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Panel on Welfare Services

**Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat
for the meeting on 12 January 2015**

Home care services for persons with severe disabilities

Purpose

This paper gives a brief account of past discussions of the Panel on Welfare Services and the former Joint Subcommittee on Long-term Care Policy regarding home care services for persons with severe disabilities.

Background

2. In March 2011, the Administration launched a three-year Pilot Scheme on Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities Scheme ("the Pilot HCS Scheme") to provide a package of home-based personal care, rehabilitation training and nursing care services 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 ("RCS") of hostel for severely physically handicapped, hostel for severely mentally handicapped and care and attention home for severely disabled persons. The Pilot HCS Scheme seeks to facilitate persons with disabilities to continue to live at home while waiting for RCS, and help relieve stress of their family carers. It is expected that 540 cases can be served upon the full operation of the Pilot HCS Scheme. As at end-February 2013, a total of 459 persons with severe disabilities had been served by referrals.

3. According to the Administration, as the Pilot HCS Scheme has achieved its intended objective and received positive response, an additional recurrent funding of \$203 million has been earmarked to

regularize the services upon the expiry of the pilot period in March 2014. The services will be extended to persons with severe disabilities in all districts, irrespective of whether they are on the waiting list for RCS. It is estimated that about 3 250 persons with severe disabilities will benefit from the services each year.

4. The Administration advised that a monthly fee of \$988 is charged for a full package of services. For service users who do not need a full package of services, they are charged at an hourly rate of \$33 for personal care service, escort service, home respite service and rehabilitation training. They are charged \$42 and \$51 per visit respectively for nursing care and home visit by occupational therapist/physiotherapist.

Deliberations by Members

Coverage of the HCS Scheme

5. Given the large number of persons with disabilities waiting for subvented RCS, some Members expressed concern about the small number of users the HCS Scheme intended to serve after its regularization. The Administration advised that, according to the experience of the Pilot HCS Scheme, not all the persons with severe disabilities on the waiting list for subvented RCS required home care services.

6. Pointing out that the unit cost would be reduced after the HCS Scheme had been regularized, some Members expressed concern that the scope and quality of home care services might be adversely affected because of a lower unit cost. According to the Administration, having capitalized on the experience of the Pilot HCS Scheme, it had included the most needed services in the regular HCS Scheme. A simplified assessment tool would be used to facilitate a quicker assessment of the applicants' eligibility for the services.

7. Concerns were also raised about the provision of home-making and meal delivery services for persons with severe disabilities. The Administration advised that as most of the persons with severe disabilities lived with their family members, there were only a small number of requests for meal delivery services during the pilot period. Although there were no kitchen facilities under the HCS Scheme, with the co-ordination of case managers, home-making and meal delivery services would be arranged upon the users' requests. According to the latest figures, four users had used meal delivery services for a total of 33 times.

As at end-June 2014, some 700 persons had used the home care services under the HCS Scheme. The Administration would step up the publicity for the HCS Scheme, with a view to benefitting more persons with severe disabilities.

Relevant papers

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

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
6 January 2015

Appendix

Relevant papers on home care services for persons with severe disabilities

Committee	Date of meeting	Paper
Joint Subcommittee on Long-term Care Policy	23 April 2013 (Item I)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Welfare Services	10 March 2014 (Item V)	Agenda Minutes
Panel on Welfare Services	25 July 2014 (Item IV)	Agenda Minutes

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