

**For discussion  
on 8 June 2015**

LC Paper No. CB(2)1595/14-15(03)

**Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services  
Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly**

**Purpose**

This paper informs Members of the progress of implementation of and the mid-term evaluation on the First Phase of the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly (the Pilot Scheme).

**Background**

2. “Ageing in place” is the underlying principle of the Government’s elderly care policy. This is also in line with the wish of most elderly persons. To this end, the Government provides a range of subsidised community care services (CCS), including centre-based day care services and home-based services.

3. The Elderly Commission (EC) commissioned a consultancy study on CCS for the elderly in 2010 to examine how CCS could be strengthened through a more flexible and diverse mode of service delivery. The consultancy study report was released in July 2011. EC recommended, among others, that the Government could introduce a voucher scheme to allow eligible elderly persons to choose CCS that suited their needs. Taking on board EC’s recommendations, the Government secured \$380 million from the Lotteries Fund to launch the First Phase of the Pilot Scheme in September 2013.

4. We briefed Members of this Panel on the progress of the First Phase implementation of the Pilot Scheme on 13 January 2014 [LC Paper No. CB(2)626/13-14(08)] and 10 November 2014 [LC Paper No. CB(2)213/14-15(03)]. The Panel at its meeting on 13 January 2014 requested the Government to provide information on why some eligible elderly persons chose not to participate in the Pilot Scheme. At its

meeting on 10 November 2014, the Panel further requested the Government to provide (a) the report of the mid-term evaluation on the First Phase of the Pilot Scheme; and (b) information on the number of vouchers received by each recognised service provider (RSP) and further details in relation to the 184 participants (as at 10 October 2014) who had withdrawn from the Pilot Scheme for the reasons of “no suitable services providers/service packages”. The information requested is set out in **Annex 1**. The consultant is finalising the report of the mid-term evaluation. We shall provide the report to this Panel when it is ready.

### **Purpose of the Pilot Scheme**

5. The Pilot Scheme aims at testing the viability of a new funding mode whereby the Government adopts a “money-following-the-user” approach and provides subsidy directly for the service users (instead of service providers) in the form of service voucher. Eligible elderly persons may choose the service provider, the type of service and the service package that suit their needs.

6. The introduction of the Pilot Scheme is a significant step towards the development of a vibrant CCS market to meet the increasing demand for CCS arising from the ageing population. In particular, the voucher scheme may encourage participation of different types of service providers and provide incentive for them to promote flexibility and diversity of CCS, improve service quality and be more responsive to the users’ needs.

### **Implementation Progress of the First Phase**

7. The Pilot Scheme is to be implemented in two phases with the First Phase launched in September 2013. A total of 62 units from 29 non-profit-making non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and two social enterprises (SEs) were selected as RSPs for the First Phase. Based on the application dates for Long Term Care (LTC) services on the Central Waiting List (CWL), the Social Welfare Department (SWD) invited eligible elderly persons through their Responsible Workers (RWs) to join the Pilot Scheme. All the 1 200 vouchers had been issued to eligible elderly persons by early April 2014. SWD has been conducting

regular review visits to all the 62 RSPs to monitor the service provision and quality and to ensure their compliance with service requirements. SWD has also maintained regular meetings with all RSPs to obtain their views and feedback on the First Phase for continuous service enhancement.

8. As of end-April 2015, a total of 2 185 elderly persons had participated in the Pilot Scheme, with 1 233 being current voucher holders<sup>1</sup>. Among these 1 233 voucher holders, 997 were receiving services from RSPs and the rest were choosing their desired service providers and/or service packages. Summary figures on the progress of implementation of the First Phase are provided in **Annex 2**.

### **Mid-term Evaluation Report on the First Phase of the Pilot Scheme**

9. SWD has commissioned Sau Po Centre on Ageing (COA) of the University of Hong Kong to conduct an evaluation study on the First Phase of the Pilot Scheme. The study, conducted between November 2013 and July 2015, adopts a multi-method approach of data collection and analysis. A mid-term evaluation conducted by COA covers data collected from January to September 2014 from four major sources, with a brief summary of findings from each source of data set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

(a) Existing data from SWD

Data analysis by COA was based on SWD questionnaires collected before 31 December 2013 from 4 734 eligible elderly persons on CWL invited by SWD to participate in the First Phase of the Pilot Scheme as well as the service usage information on 1 201 voucher holders who accepted CCS vouchers between 26 August 2013 to 29 May 2014.

Findings from existing data showed that elderly persons who had lower household income, were more educated, were living with their main caregiver, required early ADL (Activities of Daily Living) and IADL (Instrumental

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<sup>1</sup> The number of 2 185 elderly persons refers to the accumulative number of participants who have participated in the Pilot Scheme since September 2013.

Activities of Daily Living)<sup>2</sup> assistance, or had obtained adequate advice and recommendations from RWs were more likely to accept and utilise CCS vouchers. Besides, the accessibility of RSPs and the availability of appropriate service packages were critical factors contributing to CCS voucher acceptance.

(b) Survey data from COA

Data analysis by COA was based on face-to-face structured interviews with 60 current voucher users and 37 voucher users who had withdrawn from the Pilot Scheme, as conducted between June and September 2014.

Compared with the voucher withdrawers, current users found CCS vouchers more helpful in elevating their self-perceived health and quality of life while reducing their caregivers' burden. Besides, support and recommendations from RWs and family members together with the close proximity of RSPs were found to be important factors relevant to CCS voucher usage while services not meeting needs, unattractive service packages and expensive services were major reasons preventing active participation in the Pilot Scheme.

(c) In-depth interviews with CCS voucher withdrawers and family carers

Data analysis by COA was based on in-depth interviews with 14 withdrawer cases comprising two elderly persons and 12 family carers conducted between June and September 2014.

Findings included views reflecting inadequate service volume, inflexibility and inaccessibility of service, limited service options, users' lack of understanding of CCS voucher, and extra top-up services being not affordable which pointed to the need for improvements in programme

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<sup>2</sup> ADL refers to the daily activities that individuals perform for their personal self-care such as walking, bathing and toileting. IADL refers to daily activities that individual perform in order to live independently such as shopping, meal preparation and housekeeping.

flexibility, support for users from RWs and better service planning and coordination. COA pointed out that since the participants of these interviews came from those who withdrew from the Pilot Scheme, the overall reported experience was relatively negative and did not represent the experience of other CCS voucher users. Nevertheless, their experience provided reference for further improvement of the Pilot Scheme.

(d) Focus group discussions with RSPs and RWs

Data analysis was based on two rounds of focus groups. The first round was conducted in January 2014, with one focus group with 18 RSPs and the other with 10 RWs. The second round was conducted in July 2014, with one focus group with 15 RSPs and the other with 12 RWs.

Many participants observed positive changes among CCS voucher users and their family caregivers in terms of choice promotion, empowerment, health improvement and stress reduction. On the other hand, RSPs and RWs expressed concern over additional service and administrative work, limitations in resources and manpower, staff training and readiness and role conflict. RSPs and RWs pointed out that whether users would opt for the voucher depended on their understanding of CCS voucher, whether voucher services met their needs, and whether their decision-making was supported by recommendations from RWs and family members and financial concerns.

10. We are mindful that the observations above are based on limited data collected during the first year of implementation of the First Phase. For example, with RSPs commencing services at different time points from September to December 2013, views reflected in focus groups of RSPs and RWs represent their experience from a relatively short period of service provision. Nevertheless, the preliminary observations would facilitate our deliberation of possible areas for refinement for the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme.

11. The initial findings of the evaluation study indicate that the Pilot Scheme has promoted greater choice, enabled service users to select their preferred RSPs and services that best fit their needs, and has been effective in elevating frail elderly persons' self-perceived health and quality of life as well as significantly reducing their caregivers' stress and burden.

12. Having regard to the findings of the mid-term evaluation of the First Phase of the Pilot Scheme, COA has recommended the following enhancement –

- (a) adopting a personalised approach to service provision so as to allow users to decide the most suitable mix of services that best supports their community living;
- (b) expanding the service providers' pool for enhancing service quality and diversity by encouraging more NGOs, social enterprises, self-financing service providers and private organisations to become RSPs;
- (c) setting different voucher values having regard to the pattern of service utilisation of service users with co-payment values based on means test;
- (d) providing ongoing training to RWs and RSPs on CCS voucher scheme, updating them on the latest development of the scheme, and creating an easily accessible communication platform to provide most updated information directly to all stakeholders; and
- (e) enhancing the District Social Welfare Offices' involvement in the CCS voucher implementation.

## **Way Forward**

13. Taking into account the initial findings and recommendations of the evaluation study of the First Phase of the Pilot Scheme, SWD will examine possible areas for refinement and draw up implementation

details for the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme.

### **Advice Sought**

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

**Labour and Welfare Bureau**  
**Social Welfare Department**  
**June 2015**

**Information Requested by  
the Panel on Welfare Services**

**A. Information requested at the meeting on 13 January 2014**

Information on reasons for eligible elderly persons declining to join the Pilot Scheme:

As of end-December 2013, a total of 4 476 eligible elderly persons had declined to join the Pilot Scheme upon invitation. On the reasons for declining to join, around 50% were having carers (including family members or domestic helpers), while 22% preferred residential care service / home care services to day care services. The remaining 28% declined for various reasons, including unstable health condition, unwillingness to co-pay, lack of interest in the Pilot Scheme, etc.

**B. Information requested at the meeting on 10 November 2014**

**I. Information on the number of vouchers received by each recognised service provider (RSP) as at 30 April 2015:**

|     | RSP  | No. of elderly persons receiving service<br>(as at 30 April 2015) |
|-----|------|---|
| 1.  | E 1  | 33  |
| 2.  | E 2  | 29  |
| 3.  | E 3  | 27  |
| 4.  | E 4  | 25  |
| 5.  | E 5  | 17  |
| 6.  | E 6  | 10  |
| 7.  | E 7  | 7   |
| 8.  | E 8  | 5   |
| 9.  | E 9  | 3   |
| 10. | KT 1 | 32  |
| 11. | KT 2 | 29  |
| 12. | KT 3 | 29  |
| 13. | KT 4 | 19  |
| 14. | KT 5 | 16  |
| 15. | KT 6 | 14  |



|     | RSP   | No. of elderly persons receiving service<br>(as at 30 April 2015) |
|-----|-------|---|
| 16. | KT 7  | 13  |
| 17. | KT 8  | 7   |
| 18. | KT 9  | 7   |
| 19. | KT 10 | 3   |
| 20. | KT 11 | 3   |
| 21. | KT 12 | 1   |
| 22. | WTS 1 | 34  |
| 23. | WTS 2 | 29  |
| 24. | WTS 3 | 27  |
| 25. | WTS 4 | 20  |
| 26. | WTS 5 | 19  |
| 27. | WTS 6 | 10  |
| 28. | SSP 1 | 20  |
| 29. | SSP 2 | 19  |
| 30. | SSP 3 | 13  |
| 31. | SSP 4 | 10  |
| 32. | SSP 5 | 10  |
| 33. | SSP 6 | 10  |
| 34. | SSP 7 | 12  |
| 35. | SSP 8 | 5   |
| 36. | SSP 9 | 0   |
| 37. | ST 1  | 52  |
| 38. | ST 2  | 22  |
| 39. | ST 3  | 21  |
| 40. | ST 4  | 11  |
| 41. | ST 5  | 11  |
| 42. | ST 6  | 11  |
| 43. | ST 7  | 11  |
| 44. | ST 8  | 8   |
| 45. | ST 9  | 8   |
| 46. | ST 10 | 6   |
| 47. | ST 11 | 3   |
| 48. | TP 1  | 26  |
| 49. | TP 2  | 21  |
| 50. | TP 3  | 12  |
| 51. | TP 4  | 12  |
| 52. | TP 5  | 9   |
| 53. | TP 6  | 8   |
| 54. | TW 1  | 32  |
| 55. | TW 2  | 21  |

|     | RSP    | No. of elderly persons receiving service<br>(as at 30 April 2015) |
|-----|--------|---|
| 56. | TW 3   | 18  |
| 57. | TW 4   | 7   |
| 58. | TM 1   | 28  |
| 59. | TM 2   | 27  |
| 60. | TM 3   | 18  |
| 61. | TM 4   | 14  |
| 62. | TM 5   | 13  |
|     | Total: | 997   |

**II.** Information on the 184 participants (as at 10 October 2014) who had withdrawn from the Pilot Scheme for the reason of “no suitable services providers/service packages” as indicated in SWD questionnaires<sup>1</sup>

|    | Reason for Withdrawal  | No. of elderly persons |
|----|--|------------------------|
| a. | No suitable services providers<br>( <i>Breakdown at Table A below</i> )          | 15                     |
| b. | No suitable services packages<br>( <i>Breakdown at Table B below</i> )           | 130                    |
| c. | Others (including elderly persons’<br>deteriorating health, having carers, etc.) | 39 <sup>2</sup>        |
|    | Total  | 184                    |

Table A : Breakdown on reasons of “No suitable services providers”

|    | Reason for Withdrawal   | No. of elderly persons |
|----|---|------------------------|
| a. | Service provider cannot provide<br>escorting service  | 7                      |
| b. | No service provider in the home vicinity  | 2                      |
| c. | Prefer specialised service for demented<br>elderly persons but no such service<br>provider in the home vicinity | 3                      |
| d. | Prefer private operator   | 2                      |
| e. | No vacancy for the preferred service  | 1                      |

<sup>1</sup> SWD has further conducted a separate telephone survey for these 184 elderly persons/their carers to understand their reasons for withdrawal in more details

<sup>2</sup> The reasons are not related to “no suitable services providers/service packages”

|  | Reason for Withdrawal | No. of elderly persons |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|
|  | providers             |                        |
|  | Total:                | 15                     |

Table B : Breakdown on reasons of “No suitable services packages”

|      | Reason for Withdrawal  | No. of elderly persons |
|------|--|------------------------|
| i.   | Elderly person unwilling to receive centre-based care service                                      | 109                    |
| ii.  | Unwilling to make co-payment   | 15                     |
| iii. | Operating hours of service provider in the home vicinity cannot fit elderly person’s daily routine | 5                      |
| iv.  | Need additional top-up service but consider top-up service fee too high                            | 1                      |
|      | Total:   | 130                    |

**Progress of Implementation of the Pilot Scheme on  
Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly  
(as at 30 April 2015)**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Number of current voucher holders (a)                                      | <b>1 233</b> |
| Accumulative number of participants (b)                                    | <b>2 185</b> |
| Number of participants having withdrawn from the Scheme<br>(c) = (b) – (a) | <b>952</b>   |

**Reasons for Withdrawal** [i.e. (c) above][findings from SWD questionnaires]

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Will be admitted/have been admitted to subsidised CCS or subsidised/private RCS | <b>359</b> |
| No suitable service providers / service packages                                | <b>288</b> |
| Have carers, including family members or domestic helpers                       | <b>133</b> |
| Deceased  | <b>132</b> |
| Others (e.g. hospitalisation, out of town)                                      | <b>40</b>  |
| Total:  | <b>952</b> |

**Co-payment position** [i.e. (a) above]

| Category | Amount  | Number of participants |       |
|----------|---------|------------------------|-------|
| I        | \$500   | 852 *                  | 69% * |
| II       | \$750   | 123                    | 10%   |
| III      | \$1,000 | 120                    | 10%   |
| IV       | \$1,500 | 27                     | 2%    |
| V        | \$2,500 | 111 #                  | 9%    |
|          | Total   | 1 233                  | 100%  |

\* 210 participants are CSSA recipients (i.e. 17% of a total of 1 233 participants), who are eligible for getting reimbursement of part of the payment.

# 82 participants do not disclose their household income and are ready to pay \$2,500.