

Minutes of Panel on Welfare Services Meeting – 20 April 2005

Provision of a monthly supplement to CSSA recipients who are 100% disabled, or who require constant attendance and are not living in institutions

A. Extending Portable Comprehensive Social Security Assistance scheme to disabled CSSA recipients who did not necessarily have to meet the age requirement of 60 or above

The Portable Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (PCSSA) Scheme was introduced in 1997 to provide an option for elderly people to continue to receive CSSA after they have chosen to move permanently to Guangdong Province. In taking up this scheme, elderly CSSA recipients are given the standard elderly rates and the annual supplement, but not the other special grants payable in Hong Kong.

2. Regarding the suggestion of extending the PCSSA to disabled CSSA recipients so that they can also take up residence in the Mainland, the circumstances regarding the disabled recipients may be quite different from those pertaining to elderly recipients. Many of the disabled recipients may have health and mobility problems and may require frequent local medical attention and rehabilitation services. Hence, relocation to the Mainland may not be a viable option.

3. Taking into account the above consideration, the Administration considers that it is not appropriate to extend the PCSSA Scheme to the disabled.

B. Further relaxing the eligibility for Higher Disability Allowance (HDA) under the Social Security Allowance scheme

4. Eligibility for HDA is assessed as being severely disabled (being in a position broadly equivalent to a person with a 100% loss of earning capacity according to the criteria in the First Schedule of the Employees' Compensation Ordinance), in need of constant attendance from others, and not receiving care in a Government or subvented residential or medical institution. Such eligibility is determined by medical professionals drawing reference to the established criteria. If any applicant is not satisfied with the medical assessment, he/she can seek a review from the Social Security Appeals Board, which is an independent body that provides a means of redress for any person not satisfied with the decision of the Social Welfare Department in respect of applications made under the social security schemes. The Board will normally review such appeals by arranging an expert panel of doctors to assess such cases with the Hospital Authority.