

For Information
on 12 January 2015

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services

Progress on the Implementation of Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the implementation of home care service for persons with severe disabilities (HCS).

Background

2. To strengthen the support for persons with severe physical disabilities and persons with severe intellectual disabilities, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) had, since March 2011, allocated grants from the Lotteries Fund to two non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for operating a three-year pilot scheme to provide a package of integrated home-based support services for persons with severe disabilities living in Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin, Kwai Tsing and Tuen Mun districts and waitlisting for subsidised residential care services. The aim of providing such services was to meet the personal care, nursing care and rehabilitation training needs of persons with severe disabilities waitlisting for subsidised residential care services, with a view to relieving the stress of their family members/carers and improving their quality of life.

3. As the pilot scheme had delivered positive outcomes and achieved its intended objectives, SWD regularised the HCS upon the expiry of the three-year pilot scheme in March 2014 with annual provision of about \$200 million, so as to extend the HCS to all districts in Hong Kong and to cover persons with severe disabilities not waitlisting for subsidised residential care services. We estimate that about 3 250 persons with severe disabilities will benefit from this initiative.

4. The target service users of HCS include –

- (a) persons with severe disabilities living in the community, i.e. persons with severe disabilities waitlisting for subsidised residential care service of Hostel for Severely Mentally Handicapped, Hostel for Severely Physically Handicapped or Care and Attention Home for Severely Disabled Persons, or assessed to be eligible for the service in accordance with the Assessment Tool for HCS; or
- (b) persons attending special schools for children with severe physical / intellectual disabilities; and
- (c) family members / carers of the above-mentioned persons with severe disabilities.

5. Six NGOs¹ are responsible for providing the regularised HCS, which has been extended to all districts in Hong Kong. The regularised HCS is co-ordinated by case managers according to the personal care plans drawn up by multi-disciplinary teams (including allied health personnel, nurses and social workers). These case managers adjust the care plans and make timely referrals taking into account the needs and training progress of the service users, whereas the multi-disciplinary teams draw up and implement the service plans which suit the needs of individual service users. Services provided include social work service, occupational therapy/physiotherapy rehabilitation training, home-based respite service, nursing care, personal care service, escort service, meal support service and carer support service.

¹ Districts served by the respective NGO operators are: Central and Western District, Eastern District, Southern District, Wanchai and Islands are served by Tung Wah Group of Hospitals; Kowloon City, Yau Tsim Mong, Sham Shui Po and Tsuen Wan are served by Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service; Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin served by Christian Family Service Centre; Shatin, Tai Po and North District are served by SAHK; Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai are served by Po Leung Kuk; and Tuen Mun and Kwai Tsing are served by The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council.

Delivery of Regularised HCS

Assessment Tool for Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities

6. In order to assess whether persons with severe disabilities not waitlisting for subsidised residential care services are in need of the HCS, SWD set up a working group comprising clinical psychologists, occupational therapists, nurses and social workers in May 2013 to devise the relevant assessment tool. The tool, formally adopted in March 2014, is used to conduct assessment by making reference to the standardised assessment tool for residential services for people with disabilities.

7. The aim of the assessment is to determine whether HCS applicants aged 15 or above are in need of the HCS by assessing three important domains of their daily lives, namely nursing care need, functional impairment and challenging behaviour. The assessors must either be social workers who have been trained to use the standardised assessment tool for residential services for people with disabilities, or other allied health professionals including physiotherapists, occupational therapists and nurses. For persons with severe disabilities aged 15 or below, we accept assessments and referrals made by the relevant professionals of special schools, including school social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

Publicity and Promotion of the HCS

8. SWD and the operating NGOs have been actively promoting the HCS at the central and district levels respectively after the regularisation of the HCS on 1 March 2014.

9. Pamphlets and posters for the HCS were produced by SWD and distributed to various service units in different districts. Moreover, SWD sent letters to referring social workers asking them to recommend the HCS to about 2 900 persons who are waiting for residential care homes for persons with severe disabilities. Letters were also issued to 68 private residential care homes for persons with disabilities to provide more information about the HCS for their staff, so that they could recommend the service to the residents and their families.

10. At the district level, the operating NGOs paid visits to various District Coordinating Committees under the District Social Welfare Offices of SWD, hospitals, social service units, self-help organisations and special schools, etc. to introduce the HCS.

Service Utilisation

11. As at end-November 2014, a total of 1 118 persons with severe disabilities benefited from the HCS. Service statistics indicate that persons with severe disabilities have greater needs for rehabilitation training and nursing care services. From March to end-November 2014, the operating NGOs provided more than 8 100 rehabilitation training sessions and over 6 700 nursing care sessions, and delivered social work intervention service to more than 1 500 service users and their families/carers as well as home respite service to 212 persons with severe disabilities. Furthermore, a total of about 96 support activities were provided for the carers by the operating NGOs

12. As reflected by the operating NGOs since the implementation of the HCS, service users have positive comments on the HCS and remark that the HCS could cater to their nursing care and rehabilitation training needs and has improved their quality of life. SWD will closely monitor the implementation of the HCS, review from time to time the service content (including service targets and promotion activities), and conduct meetings regularly with the operating NGOs and service user groups to ensure effective service delivery.

Advice Sought

13. Members are invited to note the progress on the implementation of the regularised HCS.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau
Social Welfare Department
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