

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES**

**Subcommittee on Residential and Community Care Services  
for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly**

**Community Care and Support Services for the Elderly**

**Purpose**

This paper sets out the community care and support services provided by the Government for the elderly and various related initiatives under the social welfare portfolio.

**Policy on elderly care**

2. “Ageing in place” is an underlying principle of the Government’s elderly care policy. It is also the wish of most elders. Elders cherish the support of their families and prefer living in a familiar environment. It is internationally recognised that “ageing in place” can help enhance elders’ quality of life.

3. The Government provides a range of subsidised centre-based and home-based community care services to help elders with long-term care (LTC) needs age in the community, as set out below.

**Community care services**

4. At present, the Government provides centre-based day care services to frail elders<sup>Note</sup> who have LTC needs and cannot be taken care of by their family members during daytime through the 59 Day Care Centres/ Units for the Elderly in the territory. The services cover personal and nursing care, rehabilitation exercise, meal, escort, etc. Currently, there are a total of 2 314 day care places serving over 3 200 elders, including part-time users. In the coming two years, we will provide an additional 135 places in Kowloon City, Sai Kung, Kwun Tong and Yau Tsim Mong.

5. Apart from centre-based services, we also provide home-based Enhanced Home and Community Care Service and Integrated Home Care Services for frail elders. These services cover personal care, basic and special nursing care, rehabilitation exercise, environmental risk assessment, meal delivery, home modifications, etc. There are currently 4 699 service places in total.

6. As for non-frail elders, they can make use of the Integrated Home Care Services which cover personal care, household cleaning, meal delivery, etc. There is no ceiling on the number of service places. About 17 000 elders are using these services.

### **Community support services**

7. At present, there are more than 200 elderly centres throughout the territory, including 41 District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs), 117 Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs) and 53 Social Centres for the Elderly.

---

<sup>Note</sup> “Frail elders” refers to the elders who are assessed to be of moderate or severe level of impairment by the Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services.

With over 180 000 members, these elderly centres provide elders and their carers with diversified services and activities, taking care of their psychological, social and learning needs. The elderly centres also provide various support services to carers of elders, including the provision of information, training and counselling services, assistance in forming carers' mutual-assistance groups, setting up resource centres, and demonstration and loan of rehabilitation equipment, etc.

### **New initiatives**

8. Apart from the above-mentioned services, the Government has introduced a number of new initiatives in recent years to support elders ageing in the community, including:

(a) **District-based Scheme on Carer Training**

The “District-based Scheme on Carer Training” (the Scheme) launched by the Government in October 2007 provides subsidies for DECCs to partner with community organisations in their districts in organising carer training programmes. These training programmes cover many aspects, including the skills in taking care of elders, knowledge about common ailments among elders, communication with elders, etc. Our aim is to enhance carers’ capability through training so as to alleviate their stress resulting from caring for the elders. Carers who have completed the training will be recruited as carer-helpers, providing care service for elders at the district level. To date, over 2 400 carers have been trained under the Scheme. In view of the positive response, we have further extended the Scheme to NECs since April this year. At present, there are 114 elderly centres participating in the Scheme. We expect that an additional 4 860 carers will be trained in about a year’s

time.

(b) Integrated Discharge Support Trial Programme for Elderly Patients

In the 2007-08 Budget, the Government earmarked \$96 million for implementing a three-year “Integrated Discharge Support Trial Programme for Elderly Patients” in collaboration with the Hospital Authority, providing timely support to elderly hospital dischargees and their carers so as to help the elders recuperate at home. Three pilot projects were launched in March and August 2008 and in July 2009 in Kwun Tong, Kwai Tsing and Tuen Mun respectively. The entire programme is expected to serve a total of 20 000 elders and 7 000 carers. Upon the completion of the Programme, the Government and the Elderly Commission (EC) will evaluate its effectiveness and consider the way forward.

(c) Home Environment Improvement Scheme for the Elderly

The Government earmarked \$200 million in the 2008-09 Budget for launching a five-year “Home Environment Improvement Scheme for the Elderly” to help elders without family support, living in dilapidated homes and lacking the financial means to improve their home conditions. Under the Scheme, eligible elders are provided with home maintenance and improvement services as well as necessary fittings and household items. It is expected that 40 000 elderly households will benefit from this Scheme.

(d) Pilot Scheme on Home Care Services for Frail Elders

To address the care needs of frail elders on the waiting list of subsidised

nursing home places, the Government will seek one-off funding of \$55 million from the Lotteries Fund for introducing a pilot home care services scheme which will provide these elders with a new package of intensive and tailor-made home care services for elders, so as to better serve their special needs and help relieve the pressure of their carers. This three-year scheme will serve a total of 510 elders from Wong Tai Sin, Sai Kung, Kwun Tong, Yau Tsim Mong, Kowloon City and Sham Shui Po districts. In order to allow experienced service operators to make suggestions on the service content and delivery model, we have conducted in March this year a non-committal Expression of Interest (EOI) exercise to invite service proposals from non-governmental organisations or social enterprises with experience in elderly care and established service networks in the districts concerned. We are now examining the suggestions received during the EOI exercise with a view to finalising the detailed service specifications in August 2010, inviting qualified operators to submit formal service proposals and commencing service in early 2011.

## **The Way Forward**

9. Looking ahead, the Government will continue with its efforts in helping elders age in place and strengthening the support for their carers. The EC has also initiated an in-depth study on how to strengthen community care services for the elderly through a more flexible and diverse mode of service delivery. The study is expected to be completed by early 2011.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau**

**Social Welfare Department**

**June 2010**