

For discussion  
On 12 November 2018

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES**

**Progress of the Formulation of a new  
Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the progress of the formulation of a new Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan (RPP) and its early deliverables.

**Background**

2. RPP sets out the strategic directions as well as short, medium and long term measures to address various service needs of persons with disabilities, which include residential and community support services, employment support services, provision of barrier-free facilities and transport, healthcare, education, sports and arts, etc. RPP currently covers 10 types of disabilities, including Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, autism, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, physical disability, mental illness, Specific Learning Difficulties, speech impairment, visceral disability and visual impairment. RPP was last reviewed and updated in 2007. To keep our rehabilitation services abreast with the times, the Chief Executive announced in the 2017 Policy Address that the Government had asked the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (RAC) to commence work in formulating a new RPP.

3. The RAC set up a Review Working Group and five Task Forces to take forward the task, and commissioned the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Consulting Team) to provide consultancy service to the Review Working Group and to launch public engagement exercise. The Consulting Team also assists the Review Working Group in consolidating the findings of the Task Forces on specialised issues, with a view to mapping out the overall strategic directions.

## **Guiding Principles**

4. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) has entered into force for Hong Kong since August 2008. The purpose of UNCRPD is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of rights and freedoms by persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. The RAC will abide by the core values of “diverse needs of persons with disabilities”, “individual autonomy and independence” and “barrier-free environment, transport and information” enshrined in UNCRPD. In this connection, in the formulation of the new RPP, the RAC has adopted the following guiding principles –

- (a) adopting a life span approach in examining the needs of persons with disabilities in different aspects in different stages of their lives;
- (b) exploring cross-sectoral collaboration in providing services for persons with disabilities; and
- (c) conducting in-depth and extensive consultation and research work.

5. Considering the core values of UNCRPD, the RAC has also asked the Consulting Team to prioritise its study on measures to strengthen community support services for persons with disabilities and their carers, such that persons with disabilities can choose to continue to live in the community, hence postponing the need for admission to residential homes.

## **Public Engagement**

6. We are adopting a three-stage public engagement exercise:

- (a) Scoping Stage: to define the scope of the new RPP and identify the key issues that need to be addressed, to commence discussion with various sectors of the community and to collate their views;
- (b) Formulation of Recommendations Stage: to analyse the key issues identified and examine the overall direction and possible options for consideration to address these issues, with a view to establishing the vision, mission and strategic directions of the new RPP, as well as the specific recommendations under these strategic directions; and
- (c) Consensus Building Stage: to discuss with various sectors of the community on the final recommendations of the new RPP and build up a consensus on these recommendations.

7. The public engagement exercise for the Scoping Stage began in March 2018 and was completed in June 2018. More than 1 000 persons participated in the public engagement exercise (including district fora, stakeholder meetings, focus group sessions) and 70 written submissions were received during the period. The Report on Scoping Stage prepared by the Consulting Team will shortly be uploaded to the website of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University ([www.rs.polyu.edu.hk/rpp](http://www.rs.polyu.edu.hk/rpp)) for public view.

8. In view of the opinions collected at the Scoping Stage, the Consulting Team recommends that priority should be accorded to the following 36 key issues under 10 themes for the next stage of public engagement exercise:

<b>Proposed Themes</b>	
Theme 1	Definition of persons with disabilities
	1. Need for new categories of disabilities
	2. Need for a breakdown of more specific disability categories from existing categories or updating the description of certain disability categories
	3. Study of the experience of other countries/economies in introducing the World Health Organisation's "International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health" for disability classification and assessment
Theme 2	Service planning for community support services and residential care services and interface between the two
	4. Service capacity of existing community support service centres (e.g. District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities (DSCs), Day Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities, Day Care Services for the Disabled, Social and Recreation Centre for the Disabled, Day Activity Centres (DACs), Parents/Relatives Resources Centre (PRCs), etc.) and the appropriate mode of interface among these centres/ services
	5. Need for setting up specialised service centres for specific types of disabilities
	6. Service capacity and service targets of home-based support services

<b>Proposed Themes</b>	
	7. Demand for residential care services after strengthening of community support services
	8. Future planning parameters and basis for community support facilities (including the application of technology)
	9. Future planning parameters and basis for residential care facilities (including the application of technology)
	10. Carers' support (including direct support for carers themselves and indirect support through services such as respite service and emergency placement service for the persons of disabilities under their care)
	11. Consolidation of various cash subsidy schemes under existing Community Care Fund pilot schemes <sup>1</sup> and feasibility of introducing care service voucher
	12. Support for self-help organisations (including funding, premises and manpower)
<b>Theme 3</b>	<b>Supply of manpower for rehabilitation and care services</b>
	13. Projection of overall manpower requirements, including allied health professionals (e.g. nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech therapists, clinical/educational psychologists, etc.) and frontline staff (e.g. personal care workers, health workers, special child care workers, etc.)
	14. Measures to increase manpower supply
	15. Measures to increase the flexibility of service units to employ and mobilise professionals/care staff
<b>Theme 4</b>	<b>Ageing of persons with disabilities</b>
	16. Measures to promote health awareness in residential care homes and community to handle and alleviate early onset of ageing and other health-related problems

<sup>1</sup> These schemes include "Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Low-income Carers of Persons with Disabilities", "Special Care Subsidy for the Severely Disabled" and "Pilot scheme on providing subsidy for Higher Disability allowance recipients in paid employment to hire carers".

<b>Proposed Themes</b>	
	17. Types of special services to be provided in residential care homes (e.g. professional services for handling swallowing problems, outreaching medical and rehabilitation services, etc.)
	18. Optimisation of vocational rehabilitation pathway, including a review on the training and care needs of ageing service users of Sheltered Workshop
<b>Theme 5</b>	<b>Prevention, identification and medical rehabilitation</b>
	19. Strengthening early identification and assessment of children with special needs
	20. Measures to allow persons with mental health needs to obtain early and appropriate information and services
	21. Reasonable accommodation measures for persons with disabilities to obtain medical services (including dental services and supporting arrangements for hospitalisation)
<b>Theme 6</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>
	22. Accessibility of community/living environment through improvement of environment/facilities and application of innovative technology and use of assistive devices
	23. Accessibility of transportation, including the positioning of and interface between barrier-free public transport system and Rehabus service, as well as application of technology to enhance efficiency and service quality
	24. Access to information (e.g. Web accessibility) and services (e.g. banking service) and application of technology to enhance access
<b>Theme 7</b>	<b>Employment Support</b>
	25. Review of existing employment support measures (including future development of social enterprises) and formulation of new employment support measures (having regard to an increasing number of persons with disabilities)

<b>Proposed Themes</b>	
	acquiring higher education and advancement in technology)
	26. How to establish “Disability Inclusive Culture” among enterprises (instead of “Corporate Social Responsibility”) and to promote “reasonable accommodation” measures in the workplace
	27. Analysis of the pros and cons and implications of new policies advocated by some stakeholders (e.g. employment quota for persons with disabilities and wage subsidy)
<b>Theme 8</b>	<b>Mental Wellness</b>
	28. Measures to enhance service capacity and quality of services to cope with common mental disorder (particularly depression) through collaboration among medical, social welfare and education sectors
	29. Measures to facilitate recovery and social integration of mentally ill patients
	30. Review of service positioning, service targets, service delivery model of the Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness (ICCMW) and their collaboration with other sectors and service units
<b>Theme 9</b>	<b>Special Needs</b>
	31. Supporting models for pre-school rehabilitation services and bridging services for children with special needs from kindergarten to Primary One
	32. Supporting models for students with special education needs in primary and secondary schools
	33. Support for graduates with special education needs (including continuous education needs and career planning)

<b>Proposed Themes</b>	
Theme 10	Disability Inclusive Culture
	34. Measures to enhance public education (including the further promotion of UNCRPD, mental health and guide dog services)
	35. Measures to promote the participation of persons with disabilities in arts and sports
	36. Accessible entertainment and information, including the promotion of sign language, audio description and easy read format

### **Early Deliverables**

9. Considering the views expressed by many persons with disabilities and stakeholders in the Scoping Stage, the Chief Executive announced in the 2018 Policy Address that the Government will strengthen a range of community support services for persons with disabilities and their families, strengthening pre-school rehabilitation services for children with special needs, as well as support in other aspects before the completion of the new RPP.

10. The relevant new initiatives as announced in the 2018 Policy Address and Policy Agenda are summarised below:

#### ***Community Support Services***

- Increasing the number of DSCs by five centres, from existing 16 centres to 21 centres in the future; and to enhance the rehabilitation training service of these centres in order to enhance service capacity and quality of DSCs;
- Increasing the number of Support Centres for Persons with Autism from three to five, which will be distributed in Hong Kong, Kowloon and New Territories; and enhance the manpower of the existing centres to strengthen support for persons with autism and their parents/carers;
- Increasing the service places for home-based rehabilitation support services for persons with disabilities by 1 800, from existing 4 000

places to 5 800 places through new resources and redeployment of existing resources, and to strengthen transport support for the home-based services;

- Increasing the number of PRCs for persons with disabilities from existing six centres<sup>2</sup> to 19 centres; and to set up specialised Ethnic Minorities (EMs) units in five of these centres to step up community support for EM families; and
- Enhancing speech therapy services for ageing service users and persons with severe disabilities through DSCs, Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities and Integrated Support Service for Persons with Severe Physical Disabilities so as to assist them in dealing with speech and swallowing problems; and extending speech therapy services for ageing service users living in Care and Attention Homes for the Aged Blind, Long Stay Care Homes and Supported Hostels.

### ***Increasing Rehabilitation Service Places and Application of Gerontechnology***

- Implementing a new phase of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses<sup>3</sup>, under which targeted assistance is provided for participating non-governmental organisations during the planning or development process. ;
- Increasing the number of places of pre-school rehabilitation service, day service and residential service, as well as increasing the number of subsidised places under the Bought Place Scheme for Private Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities; and
- Launching the \$1 billion Innovation and Technology Fund for application in December 2018 to subsidise elderly and rehabilitation service units to try out and procure/rent technology products, so as to improve the lives of service users as well as reduce the burden and stress on care staff and carers.

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<sup>2</sup> One of them is a dedicated PRC for ex-mentally ill persons.

<sup>3</sup> The scheme aims at increasing the provision of much-needed welfare facilities, in particular additional places of elderly, rehabilitation and child welfare services, through applications for expansion, redevelopment or new development on the sites owned by the participating organisations.



## *Special Needs*

- Regularising on-site pre-school rehabilitation services (OPRS) in 2018/19 school year and increasing the number of service places from about 3 000 at present to about 5 000 in October 2018, which will be further increased to 7 000 in October 2019;
- Enhancing the professional and support services provided under the OPRS, including strengthening the establishments of speech therapist and social worker of the inter-disciplinary service teams, and setting up mobile training centres;
- Implementing a pilot project, through the Lotteries Fund, on the provision of support for children who show signs of special needs and are waiting for assessment in kindergartens (KGs) or KG-cum-Child Care Centres (CCCs);
- Enhancing the mechanism for transfer of information on children with special needs from operators of pre-school rehabilitation services to primary schools in the 2018/19 school year, so as to enable primary schools to plan ahead and provide appropriate support for these children; and exploring ways to provide appropriate bridging and support services for children with special needs when they proceed to Primary One;
- Enhancing social work services of Special Child Care Centres (SCCCs) and Residential SCCC and strengthening care and nursing support for children with severe disabilities receiving residential care services;
- providing subsidy for special child care centres and early education and training centres to strengthen support for pre-school EM children with special needs
- launching a three-year pilot scheme on social work service for pre-primary institutions<sup>4</sup> in the 2018/19 school year through the allocation by the Lotteries Fund.

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<sup>4</sup> The pilot scheme will provide social work service in phases for about 150 000 pre-school children and their families in more than 700 subsidised/aided CCCs, KGs and KG-cum-CCCs. The pilot scheme will be implemented in three phases with the first phase to be launched in February 2019, and the second and third phases are expected to be launched in August 2019 and August 2020 respectively.

## *Accessibility*

- Commissioning a consultancy study on the accessibility of the community/living environment in Hong Kong with reference to standards and best practices in overseas cities with a view to formulating strategy and recommending practical measures to facilitate persons with disabilities to lead an independent life in the community.

## *Mental Wellness*

- Expanding the target groups of ICCMWs<sup>5</sup> to cover all secondary school students with mental health needs and through community mental health support services ranging from early prevention to risk management, such as casework counseling, therapeutic groups, occupational therapy, etc., to strengthen professional support for them and to assist the needy ones in their transition to appropriate adult support services.

## *Employment Support*

- Conducting a review on the training and care needs of ageing service users of DAC cum Hostel for Severely Mentally Handicapped Persons and Sheltered Workshop/Integrated Vocational Rehabilitation Services Centre cum Hostel for Moderately Mentally Handicapped Persons so as to explore the need and feasibility of developing a new service mode.

## **Way Forward**

11. We will continue to collate views from stakeholders through different modes including public fora and seminars in the next stage of public engagement exercise and to make concerted efforts with relevant stakeholders, Government Bureaux/Departments and committees in the formulation of a new RPP.

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<sup>5</sup> ICCMWs provide mental health support services for ex-mentally ill persons and persons with suspected mental health problems aged 15 or above to enhance social support and re-integration of ex-mentally ill persons into the community.

## **Advice Sought**

12. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau  
Social Welfare Department  
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