

23rd Meeting of the Elderly Commission

Summary for Press Briefing

The Elderly Commission (EC) held its 23rd meeting today (24 April 2001) with the following 4 items on the agenda:

(1) Themes of Future Work

- A thematic approach has been adopted by EC for its meetings since March 2000. Under this approach, each EC meeting will have a main theme and/or a sub-theme for discussion. Apart from facilitating a more systematic and comprehensive look at elder issues, the thematic approach can also enable EC to take a strategic view in planning its work.
- For EC's work in the next 18 months, the following themes/sub-themes have been proposed: -

For 2001

- (i) Planning for an Elder-friendly Environment
- (ii) Long-term Care : Home and Community Care Services – Integration of Day Services
- (iii) Financial Support for Elders In Need
- (iv) Long-term Care for Frail Elders
- (v) Lifelong Learning/Continuing Education for Elders
- (vi) Long-term Care : Manpower Training and Supply for Elder Care Services
- (vii) Healthy Ageing

For 2002

- (viii) Long-term Care : Quality Assurance for Residential Care Homes
- (ix) Long-term Care : Long-term Care Financing
- (x) Long-term Care : Care for Frail Elders with Special Needs – Dementia
- (xi) Care for Vulnerable Elders
- (xii) Active Ageing and Employment Opportunities for Elders
- (xiii) Long-term Care : Home and Community Care Services – Review of Various Home Help Services

(2) **Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy**

Stage One Public Consultation – Planning Objectives and Key Study Areas

- The Planning Department (PlanD) has briefed EC Members on the two-year study “Hong Kong 2030: Planning Vision and Strategy” and invited their views on the planning objectives and key study areas of the Study. The Study, consisting of four stages with wide public consultation at each stage, is intended to provide a long-term land use-transport-environmental planning framework to guide the development of Hong Kong over the next 30 years. Details of this Study are available at PlanD’s homepage (<http://www.info.gov.hk/planning>).
- For the current stage-one public consultation, PlanD has been soliciting views on the seven proposed planning objectives and the eight proposed key study areas – which will be used to guide the study and form the evaluation criteria for assessing the planning scenarios and options to be developed later.

(3) **Provision of Integrated Care Services for the Elders**

- The Government has commissioned a study to review the provision of community care and support services for elders living in the community, with a view to improving service integration, cost-efficiency and accessibility to elders. The Administration has briefed EC on a strategy, as detailed below, which was mapped out for implementation in the light of the study’s findings and recommendations.
- The changing demographic and socio-economic characteristics of older persons in the coming decades call for a different approach in service provision. A priority area of work in care for older persons is to promote healthy and active ageing. This will help to enhance the quality of life of the older persons and reduce the health and long term care cost borne by society. As regards long term care, the Administration aims to develop over time a care infrastructure which can facilitate provision of comprehensive and integrated long term care services tailor-made to suit individual needs.
- The Administration agrees with the consultants that we should in future plan and build integrated care facilities. For example, we can integrate day care centres (DEs) with multi-care centres (MEs), and elderly homes with DEs/MEs. The integrated facilities can benefit from synergy and flexibility in deployment of resources. The integrated care facilities should provide a full range of care and support services, including residential care (if there is a residential component in the

facility), home-based care, centre-based day care, respite, carer support and education, and should be adequately supported by appropriate medical and health services.

- The Administration shares the consultants' view that social centres should be transformed into Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs). They should move away from direct service provision where possible and facilitate access to services provided in the community. These new centres should take on greater responsibilities in promoting healthy and active ageing and in satisfying the psycho-social needs of older persons, including engaging the older persons in the operation of these centres.
- To put in place a planning infrastructure that is responsive to the changing needs of elders, the District Social Welfare Officers (DSWOs) would play a more active role in service planning and development. With their understanding of the needs of older persons in the districts, they can work with the existing service operators to identify service gaps and to facilitate the service integration process.
- The Government will commission a number of new projects in the integrated mode this year. Service operators would be invited to submit proposals on provision of integrated services in a flexible, innovative and cost-effective manner, by taking into account local service demand, area co-ordination and rationalization of existing services. The DSWOs will conduct district consultation on possible pilot projects in due course.

(4) **Findings on Elderly Households in the Survey of Housing Aspirations of Households (1999)**

- The Housing Bureau and PlanD have briefed EC Members on the key findings of the Survey on the Housing Aspirations (SHA) of the Elders which was carried out in 1999.
- EC Members have been invited to comment on the findings of the last SHA and to advise if additional information should be gathered in the next round of SHA which is expected to commence before end of this year.

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