



Joint Subcommittee on Long-term Care Policy
January 16, 2017

Review on Integrated Home Care Services—Submission of Our Hong Kong Foundation

Subcommittee Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to make a few remarks on behalf of Our Hong Kong Foundation.

Our Hong Kong Foundation (OHKF) is delighted to be part of the Joint Subcommittee on Long-term Care Policy’s discussion on the “Review of Integrated Home Care Services.” OHKF has released a policy research report on aging entitled “An Investment for the Celebration of Aging” led by Prof. Eng-kiong Yeoh. The report includes OHKF’s views and recommendations on the institutions and initiatives to invest in in order to enable healthy aging in Hong Kong. Our recommendations, while drafted for the revamping of medical, social, and other community institutions for improving long term care at the macro level, can also be specifically applied to improving Integrated Home Care Services (IHCS). Where applicable, the page section of the English report will also be mentioned for easy reference to these specific recommendations.

1. Collaborative Governance

Based on the World Health Organization’s Healthy Ageing framework, the community as a whole must adopt a new lens for reviewing the political, social, and physical environments of Hong Kong in order to establish an age-friendly Hong Kong. The initial stage of building this age-enabling city starts with collaborative governance between the government, business sector and civil society. ***OHKF recommends further research and development of IHCS through cross-sector collaboration, where collaboration with tertiary institutions, including local universities, can assist in the research and development of community-based solutions for those in need of long term care (Pages 157-158).***

2. Integrated and Person-Centered Care: The Chronic Disease Management Voucher Scheme and the Health-Enabling Network



The Chronic Disease Management Voucher Scheme and the Health-Enabling Network are two policy initiatives proposed by OHKF for bridging health and social care with the ultimate goal of integrating and providing person-centered care to those in need in the community. Community care can be improved through establishing cross-disciplinary teams who place greater emphasis on chronic disease management, thus enabling those with long term chronic conditions to better manage their own health and age in place.

A. Chronic Disease Management

Our report proposes the Chronic Disease Management Voucher Scheme, a needs-tested healthcare voucher scheme for chronic disease management targeted at low-income individuals aged 45 and above. The primary goal of the Scheme is to detect chronic disease and provide chronic disease management programs to prevent disease progression and health deterioration. The Scheme would enable both integration of the public and private sector in delivering health care services as well as enhance the linkage between primary care and specialist services. Data obtained from the Census and Statistics Department shows that those aged 45 to 65 are 6 times more likely to suffer from multi-morbidity, and those aged 65 and above are 18 times more likely compared to those aged 14 to 25. Moreover, the goal of the Scheme is to maintain the health of those who are aged 45 and above with chronic diseases, first focusing on those with hypertension and diabetes, as these are the two most prevalent chronic diseases. These findings show the commonality of chronic diseases as people age, and the importance of starting prevention early on. As those admitted into IHCS include not only those who are aged 60 and above but also the disabled and underprivileged families and individuals of all ages, the spectrum of needs among IHCS beneficiaries is vast. **Therefore, OHKF advises that the Government include chronic disease management programs in IHCS. In addition, implementation of a voucher scheme similar to the proposed Chronic Disease Management Voucher Scheme for those matched into community care services like IHCS can be used as a way to further promote self-management of health and enable aging in place (Pages 143-148).**

B. Health-Enabling Network

The Health-Enabling Network as described in the OHKF aging report encompasses partnerships among the Department of Health, the Hospital Authority and the Social Welfare Department, non-profit organizations and the private sector in establishing a



district-based network for older people with unmet needs in collaboration with the community. The aim is to prevent older people's health from deteriorating, thus, allowing them to age in place with appropriate support. Within the Network, older people with varying degree of capacity, who have i) high physical and functional ability, ii) declining ability or iii) frailty and impairment, will be matched with services that meet their needs in their respective neighborhoods. Depending on the degree of functioning, the Health-Enabling Network can function to where IHCS teams and Community Health Centres managed by the Hospital Authority can create partnerships to offer more advanced health and social care in home care settings. Local Community Health Centres can provide home help and home-based rehabilitation services alongside IHCS teams. ***OHKF recommends the Government to apply the concept of the Health-Enabling Network to IHCS in order to establish a more integrated and person-centered care approach to home help. This requires existing IHCS teams and Community Health Centres to expand their service scope. OHKF advises the Government to explore strategies to increase manpower capacity through establishing career prospects for elderly service workers, offering supplementary training for existing workers, and using assistive technology and healthcare technology in home care settings (Pages 148-153).***

We hope the successful promotion and implementation of collaborative governance, chronic disease management, and the Health-Enabling Network can bolster IHCS and other long term care services in Hong Kong. Thank you again for your time, and we look forward to further discuss.

Sincerely,

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