

**For information  
on 13 February 2017**

**Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services**

**Care support services provided for elderly persons  
discharged from public hospitals after treatment**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the Government's plan to invite the Community Care Fund (CCF) to consider implementing a new pilot scheme to provide the necessary transitional care and support for elderly persons newly discharged from public hospitals after treatment.

**Background**

2. "Ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up" is the Government's elderly care policy. In fact, ageing in place is the cherished wish of most elderly persons who would like to age in a familiar environment, where they can continue to receive support from their families, friends and neighbours. With adequate community care and support, many of the elderly persons with long-term care needs can continue to age in their own homes without the need to be prematurely admitted to residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs).

3. In January 2014, the Chief Executive announced in his Policy Address that the Government would task the Elderly Commission (EC) to formulate the Elderly Services Programme Plan (ESPP), so as to strengthen the medium-to-long-term planning of elderly services. Having completed the first two stages of public engagement exercise, the EC has drawn up initial recommendations of the ESPP and conducted the third stage of public engagement exercise from October 2016 to February 2017 to gauge stakeholders' views on the various initial recommendations.

4. Views gathered from the public engagement exercise show that the public and stakeholders generally support the policy of “ageing in place as the core, institutional care as back-up” and consider that community care services should be strengthened. In particular, there are views that for some elderly persons who have been admitted to hospital for treatment due to illness or accident, their family members may not be able to take sufficient care of them upon discharge due to work commitments or financial reasons, rendering it necessary for the elderly persons to be admitted to RCHEs to receive residential care services. If suitable care and support is timely provided to these elderly at the initial stage of the post-discharge transitional period, premature or unnecessary institutionalisation of elderly persons can be reduced. This would enable elderly persons to age in place. The EC agrees with the above view and it has been proposed in the initial recommendations of the ESPP that transitional care support to elderly persons discharged from hospitals should be enhanced.<sup>1</sup>

5. The Chief Executive announced in his Policy Address in January 2017 that before the scheduled completion of the report on the ESPP in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2017, the Government will seize each and every opportunity to improve elderly services, particularly community care services. One of the initiatives is to invite the CCF to consider implementing a new pilot scheme to support elderly persons discharged from public hospitals after treatment.

### **The new Pilot Scheme on Support for Elderly Persons Discharged from Public Hospitals After Treatment (Pilot Scheme)**

#### **Overview**

6. At present, the Government, in collaboration with the Hospital Authority (HA), implements the Integrated Discharge Support Programme for Elderly Patients (IDSP). The service targets are mainly elderly persons newly discharged from HA hospitals who have been assessed by HA medical staff to be at high risk of unplanned re-admission to hospital. The programme provides a range of support services (including discharge planning, transitional

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<sup>1</sup> Initial recommendation 8b of the ESPP: transitional care support to elderly persons discharged from hospitals should be enhanced to assist them in staying in the community and prevent premature institutionalisation.

rehabilitation service, home care services and carer training) for these elderly persons, mainly aiming at reducing their unplanned hospital re-admission risk.

7. The Government plans to invite the CCF to consider implementing a new pilot scheme to support elderly persons who are not covered under the existing IDSP and are assessed to be in need of transitional care and support (including temporary residential care and/or community care and support services). The Pilot Scheme aims at enabling them to continue ageing in place in a familiar community after receiving the necessary services during the transitional period, thus preventing their premature admission into RCHEs.

8. The new Pilot Scheme will adopt a “medical-social collaboration” approach. Elderly persons in need of transitional service (except those covered under IDSP) will be referred by HA to participate in the new Pilot Scheme, so as to avoid their premature admission into RCHEs. This is consistent with the cherished wish of elderly persons in general to age in place as well as the Government’s policy objective of “ageing in place as the core”. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) will set up a Centralised Team mainly comprised of social workers. The Centralised Team will work closely with HA to plan the post-discharge transitional support services for the elderly persons referred by HA and arrange them to receive services through suitable service providers. During the process of formulating the support plans, the Centralised Team will help review the post-discharge support for elderly persons, provide information on service providers, assist elderly persons in selecting service providers and service packages that suit their needs, etc. Under the Pilot Scheme, each eligible elderly person will be given a service voucher. Throughout the delivery of services, the Centralised Team and the service providers will conduct regular case conferences to monitor the elderly persons’ needs for community care and support services.

### **Implementation Details**

9 The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) plans to make an application to the CCF to implement the new Pilot Scheme. Details are set out below.

#### **(a) Service Targets**

As mentioned above, the Pilot Scheme aims to provide support for elderly

persons newly discharged from HA hospitals (except for those not covered under the existing IDSP) who are assessed by HA medical staff to be in need of transitional care and support (i.e. need to receive temporary residential care and/or community care and support services). The assessment will be completed prior to or around the time of discharge as far as possible. As a preliminary estimate, the new Pilot Scheme can provide support for a minimum of 3 200 elderly patients in total.

(b) Service Scope and Type

Under the new Pilot Scheme, eligible elderly patients newly discharged from hospital can, according to their discharge support plans formulated by SWD's Centralised Team and HA, generally receive transitional care and support in the community for not more than six months in total, including temporary residential care and/or community care and support services.<sup>2</sup> For temporary residential care services, eligible elderly persons will be issued service vouchers at a single value<sup>3</sup> and can choose among the eligible RCHEs to receive temporary residential care services. As regards community care and support services<sup>4</sup>, the values of the service vouchers issued to elderly persons will be the same as those of the existing community care service vouchers, i.e. service vouchers with five different values, so as to cater for the individual needs of different elderly persons.<sup>5</sup> The RSPs are required to provide price lists setting out the service fee of each community care and support service item for service users' reference and selection.<sup>6</sup> The voucher values will be adjusted annually according to the Composite Consumer Price Index. Service users may also make top-up payments to purchase additional services (above the voucher value) or services outside the scope under the Pilot

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<sup>2</sup> Actual service period depends on the varying needs of individual elderly persons. The service providers may flexibly extend the service period as appropriate in accordance with the actual situation. In addition, HA will also arrange outreach rehabilitation services for the elderly persons if necessary.

<sup>3</sup> Current value is \$12,416 at 2016-17 price level. The voucher value will be pegged to the price level of an EA1 residential care place in the urban area under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme.

<sup>4</sup> Community care and support services include basic and special nursing care, personal care, rehabilitation exercises, day care services, carer support services, respite services, counselling services, 24-hour emergency support, home environmental risk assessment and home modifications, home-making and provision of meals, escort services, etc.

<sup>5</sup> The present values being \$8,600, \$7,300, \$6,500, \$5,200 and \$3,600 at 2016-17 price level.

<sup>6</sup> Service fee levels for different service items have to be approved by SWD. RSPs can set the service fee for individual community care and support service items within the permitted ceiling prices recognised by SWD. The Pilot Scheme will make reference to the price list of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly.

Scheme.

(c) Recognised Service Providers

SWD will invite eligible RCHEs<sup>7</sup> to participate in the new Pilot Scheme and provide temporary residential care services through their non-subsidised places. For community care and support services, SWD will invite the existing Recognised Service Providers (RSPs) under the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly to participate in and serve as RSPs under the new Pilot Scheme.

(d) Co-payment and Means Test

Drawing reference from the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly, the new Pilot Scheme will adopt six co-payment categories on a sliding scale. Specifically, the amount of co-payment applicable to elderly persons will be set at 5%, 8%, 12%, 16%, 25% or 40% of the voucher value, whereas the remaining voucher value will be paid by the Government. In other words, the Government will subsidise at least 60% and up to a maximum of 95% of the voucher value. Please see Annex for details.

(e) Post-transitional Arrangements

Under the new Pilot Scheme, in the course of service delivery in the transitional period (normally no more than six months of care and support), social workers of the Centralised Team will regularly assist in reviewing various aspects of the elderly persons, deploy relevant assessment tools to evaluate their post-transitional service needs, and make service referrals as appropriate, including referrals to Integrated Home Care Services (Ordinary Cases). If an elderly person is in need of long-term care services, he/she will be arranged to undergo assessment under the Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services and the social worker will then help him/her to apply for existing regular community care and support services, such as day care services, Enhanced Home and Community Care Services or the Pilot Scheme on

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<sup>7</sup> Including subvented homes, contract homes, self-financing homes that meet EA1 standard and EA1 homes under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme.

Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly, etc. The aim is to seamlessly connect the elderly persons to the required services where practicable so as to provide them with sustained support to age in place. Under special circumstances, the social workers and the RSPs may, according to the actual circumstances of individual elderly persons, have discretion to slightly extend the service period for providing transitional care and support beyond a period of six months.

### **Implementation Timetable**

10. LWB plans to submit the proposal to the CCF Task Force under the Commission of Poverty in May 2017 for consideration. Subject to the views of the Task Force, the proposal will be submitted to the Commission on Poverty for endorsement and for CCF funding. The Government proposes that the Pilot Scheme to be rolled out in the first quarter of 2018 for a period of three years. The estimated funding requirement is around \$220 million (including transitional residential care and community care and support services, staffing expenses and administration costs). SWD will commission a consultant to conduct an evaluation on the effectiveness of the Pilot Scheme, covering such areas as whether the new Pilot Scheme can effectively reduce premature institutionalisation of elderly persons and related matters. The evaluation is expected to be completed by end-2019. Long-term planning of the relevant services will be conducted depending on the results of the evaluation.

### **Advice Sought**

11. Members are invited to comment on the implementation of the Pilot Scheme.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau  
Social Welfare Department  
February 2017**

**Co-payment Categories for Voucher Holders under  
the Pilot Scheme on Support for Elderly Persons Discharged from Public Hospitals After Treatment  
(Price Level: 2016-17)**

Co-payment Category	I Designated Co-payment Category for CSSA voucher holders	II	III	IV	V	VI <sup>1</sup>
<b>Transitional Residential Care Services<sup>2</sup></b>						
<b>Co-payment %</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>40%</b>
Household Size <sup>3</sup>	CSSA Recipient	75% of MMDHI	>75% - 100% of MMDHI	> 100% - 150% of MMDHI	> 150% - 175% of MMDHI	Exceeding 175% of MMDHI
1		≤\$6,450	\$6,451- \$8,600	\$8,601 - \$12,900	\$12,901 – \$15,050	> \$15,050
2		50% of MMDHI	> 50% - 75% of MMDHI	> 75% - 125% of MMDHI	> 125% - 150% of MMDHI	Above 150% of MMDHI
3		≤\$9,500	\$9,501 - \$14,250	\$14,251 - \$23,750	\$23,751 - \$28,500	> \$28,500
4		≤\$14,000	\$14,001 - \$21,000	\$21,001 - \$35,000	\$35,001 - \$42,000	> \$42,000
5		≤\$19,000	\$19,001 - \$28,500	\$28,501 - \$47,500	\$47,501 - \$57,000	> \$57,000
5		≤\$23,700	\$23,701 - \$35,550	\$35,551 - \$59,250	\$59,251 - \$71,100	> \$71,100
Monthly Voucher Value	Co-payment Amount					
\$12,416	\$620	\$990	\$1,490	\$1,990	\$3,100	\$4,970

Co-payment Category	I Designated Co-payment Category for CSSA voucher holders	II	III	IV	V	VI <sup>1</sup>
<b>Community Care Services<sup>2</sup></b>						
Co-payment %	5%	8%	12%	16%	25%	40%
Household Size <sup>3</sup>	CSSA Recipient	75% of MMDHI	>75% - 100% of MMDHI	> 100% - 150% of MMDHI	> 150% - 175% of MMDHI	Exceeding 175% of MMDHI
1		≤ \$6,450	\$6,451- \$8,600	\$8,601 - \$12,900	\$12,901 – \$15,050	> \$15,050
2		50% of MMDHI	> 50% - 75% of MMDHI	> 75% - 125% of MMDHI	> 125% - 150% of MMDHI	Above 150% of MMDHI
3		≤ \$9,500	\$9,501 - \$14,250	\$14,251 - \$23,750	\$23,751 - \$28,500	> \$28,500
4		≤ \$14,000	\$14,001 - \$21,000	\$21,001 - \$35,000	\$35,001 - \$42,000	> \$42,000
5		≤ \$19,000	\$19,001 - \$28,500	\$28,501 - \$47,500	\$47,501 - \$57,000	> \$57,000
5		≤ \$23,700	\$23,701 - \$35,550	\$35,551 - \$59,250	\$59,251 - \$71,100	> \$71,100
Monthly Voucher Value	Co-payment Amounts for Different Voucher Values					
\$8,600	\$430	\$690	\$1,030	\$1,380	\$2,150	\$3,440
\$7,300	\$370	\$580	\$880	\$1,170	\$1,830	\$2,920
\$6,500	\$330	\$520	\$780	\$1,040	\$1,630	\$2,600
\$5,200	\$260	\$420	\$620	\$830	\$1,300	\$2,080
\$3,600	\$180	\$290	\$430	\$580	\$900	\$1,440

<sup>1</sup> This category includes the applicants who are unwilling to undergo the means test.

<sup>2</sup> The Centralised Team of SWD will issue service vouchers to eligible applicants who will receive temporary residential and/or community care services according to their needs.

<sup>3</sup> Based on MMDHI of the third quarter of 2016.