been admitted to private RCHEs, to receive better services. The scope and cost of CCS were different from those of RCS and therefore the values of the two vouchers were not set at the same level.

10. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed appreciation of the Administration's efforts in enhancing LTC services. However, he was concerned that the amount of public resources allocated for RCS was much more than that for CCS. As the RCS voucher could enable elderly persons to have constant care in RCHEs, elderly persons who were taken care of by their family members might be asked by them to choose the RCS voucher rather than the CCS voucher which could only support the provision of CCS for about 3 days per week. He was wary that the implementation of the RCS Voucher Scheme would encourage more elderly persons to be institutionalized, thereby countering the policy objective of "ageing in place as core, institutional care as

Action

back-up".

11. PS(LW) fully appreciated that most of the elderly persons wished to age in place. The Administration would continue to put more effort in enhancing CCS and support for carers. In parallel, the RCS Voucher Scheme was put forward with a view to helping elderly persons on CWL, including among others those who had been admitted to private RCHEs and were receiving CSSA, to receive better RCS. The Administration would assess carefully the impact of RCS Voucher Scheme on CCS and whether the Scheme would bring about premature institutionalization.

Design of RCS Voucher Scheme

12. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung said that in view of the serious shortage of CCS, the Administration should consider shortening the 3-year pilot period to one or two years and allocating part of the \$800 million earmarked for the RCS Voucher Scheme for enhancing CCS. He requested the Administration to provide justifications if the Administration decided not to shorten the pilot period. PS(LW) reiterated that while the Administration would continue its effort to enhance CCS, it was also necessary to try and implement different measures to meet the service need of those elderly persons who were in need of subsidized RCS. Allocating part of the funds of the RCS Voucher Scheme to enhancing CCS would be unfair to those elderly persons who had waited for a long time for subsidized RCS places. It was also considered that a 3-year pilot period was appropriate to fully test the effectiveness of the RCS Voucher Scheme, which was new to elderly persons, their family members and service providers. She nevertheless would relay Mr LEUNG's concern about the duration of the pilot period to EC for its consideration.

13. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that to avoid a conflict of interests, case management services under both the RCS and CCS Voucher Schemes should be provided by a third party instead of service providers so that recommendations could be given to elderly persons for their best benefits. He urged the Administration to make reference to overseas experience in this regard. PS(LW) said that she would relay Dr CHEUNG's view to the Consultant Team and EC for its consideration.

14. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung said that many deputations and elderly persons reflected that more time and channels should be given to them for expressing views on the RCS Voucher Scheme. He asked if the Administration would carry out a more thorough public consultation exercise on the Scheme at the

Action

district level. Dr CK LAW responded that the Consultant Team had conducted questionnaire surveys with stakeholders in late 2014 and a public consultation exercise in early 2015 to collect stakeholders' views on the RCS Voucher Scheme. On these occasions, views and suggestions received by the Consultant Team were largely similar to those given by members' and deputations at the Panel meeting. If there were no new concerns and suggestions received at the Panel's next special meeting, extension of the consultation period might not be necessary.

Conclusion

15. In concluding the discussion, the Chairman said that there were divergent views among members and deputations on the RCS Voucher Scheme. On the one hand, the majority of members and deputations considered that the work of the RCS Voucher Scheme was carried out in a hasty manner. In addition, there were concerns about conflicts between the policies on RCS and CCS, and the timing for exploring the feasibility of the RCS Voucher Scheme when the CCS Voucher Scheme was still under review. On the other hand, some deputations held the view that the implementation of the RCS Voucher Scheme could help improve the service standard of private RCHEs. The Chairman asked the Administration to consider providing the Panel with the consultancy report on the RCS Voucher Scheme at the same time when it was submitted to EC, and briefing the Panel on how EC would take forward the RCS Voucher Scheme. He also requested the Administration to invite the Chairman or representative(s) of EC to attend the Panel's next special meeting. PS(LW) responded that the Chairman's invitation and requests would be relayed to EC for consideration.

Admin

(Post-meeting note: The Vice-Chairman of EC attended the Panel's special meeting on the RCS Voucher Scheme on 28 March 2015.)

II. Any other business

16. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 10:35 am.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
3 June 2015

Panel on Welfare Services

Special meeting on Monday, 23 March 2015 at 8:30 am

Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly

Summary of views and concerns expressed by deputations/individuals

No.	Deputation/individual	Views
1.	Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressed support for a Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service ("RCS") Voucher for the Elderly ("RCS Voucher Scheme"). • To upgrade service standard, residential care homes for the elderly ("RCHEs") should recruit more health care workers and registered nurses, provide more training for staff members and improve the complaint mechanism.
2.	Carer Alliance for the Dementia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC Paper No. CB(2)1062/14-15(01)
3.	Liberal Party Youth Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressed support for the RCS Voucher Scheme. • The Administration should formulate policies on long-term care services for the elderly and on the provision of RCS for elderly persons in public rental housing. It should also consider allowing RCHEs in the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme ("EBPS") to import foreign workers to address manpower shortage.
4.	香港安老服務協會	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressed support for the RCS Voucher Scheme. • All RCHEs should be invited to join the RCS Voucher Scheme. • More incentives should be provided to encourage more private RCHEs to join EBPS.
5.	長者服務大聯盟	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressed support for the RCS Voucher Scheme. • Elderly persons who acquired subsidized RCS and those who were living in private RCHEs in EBPS were receiving different levels of service due to different amount of subsidies. • In view of the serious shortage of RCS, the RCS Voucher Scheme should be implemented as soon as possible.
6.	爭取資助院舍聯席	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC Paper No. CB(2)1107/14-15(01)
7.	The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC Paper No. CB(2)1143/14-15(01)
8.	葵涌邨居民權益關注組	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC Paper No. CB(2)1143/14-15(02)
9.	Labour Rights' Commune	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC Paper No. CB(2)1143/14-15(03)
10.	The Salvation Army Carer Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC Paper No. CB(2)1143/14-15(04)
11.	Society for Community Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LC Paper No. CB(2)1062/14-15(02)
12.	Elderly Rights League (HK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RCS Voucher Scheme could not help elderly doubletons who were living in the community.

No.	Deputation/individual	Views
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The funds of the RCS Voucher Scheme should be used to increase the supply of other forms of subsidized RCS places.
13.	New People's Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effectiveness of the RCS Voucher Scheme was hinged on the service quality of RCHEs. The Administration should formulate specific measures to help improve the service quality of the residential care industry. For example, vocational training should be enhanced and foreign workers should be imported to address the problem of manpower shortage in RCHEs.
14.	關注家居照顧服務大聯盟	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LC Paper No. CB(2)1062/14-15(03)
15.	Hong Kong Social Security Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given that most of the elderly persons would like to age in place, the funds of the RCS Voucher Scheme should be used to strengthen community care services ("CCS").
16.	香港長者活力協會	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LC Paper No. CB(2)1143/14-15(05)
17.	Mr LAM Hon-wai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposed to the RCS Voucher Scheme as the objective and target beneficiaries of the Scheme were unclear. The Administration should formulate a holistic plan for the provision of elderly services. The proposal of the RCS Voucher Scheme should be revisited after the review of the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher for the Elderly had been conducted.
18.	Ms POON Tip-mui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposed to the RCS Voucher Scheme as the work of the Scheme was carried out in a hasty manner, thereby leaving many questions unanswered. Resources should be used to provide assistance for people who were most in need of help.
19.	Ms WONG Yuk-ching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objected to the RCS Voucher Scheme as the Scheme was of little help for elderly persons who were taken care of by their carers and for those who were not recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance.
20.	Ms TSUI Yee-nui	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns were raised about the service quality of RCHEs under the RCS Voucher Scheme and the future arrangement for the participating elderly persons after the 3-year pilot period.
21.	將軍澳民生關注會	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LC Paper No. CB(2)1149/14-15(01)
22.	Mr KWONG Wing-tai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LC Paper No. CB(2)1149/14-15(02)
23.	張榮燦先生	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As elderly persons had contributed to the development of Hong Kong, the Administration should address the demand for subsidized RCS, and strengthen CCS to help elderly persons age in the community.