January 28th, 2016

Clerk to Panel on Welfare Services
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central , Hong Kong

Re: Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly (Second Phase)

Our Hong Kong Foundation fully supports the implementation of the Pilot Scheme of Community Care Service Voucher Elderly (Phase II). The voucher scheme, which adopts a "money-follow-user" approach, provides users with the freedom to choose the services they need and improves services quality by creating a competitive market.

Based on the interim report released by Sau Po Center of Ageing (SPCA) at the University of Hong Kong in November 2015 and initial consultations with other stakeholders, Our Hong Kong Foundation would like to express our preliminary considerations for Phase II of the program. The implementation strategy of some of these considerations below may be further discussed in our upcoming research report on elderly healthcare policy, depending on the findings of our ongoing analyses. The preliminary considerations are: 1) Improve flexibility in voucher service provision, 2) Facilitate coordination among service providers, 3) Increase the number of service units with evidence-based planning and 4) Establish an online platform for information sharing.

1) **Improve flexibility in voucher service provision**
    The voucher services are currently delivered in two modes. Voucher holders can

either choose to enjoy part time day care services or a part time day care mode plus home-based services. According to SPCA, caregivers of voucher holders expressed that the modes of services offered are limited, especially for elders with cognitive impairment who need full-time and multiple types of care. As such, we recommend the government to improve the flexibility in voucher services provision by expanding the range of services covered by the vouchers.

2) Facilitate coordination among recognized service providers

The service options provided by individual recognized service providers are fragmented, and as a result, voucher holders find it difficult to obtain personalized care. For instance, some of the day care centers did not offer services for elders with cognitive impairment. Other caregivers expressed that they needed to pay a top up fee in order to received personalized care for their parents. In response to the feedback, we suggest the government to come up with a plan to facilitate the coordination of services provided by recognized day care centers, so that, the voucher services can meet the specific needs of individual elders.

3) Increase the number of service units with evidence-based planning

With reference to SPCA, some caregivers expressed that there were no service units near their homes; hence, it was difficult for them to utilize the day care services. We urge the government to conduct an in-depth analysis to decide on where to introduce additional service units in all districts. A comprehensive service allocation analysis will provide information for the government to decide on the most suitable locations to establish new day care service units.

4) Establish an online platform for information sharing

Accessibility to information is necessary for voucher holders to choose the type of services that best fit their needs. Having access to information will also increases competition among service providers. As a result, vouchers holders can enjoy personalized and good quality services at a relatively low cost. According to SPCA, voucher users expressed that they had limited information and knowledge regarding

the services provided by the community day care centers. Others expressed that they found the information packet too difficult and complicated to digest. Considering the issue, we suggest the government to establish an online platform that provides voucher users with rich information about the voucher scheme and services offered by different day care centers.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Yours faithfully,

Angel Lai
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Our Hong Kong Foundation