

立法會 *Legislative Council*

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Panel on Welfare Services

Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 8 December 2014

Elderly Services Programme Plan

Purpose

This paper gives an account of past discussions at meetings of the Council and relevant committees on the Elderly Services Programme Plan ("the Programme Plan").

Background

2. According to the Administration, Hong Kong is facing an ageing population. In 2013, the number of elderly persons aged 65 and above stood at about 1.02 million, representing 14.2% of Hong Kong's population. According to the latest population projection by the Census and Statistics Department, the number of elderly persons will increase to 2.56 million by 2041, representing 30.2% of Hong Kong's population. Concurrently, the life expectancy of Hong Kong's population continues to increase. On average, men and women in Hong Kong today are expected to live 81.1 years and 86.7 years respectively.

3. With the combined effect of an ageing population and increasing longevity, there will be a pressing need for the Administration to enhance its medium to long-term planning for elderly services. In this connection, the Chief Executive ("CE") announced in his 2014 Policy Address that the Elderly Commission ("EC") would be commissioned to draw up the Programme Plan within two years. To take forward the task, EC has set up a dedicated working group. Besides, it would engage consultants to assist in collating and analyzing information related to the provision of long-term care ("LTC") services for the elderly persons, as well as engaging relevant stakeholders and other interested groups in the process.

Deliberations by Members

Coverage of the Programme Plan

4. Members had time and again urged the Administration to make early planning on the provision of elderly services. While agreeing that the formulation of the Programme Plan was necessary, Members considered that the Administration should assess the demand for residential care services ("RCS") and community care services ("CCS") for elderly persons and make corresponding planning on welfare premises, manpower and financial resources requirements.

5. The Administration advised that it had all along accorded high priority to address LTC needs of the elderly persons. In mapping out the Programme Plan, EC would look into the medium and long-term development of elderly services up to 2030 by taking into account the supply and demand of welfare premises for elderly services, related manpower needs, as well as the viability and desirability of different modes of service delivery. In considering the long-term development of elderly services, the consultant team engaged by EC would examine the impact of the growing elderly population on the existing services and explore measures for a sustainable development. EC would also look into the demand and supply of LTC services, taking into account the welfare facilities to be provided under the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses ("the Special Scheme"), under which social welfare organizations were encouraged to provide the necessary welfare facilities through in-situ expansion or redevelopment.

6. The Administration further advised that a number of schemes would be considered together with the relevant information and data (including the demand and supply of elderly services) in the wider context of the Programme Plan. For example, the Special Scheme, the Pilot Scheme on CCS Voucher for the Elderly, the Pilot Scheme on the Provision of Living Allowance to Carers of the Elderly Persons from Low Income Families under the Community Care Fund and the feasibility study of introducing the Voucher Scheme on RCS for the Elderly¹. In the course of formulating the Programme Plan, public consultation would be conducted.

7. Members took the view that the Programme Plan should not confine to studying RCS policies for the elderly but should also cover policies on housing, financial security, health and medical, psychological, employment

¹ CE announced in his 2014 Policy Address that EC had also been tasked to study the feasibility of introducing the Voucher Scheme on RCS for the Elderly and submit a report within a year's time in addition to the preparation of the Programme Plan.

and recreational needs of elderly persons. Some Members considered that instead of formulating the Programme Plan, the Administration should prepare a high-level blueprint of elderly care policy with input from relevant government bureaux/departments. The Administration advised that the Programme Plan would be prepared in accordance with the guiding principle of "Ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up". It had been committed to formulating elderly care policies holistically, having regard to considerations on different areas, including medical, housing, as well as population strategies, where appropriate.

8. Members considered that the existing provision of LTC services was fragmented with unnecessary categorization under "elderly" and "persons with disabilities", which was against the international trend of no distinct age limit. The Administration was urged to conduct a comprehensive review of its LTC policy with a view to offering services according to the needs of recipients, instead of their age. Members also considered that the Programme Plan should be prepared in tandem with the Rehabilitation Programme Plan, so that the Administration could map out holistically the direction of LTC policy according to the needs of recipients.

Motion passed by the Council

9. At its meeting on 11 June 2014, the Council passed a motion urging the Administration to -

- (a) immediately formulate a comprehensive elderly care policy, make detailed planning for elderly care services in the future and promote collaboration between the medical and welfare sectors; and
- (b) take the needs and LTC of the elderly persons as the basis, rather than adopting age as the sole criterion, to immediately formulate a comprehensive elderly care policy.

10. The Administration advised that it would continue to commit resources to elderly services, implement a host of new measures to provide more suitable services to elderly persons and enhance the planning of elderly services. When formulating the Programme Plan, EC would take into account the schemes mentioned in paragraph 6 above in the wider context of the Programme Plan. In addition, it would make reference to the issues highlighted in its past studies on LTC services for the elderly persons², and the views expressed by different stakeholders and concern groups on elderly care services.

² EC released the report on the Consultancy Study on RCS for the Elderly in 2009 and the report on the Consultancy Study on CCS for the Elderly in 2011.

Relevant papers

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

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
2 December 2014

Appendix

Relevant papers on Elderly Services Programme Plan

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Panel on Welfare Services	23 January 2014 (Item II)	Agenda Minutes
	10 March 2014 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes
Establishment Subcommittee of the Finance Committee	30 April 2014 (Item 3)	Agenda Minutes
Legislative Council	11 June 2014	Official Record of Proceedings Pages 6-76 Progress Report
Joint Subcommittee on Long-term Care Policy	24 July 2014	Report (issued on 30 July 2014)
Panel on Welfare Services	25 July 2014 (Item III)	Agenda Minutes

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