

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1388/05-06
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/WS

Panel on Welfare Services

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 13 February 2006 at 10:45 am
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

Members present : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon Bernard CHAN, JP
Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, SBS, JP
Dr Hon YEUNG Sum
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP
Hon Albert CHAN Wai-yip
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, JP
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC

Member absent : Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

Public Officers attending : Items IV and V
Ms Linda LAI, JP
Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
(Family and Women)

Mrs Mary MA
Commissioner for Rehabilitation
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

Item IV

Ms Ida LAM
Chairperson, Arts with the Disabled Association

Ms Lena LEE
Vice-chairperson, Arts with the Disabled Association

Item V

Mr D C CHEUNG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
(Elderly Services and Social Security) 2

Mr SIT Tung
Assistant Director of Social Welfare
(Rehabilitation & Medical Social Services)

Mrs Agnes LI CHAN Chui-ngan
Chief Social Work Officer
(Rehabilitation & Medical Social Services) 1
Social Welfare Department

Mr CHENG Chok-man
Chief Social Security Officer (Social Security) 1
Social Welfare Department

**Deputations/
Individuals
by invitation**

: Item V

The Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally
Handicapped

Ms CHENG Yee-man
Deputy Chairman

1st Step Association

Ms HO Kwai-sim

Ms WONG Chun-lin

Hong Kong Neuro-Muscular Disease Association

Ms Norma CHAN

Mr David LING

Hong Kong Stoma Association Limited

Mr YEUNG Kam-che
Vice-Chairman of External Affairs

Mr NG Sze-ku
Vice-Chairman of Internal Affairs

Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities

Ms LING Ching-ha
Executive Member

Ms LAM Suk-yu
Executive Member

關注傷殘津貼小組

Ms WONG Siu-wan

關注傷殘津貼聯席

Ms HO Bo-ching
Executive Member

Ms TAM Yuk-fung
Executive Member

Alliance for Renal Patients Mutual Help Association

Ms HO

Mr LEE

Hong Kong Social Security Society

Dr HO Wing-chung

Individuals

Mr Raymond LAU

Ms NG Yan-yee

Clerk in attendance : Ms Doris CHAN
Chief Council Secretary (2) 4

Staff in attendance : Miss Mary SO
Senior Council Secretary (2) 8

Miss Maggie CHIU
Legislative Assistant (2) 4

I. Confirmation of minutes
(LC Paper No. CB(2)1028/05-06)

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2006 were confirmed.

II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting

2. There was no information paper issued since the last meeting.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1029/05-06(01) and (02))

3. Members agreed to discuss the review of the implementation of the

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standardised needs assessment tool for admission to residential homes for people with disabilities at the next regular meeting to be held on 21 March 2006 at 10:45 am.

4. The Chairman advised members that apart from holding a joint meeting with the Panel on Health Services and the Panel on Manpower on 9 March 2006 to discuss the operation of the Trust Fund for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, arrangements would be made for the Panel to hold the following joint meetings -

- (a) with the Subcommittee to Study the Subject of Combating Poverty to discuss the issue of retirement protection at the end of March 2006; and
- (b) with the Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of Boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education and Employment Opportunities for Children with Special Educational Needs to discuss the issue of improving the living standards of people with disabilities in private hostels in April 2006.

5. Responding to the Chairman's enquiry on when the 2005 Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan Review Working Group would finalise its review report, Commissioner for Rehabilitation (C for R) envisaged that it would be ready in May/June this year.

IV. International Festival of Inclusive Arts
(LC Paper No. CB(2)1029/05-06(03))

6. C for R introduced the Administration's paper detailing the International Festival of Inclusive Arts (IFIA) organised by the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB), with the aid of a powerpoint. The IFIA, to be held from 3 to 10 December 2006, was the first of its kind in Hong Kong seeking to encourage people, with or without disabilities, to cooperate and exchange experiences in the arts activities. The IFIA was co-organised by the Arts with the Disabled Association (ADA), in collaboration with the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, as well as other supporting organisations and interested parties. It was hoped that through the IFIA, a more caring and accepting society would be built.

7. Ms Ida LAM, Chairperson of ADA, briefed members on the history, mission and activities of ADA, details of which were set out in its information leaflets tabled at the meeting. Ms Lena LEE, Vice-chairperson of ADA, next

conducted a powerpoint presentation on the schedule of programme of the IFIA, details of which were set out in the IFIA Festival Diary tabled at the meeting.

8. Miss CHAN Yuen-han expressed support for the IFIA. Miss CHAN hoped that apart from enlisting the support for the project from the 18 District Councils, it was also necessary to enlist support from the whole community for the same so that people with different levels of artistic creativity, and regardless of whether they were with or without disabilities, could take part in the IFIA. Miss CHAN then asked whether subsidy would be provided to people with disabilities (PWDs) participating in the IFIA.

9. C for R responded that the District Councils visited had agreed to identify and recruit PWDs in their respective districts to perform or exhibit their art works during the IFIA, and where necessary, training would be provided to these PWDs to better prepare them for the event. C for R further said that the budget of the IFIA already included money to provide cash subsidy to those participants in need, such as transportation and necessary coaching.

10. Miss CHAN Yuen-han asked what actions would be taken to encourage PWDs to take part in the IFIA.

11. Ms Lena LEE responded that the content of the Festival included a series of indoor and outdoor performances, carnival, visual arts exhibitions, symposium, workshops and other cultural and arts activities catering to different levels of artistic accomplishment of people of different abilities. For instance, accomplished artists would be arranged to perform in formal venues such as the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, whereas arrangements would be made for budding artists or newcomers to the arts to perform or exhibit their art works in a less formal setting such as a carnival. Ms LEE further said that ADA did not envisage major problem in recruiting local PWDs to participate in the Festival. Through its 20 years of operation, ADA had accumulated a large database on the details of local artists, some of whom had artistic ability of an international standard. In an effort to mobilise community collaboration for the Festival, the District Councils had been asked to encourage the organisation of activities echoing the theme of inclusive arts in their respective districts throughout the year. Should a District Council wish to have its local artists, with or without disabilities, perform or exhibit their art works during the Festival, ADA would be happy to see how this could be realised.

12. Ms Ida LAM also said that ADA had been providing training classes and workshops to generate interests, teach skills, instill confidence, unleash imagination and release creativity in PWDs with artistic potential. Ms LAM however pointed out that such cultivation of artistic excellence in PWDs entailed a

long time period ranging from some five to 10 years. In the light of this, ADA planned to launch a seed plan to groom PWDs with artistic talent.

13. Ms LI Fung-ying also expressed support for the IFIA. Ms LI noted from paragraph 13 of the Administration's paper that the total budget of the IFIA was about HK\$5.5 million. S K Yee Fund had already approved a sponsorship of HK\$2 million for the project. HWFB was expected to bear about HK\$3 million of the projected expenditure, with the remaining to be covered by sponsorship and donations in cash or in kind from corporations and the general public. Ms LI asked why sponsorship and donations from corporations and the general public were budgeted so conservatively at some HK\$500,000 only.

14. C for R explained the HK\$3 million to be borne by HWFB for the project was merely an estimate of the maximum amount which the Bureau needed to bear. It was envisaged that with the drive for sponsorship and donations in cash or in kind from corporations now being conducted, the amount of money to be footed by the public coffer might be lower than the estimated HK\$3 million. Ms Lena LEE advised that responses from corporations for the project had been positive. Not only were many corporations willing to sponsor the event in cash or in kind, staff members of some of them had also formed volunteer teams to help with the implementation of various parts of the event.

15. Mr TAM Yiu-chung urged the Administration to see that the IFIA was well publicised, so as to avoid low turnout for the event. C for R responded that promotion and publicity work would be conducted and stepped up in the run-up to the Festival to ensure high turnout for the event.

16. The Chairman asked the Administration whether it had any plan to hold another IFIA in future; and if so, when. The Chairman hoped that more opportunities could be created to enable PWDs to enjoy, partake in and have access to the arts, including drawing up guidelines facilitating their participation, as had been done by the Arts Council in the United Kingdom. The Chairman also hoped that the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC), as a statutory body responsible for the development of the arts in Hong Kong, could do more to promote and provide more platforms for PWDs to participate in the arts.

17. Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Family & Women) (DSHWF(F&W)) responded that the Administration hoped to organise the IFIA on a regular basis in future, say, every few years, in the light of the operational experience to be gained from the coming Festival. On promoting equal opportunity for the disabled to have access to the arts, DSHWF(F&W) said that it was the Government's policy to provide a barrier-free physical environment for PWDs to live independently and participate in the community. The existing

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Design Manual : Barrier Free Access 1997 (DM97) would be updated to provide enhanced barrier-free designs to PWDs, such as providing access for wheelchair users in the auditorium, the stage, backstage facilities, changing rooms and rehearsal rooms, etc.

18. C for R supplemented that apart from organising the annual performance by PWDs for celebration of the International Day for Disabled Persons, a sum of \$27 million was donated by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust three years ago to implement a Jockey Club Arts for the Disabled Scheme providing basic arts training to PWDs at all ages, including students of special schools and special child care centres. The Scheme also provided scholarships for disabled artists and a sponsorship programme for organising arts activities for PWDs. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department also organised and sponsored programmes catered to the participation of PWDs. C for R further said that HWFB would step up liaison with the HKADC to find out ways of better promoting equal opportunity for PWDs to participate in and have access to the arts.

19. The Chairman expressed concern about the lack of a plan by the Administration to organise the IFIA in future, and hoped that it could fix a specific time interval for organising the event. Miss CHAN Yuen-han echoed similar views.

20. DSHWF(F&W) responded that the Administration was sincere in organising the IFIA in future. In fact, the coming Festival was initiated by the Administration. Given the long lead time required to prepare for the event, it was not possible to hold the event annually. Nevertheless, the Administration would strive to organise an IFIA at regular intervals, say, every three years, subject to public responses to the upcoming Festival.

21. The Chairman hoped that the disabled and groups representing the interests could be represented in the HKADC. The Chairman further said that the Administration should make reference to the more comprehensive barrier-free guidelines for PWDs adopted in the United Kingdom in its updating of the existing DM97, which did not include such details as design of theatre stage or facilities for sale of tickets.

22. Ms Ida LAM advised that ADA had submitted its views that Hong Kong should make reference to the barrier-free guidelines for PWDs adopted in the United Kingdom and Australia in enhancing access and facilities for PWDs to the 2005 Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan Review Working Group for its consideration.

V. Supporting people with disabilities who are not CSSA recipients to cope with everyday needs

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1029/05-06(04) to (07), CB(2)1076/05-06(01) to (02) and CB(2)1085/05-06(01) to (02))

23. C for R introduced the Administration's paper (LC Paper No. CB(2)1029/05-06(04)) detailing the assistance covering various aspects, including financial, housing, emotional, community and information technology supports, that non-Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) PWDs might seek to meet their needs in daily lives.

Views of deputations

24. Representatives from the following organisations gave their views on the lack of sufficient support provided by the Administration to non-CSSA PWDs living in the community, details of which were set out in their respective submissions -

- (a) Association of Parents of the Severely Mentally Handicapped (LC Paper No. CB(2)1029/05-06(01));
- (b) 1st Step Association, Hong Kong Neuro-Muscular Disease Association and Paraplegic & Quadraplegic Association (LC Paper No. CB(2)1076/05-06(01));
- (c) Hong Kong Stoma Association Limited (LC Paper No. CB(2)1076/05-06(02));
- (d) Hong Kong Association for Parents of Persons with Physical Disabilities (LC Paper No. CB(2)1124/05-06(02) tabled at the meeting);
- (e) 關注傷殘津貼聯席 (LC Paper No. CB(2)1124/05-06(03) tabled at the meeting);
- (f) 關注傷殘津貼小組 (LC Paper No. CB(2)1085/05-06(01)); and
- (g) Alliance for Renal Patients Mutual Help Association (LC Paper No. CB(2)1085/05-06(02)).

25. Dr HO Wing-chung of the Hong Kong Social Security Society said that the Administration should announce the number of different types of PWDs in Hong

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Kong, so as to facilitate better discussion on introducing a quota system for hiring disabled workers in the open labour market, among others. There was also a need for the Administration to develop a standardised care need assessment mechanism for PWDs, as had been done for the elderly.

26. Mr Raymond LAU hoped that the Administration could introduce a second safety net for non-CSSA tetraplegic patients, as requested in a motion passed by the Panel on 18 February 2005. Mr LAU pointed out that for non-CSSA tetraplegic patients to rely on charitable funds to meet their needs in daily lives was unrealistic, given the temporary or one-off nature of these funds. Moreover, of the all charitable funds available for application by PWDs, only the Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund provided financial assistance to the recipients for hiring a carer. Mr LAU further pointed out that unlike disabled CSSA recipients who had social workers to help them apply for various charitable funds, non-CSSA PWDs often had to make such applications on their own.

27. Ms NG Yan-ye urged the Administration to make reference from the policy adopted and/or legislation enacted in overseas places, such as the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland, on providing support to family carers of PWDs who needed constant care and attendance, so as to address the lack of support to family carers of PWDs in Hong Kong. Due to time constraint, Ms NG hoped that the Administration could convene a meeting to meet with family carers to understand their difficulties. Ms Norma CHAN of the Hong Kong Neuro-Muscular Disease Association and Mr David LING of the Paraplegic & Quadraplegic Association referred to the heavy financial burden of taking care of their severely disabled family members. They said that some families might need to rely on CSSA if they ceased to receive financial assistance from the charitable funds or compromised the quality of care to the disabled family members.

Discussion

28. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan expressed dissatisfaction that nothing had been done by the Administration to alleviate the heavy burden of family carers of non-CSSA tetraplegic patients since the last discussion on providing support and assistance to non-CSSA tetraplegic patients living in the community on 18 February 2005. Mr LEE wondered whether it was the Financial Secretary (FS) who refused to help the family carers or the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food who decided not to raise the matter with FS. Mr LEE shared the views of tetraplegic patients that it was unrealistic to rely on the Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund for assistance. Mr LEE pointed out since February last year, the number of applications approved by the Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund had only increased from 18 to 32 cases. In the light of this, Mr LEE requested the Administration to expeditiously implement the following measures to address the needs of non-CSSA PWDs and their family

carers -

- (a) to provide a subsidy to family carers of non-CSSA tetraplegic patients living in the community;
- (b) to review the eligibility criteria of the Disability Allowance (DA) under the Social Security Allowance Scheme, in order to address the inconsistency in assessing the eligibility of the applicants; and
- (c) to allow a disabled person to apply for CSSA on his own, despite the fact that he lived with his family not on CSSA.

29. DSHWF(F&W) responded that as resources were finite, the Administration had a mechanism to assist disabled people in need of help. Non-CSSA tetraplegic patients living in the community could apply for the non-means tested DA, which was designed to provide an allowance to Hong Kong residents who were severely disabled to meet the special needs arising from disability. On the eligibility criteria of DA, Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Elderly Services & Social Security)2 (PAS/HWF(ES&SS)2) said that a review of DA was being conducted and it was the Administration's intention to report to members on the outcome of the review in due course. As regards the applications for the Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services) (ADSW(R&MSS)) said that to date, 24 applications for the Fund had been unsuccessful. The main reasons were the applicants did not meet the level of disability required by the Fund, could not prove that they were in financial hardship and had successfully applied for CSSA. ADSW(R&MSS) further said that since the establishment of the Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund in September 2004, several cases had continued to receive financial assistance from the Fund since October 2004. This demonstrated that the Fund would continue to provide assistance to relieve the financial difficulties of the tetraplegic patients living in the community where justified.

30. The Chairman requested the Administration to give a date on which the review of DA would be completed. PAS/HWF(ES&SS)2 responded that in view of the complexity of the issues involved in the review of DA, he was not able to give a date for completion of the review. Nevertheless, the Administration would strive to report to members as soon as possible.

31. Miss CHAN Yuen-han urged the Administration to draw reference from overseas places, such as the United Kingdom, in providing financial assistance to family carers of severely disabled patients living in the community.

32. DSHWF(F&W) responded that the cost of providing a subsidy to all carers

of non-CSSA severely disabled patients living in the community would be very high. As resources were finite, it was questionable whether they should be used in such a manner. This however did not mean that no support was provided to carers. As mentioned earlier, the objective of the DA was to provide some financial assistance to the severely disabled to meet the special needs arising from disability. In addition to financial assistance, a range of community support services and training for carers were also provided. As to whether the DA was adequate, DSHWF(F&W) said that this was certainly an area that could be looked at.

33. Miss CHAN Yuen-han said that the Administration should consider providing dedicated service units in residential care homes and day care centres for the severely disabled, as had been done for the demented elderly, so as to alleviate the heavy burden of the family carers. The Chairman advised that providing dedicated services for the demented in residential care homes and day care centres was a pilot project. To his understanding, the project ceased to continue upon the expiry of the three-year pilot period.

34. ADSW(R&MSS) referred members to the various measures implemented by the Administration in providing support for carers, details of which were set out in paragraphs 12 to 14 of the Administration's paper. The two new services to be launched in 2006-07, as set out in paragraph 17 of the paper, would also relieve the burden of the carers from the caring role by giving them a break. In recognition of the hard work and sacrifices made by carers for their disabled family members, a publicity campaign would shortly be launched to raise public awareness of such.

35. Mr Albert HO said that the Administration should provide different amounts of DA to people according to their level of disability, so as to better meet their special needs arising from disability. The Administration should also provide direct financial assistance to carers of people who were severely disabled. To ensure public money was used in a prudent manner, an assessment mechanism could be put in place to identify deserving cases. Mr HO further said that it would be irresponsible of the Administration if it refused to even consider his suggestions because of the money involved. Mr HO then requested the Administration to provide an explanation in writing on why Hong Kong could not implement some forms of financial assistance for carers as practised in overseas places, such as the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland.

36. DSHWF(F&W) responded that cost was not the sole determining factor in providing financial support for non-CSSA PWDs, as evidenced by the huge sum spent by the Administration in this area. If DA was meant to meet the financial needs of the disabled, there might be a need to examine whether it should continue

to be non-means tested.

37. Mr Albert HO hoped that the Administration would include financial implications of the proposals which it did not consider viable in its future report on the review of DA.

38. Mr Albert CHAN said that the Administration should not turn a blind to the plight of PWDs not on CSSA. The Administration should face up to the problem of lack of support for non-CSSA PWDs living in the community by formulating short and long term strategies and measures to tackle the problem and present them for public discussion before deciding the way forward.

39. Mr David LING said that the fact that the Administration did not know the exact number of disabled persons in Hong Kong was a testament that it did not grasp the full extent of the difficulties faced by non-CSSA PWDs. Mr LING further said that to force non-CSSA PWDs to seek financial support from the relevant charitable funds was irresponsible, as the requirements of these funds were very stringent. The small number of cases approved by the Yan Chai Tetraplegic Fund was a case in point.

40. Ms HO Bo-ching of 關注傷殘津貼聯席 said that if the Administration was concerned about the high cost involved in helping non-CSSA PWDs living in the community, she hoped that some form of financial assistance could at least be given to the ones most in need. For instance, allowing DA recipients to claim reimbursement from the Administration on the money they spent on the purchase of essential medical/rehabilitative appliances and medical consumables.

41. Ms NG Yan-ye said that charitable funds could not help to address the long-term financial needs of people who were severely disabled. Ms NG hoped that the Administration would establish a second safety net for severely disabled persons not on CSSA and provide some forms of financial support to their carers as requested by this Panel on 18 February 2005.

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42. DSHWF(F&W) responded that the Administration had the figures on the different types of disabled persons in Hong Kong. She would be happy to provide such information after the meeting. DSHWF(F&W) further said that it was not unusual that not all applications for charitable funds were successful. Even if resources were provided by the Government, whenever there was a vetting mechanism, there were bound to be cases which could not meet the criteria. Referring to the suggestion made in paragraph 40 above, DSHWF(F&W) said that the Administration was willing to explore ways on how best to better meet the special needs of PWDs arising from disability. C for R advised members that the number of non-CSSA tetraplegic patients living in the community currently stood

at 300-odd.

43. Ms LI Fung-ying urged the Administration not to use a delaying tactic in addressing the needs of non-CSSA PWDs living in the community. Referring to the lack of support provided to non-CSSA PWDs in seeking financial assistance from the relevant charitable funds and the unreasonableness of changing the DA received by non-CSSA PWDs from Higher DA (HDA) to Normal DA (NDA) as pointed out by some deputations at the meeting, Ms LI hoped that the Social Welfare Department (SWD) would help non-CSSA PWDs to apply for the relevant charitable funds, and explain why PWDs who had all along received HDA were suddenly changed to receiving NDA.

44. ADSW(R&MSS) responded that if non-CSSA PWDs needed assistance to apply for the relevant charitable funds, they were welcome to approach the medical social workers (MSWs) of SWD who would help them to identify the suitable funds and, if necessary, help them to fill in and submit the applications. In view of the concerns raised about the lack of support provided to PWDs in applying for these charitable funds, ADSW(R&MSS) undertook to convey to MSWs of the need to step up efforts in this regard.

45. As to why some PWDs who had all along received HDA were suddenly changed to receiving NDA, Chief Social Security Officer (Social Security) 1 (CSSO(SS)1) surmised that this was due to the result of medical assessment by doctors that the HDA recipients' disabling condition no longer eligible for HDA. CSSO(SS)1 further said that DA recipients not satisfied with SWD's decision on their allowance might appeal to the Social Security Appeal Board whose membership comprised seven non-officials appointed by the Chief Executive.

46. The Chairman said that the phenomenon of downgrading the DA received by some PWDs was not limited to isolated cases. In his view, the problem might be due to more stringent application of the existing eligibility criteria. As DA was currently the only financial support which non-CSSA PWDs could get if they met the eligibility criteria, there was a need to find out and solve the problems in the existing applications for DA. In the light of this, the Chairman said that the Panel should set a date for the Administration to report to the Panel on the result of its review of DA and suggested that the date should be the date of the March 2006 regular meeting.

47. The Chairman further asked the Administration whether it would meet with deputations to better understand their difficulties. ADSW(R&MSS) responded that this could be arranged.

48. Mr Frederick FUNG echoed members' and deputations' views that the

Administration should provide a subsidy to carers of severely disabled persons not on CSSA to compensate for their loss in not being able to take up paid employment. Mr FUNG urged the Administration not to evade such a request, which had been repeatedly raised by members and deputations alike since February 2005. If the design of DA was truly intended to provide an allowance to Hong Kong residents who were severely disabled to meet the special needs arising from disability, Mr FUNG requested the Administration to point out what percentage of the DA was meant to provide some financial assistance to carers, and if so, why it considered that the amount was adequate.

49. CSSO(SS)1 pointed out that the amount of HDA, which was twice that of NDA, could provide financial assistance to alleviate to some extent the family burden arising from the need for taking care of a severely disabled member who required constant care and attendance. PAS/HWF(ES&SS)2 supplemented that it was not possible to itemise the financial support to DA recipients, as DA, being non-means tested, was intended to provide an allowance to help recipients meet the special needs arising from disability. DA was different from the CSSA which was a safety net.

50. Mr Frederick FUNG disagreed with the Administration's explanation in paragraph 49 above, as people requiring constant care and attendance inevitably needed more money to meet their medical expenses. If what the Administration said was true, HDA should be renamed as Higher Disability and Carer Allowance. Mr FUNG then left the meeting in protest.

51. In closing, the Chairman suggested and members agreed to discuss the review of DA at the next regular meeting in March 2006.

52. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:12 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
17 March 2006