



Your Ref. :
Our Ref. : SWD/LR/6-20/8
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29 January 2019

Ms Doris LO
Clerk to Public Works Subcommittee
Legislative Council Secretariat
Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Ms LO,

**Capital Works Reserve Fund Block Allocations
Head 710 Subhead A007GX
Development of Online Platform for Residential Care Homes
for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities**

We refer to the follow-up questions in respect of the above item as raised by Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG on 18 January 2019. The information is provided at Annex.

Yours sincerely,



(Ms Wong Yin-ye)
for Director of Social Welfare



c.c.

Secretary for Financial Services & the Treasury
Secretary for Labour & Welfare

(Attn: Ms. KWONG Sin Hang, Terri)
(Attn: Mr Mr. WU Chia-chun, Desmond)
(Attn: Miss TSE Wein Yin, Victoria)
(Attn: Ms. LAM Chi Ping, Christie)

Government Chief Information Officer

**Public Works Subcommittee
Finance Committee of the Legislative Council**

**Provision for Capital Works Reserve Fund block allocations in 2019-20
under Head 710 Subhead A007GX**

**Development of Online Platform for Residential Care Homes
for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities**

Supplementary Information

With respect to the 21 questions raised by Hon Fernando CHEUNG on 18 January 2019, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) provides a consolidated reply as follows –

- (1) The SWD plans to develop an Online Platform for Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (RCHEs) and Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities (RCHDs) with a view to enhancing communication with them through the use of information and communication technology, increasing efficiency of information dissemination, and facilitating their handling of licence applications/renewals, enrolment with training/briefing sessions, etc. Functions of the online platform include the homes' submission of documents on licence application and licensing-related matters through designated online accounts, their online enrolment of training/briefing sessions, and the SWD's online dissemination of information to and obtaining feedback from the homes. In other words, the online platform mainly facilitates the collection of documents and dissemination of information without involving any change to the existing workflow of handling licence applications/renewals and approving procedures, and will not have any impact on the processing time of licence applications / renewals.
- (2) The system support and maintenance service of the planned online platform will be taken up by outsourced contractor and the annual estimated expenditure is around \$300,000.
- (3) As at end-December 2018, there were altogether 735 RCHEs issued with licences under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance (Cap. 459) and 315 RCHDs issued with licences/certificate of exemptions (CoEs) under the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Ordinance (Cap. 613) in Hong Kong. At present, applicants for licences/CoEs must submit the application form and relevant supporting documents¹ by hand or by registered mail to the Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (LORCHE) and the Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities (LORCHD). Upon the development of the online platform,

¹ The documents to be submitted are set out in the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) and the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities.

applicants may choose online e-submission of documents to minimise the use of paper for environmental friendly purpose.

Furthermore, upon the development of the online platform, the LORCHE/LORCHD will be able to issue relevant circular memoranda and provide care-related guidelines to the RCHEs/RCHDs in a more efficient manner. Besides, the RCHEs/RCHDs may choose to nominate their staff online for enrolment with workshops/training courses, sharing/briefing sessions, and apply for relevant financial assistance, including full subsidies for home managers, health workers and care workers of all RCHEs/RCHDs in the territory to enrol in Qualifications Framework-based training courses under a five-year scheme to be launched by the SWD in 2019. The SWD will note the utilisation and encourage applicants to adopt the most efficient, convenient and cost-effective channels.

Upon the development of the online platform, it will be used by SWD staff of different ranks responsible for handling licence applications/renewals, preparing workshops/sharing/briefing sessions, implementing the Training Subsidy Scheme for Staff of Residential Care Homes, and conducting inspection visits.

- (4) As set out in the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) and the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities, applicants for licences/CoEs of RCHEs and RCHDs should submit a photocopy of the tenancy agreement in respect of the related premises (applicable to rented premises) as a proof of the permitted use of the premises for the operation of RCHE or RCHD. However, the SWD does not keep the average rental information and figures of RCHEs and RCHDs in the respective districts, nor does it have any plan to collect or keep rental information of RCHEs and RCHDs through the proposed online platform.
- (5) As set out in the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) and the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities, applicants for licences/CoEs of RCHEs and RCHDs should submit layout plans of the RCHE or RCHD concerned for assessment of the premises' compliance with the relevant building and fire safety requirements (e.g. escape routes, width of passages, various basic facilities), and the minimum area of floor space required for each resident. However, the layout plans of the RCHEs and RCHDs in general will not contain the area of floor space for each resident. Hence, the SWD will not be able to provide related information at the SWD Elderly Information Website or the SWD Information Website for RCHDs. The SWD does not have any plan to conduct analysis on the layout plans and related information or keep information on the area of floor space for each resident through the proposed online platform.
- (6) As set out in the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) and the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes for Persons with

Disabilities, applicants for licences/CoEs of RCHEs and RCHDs should submit staff employment record for assessment on their compliance with the statutory staffing requirements. The SWD does not keep information on the staff simultaneously employed by more than one home, nor does it collect information on salary or average figures of salary in respect of the home staff of different posts. At present, the SWD will follow up on cases relating to the simultaneous employment of staff by different residential care homes and their duty pattern. The SWD does not have any plan to collect or keep the staff salary information of the RCHEs and RCHDs through the proposed online platform.

- (7) According to the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) and the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities, RCHEs and RCHDs must establish and maintain a comprehensive and regularly updated record system, including record of residents, log book, record on application of restraints, record of accidents, death record, etc. The records should be properly kept inside the RCHEs or RCHDs for inspection by SWD inspectors on surprise checks, which are to ensure that the operation and management of the residential care homes comply with the licensing requirements. The SWD generally will not collect or keep records relating to the daily operation of the residential care homes or the residents' personal information, nor does it have any plan to collect or keep such information through the proposed online platform.