

(Translation)

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**Elderly Commission**  
**Minutes of the 46th Meeting**

Room 2005, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central  
2:30 p.m., 18 May 2006 (Thursday)

**Present:**

**Chairman**

Dr the Honourable LEONG Che-hung, GBS, JP

**Vice-Chairman**

Prof CHAN Cheung-ming, Alfred, JP

**Members**

Dr NG Yau-yung, JP

Dr LUM Shun-sui, Susie

Ms WONG Yiu-ming, Anita

Mr CHAN Iu-seng, Star, BBS

Dr LAM Ching-choi, JP

Prof Jean WOO

Mr CHAN Chi-yuk, Kenneth

Mr CHAN Han-pan

Prof CHIU Fung-kum, Helen

Rev LAU Wai-ling, Dorothy, JP

Mr MA Chan-hang, Leo

Dr YAM Yin-chun, Loretta, BBS

Mr TANG Kwok-wai, Paul, JP

Director of Social Welfare

Mr Shane SOLOMON

Chief Executive of Hospital Authority

Mr LAU Kai-hung, JP Representative of Director of Housing  
Dr CHAN Wai-man, JP Representative of Director of Health

**In Attendance:**

Ms Sandra LEE, JP Permanent Secretary for Health and Welfare

Ms Salina YAN Deputy Secretary for  
Health, Welfare and Food

Mr FUNG Kin-yip, Eugene Principal Assistant Secretary for  
Health, Welfare and Food

Mrs Kathy NG Assistant Director (Elderly),  
Social Welfare Department

Mr William YIU Executive Director, Charities  
The Hong Kong Jockey Club

Ms Bonny WONG Head of Charities  
The Hong Kong Jockey Club

Adbrownies Advertising Ltd (In attendance for Agenda Item 5)

Mr Freely CHENG Principal Assistant Secretary for  
Health, Welfare and Food

Mrs Grace NG Project Management Officer,  
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

Ms Brandie CHAN Assistant Project Management Officer,  
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

Mrs YUK KWOK Lai-sum, Kitty Chief Social Work Officer,  
Social Welfare Department

Ms Grace CHAN Chief Social Work Officer,  
Social Welfare Department

Mrs Senna SMITH Executive Manager,  
Social Welfare Department

Mrs KWOK LI Mung-yee, Helen Senior Social Work Officer,  
Social Welfare Department

Ms IP Siu-ming Senior Social Work Officer,  
Social Welfare Department

} In Attendance for  
Agenda Item 2

} In Attendance for  
Agenda Item 6

Mr YAM Mun-ho	Senior Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Dr Daisy DAI	Senior Executive Manager, Hospital Authority
Dr THAM May-ked	Senior Medical and Health Officer, Department of Health
Dr. WONG Wai-ying	Senior Medical and Health Officer, Department of Health
Ms LOW Looi-looi	Senior Research Scientist, Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
Mr HUEN Chi-wai, Freeman	Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
Mr LAW Hok-yin, Anson	Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
Mr AU Kai-fung, Albert	Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
Ms POON Ming-soo, Bonita	Executive Officer, Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

**Absent with Apologies:**

Secretary for Education and Manpower

Mr CHEUNG Doi-ching	Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
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**Acting Secretary**

Ms Rosaline WONG	Chief Executive Officer, Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
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The Chairman, Dr the Honourable LEONG Che-hung, welcomed all to the meeting, in particular Ms Sandra LEE, Permanent Secretary for Health and Welfare, Mr William YIU and Ms Bonny WONG, representatives of the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC), as well as Mr

Shane SOLOMON, Chief Executive of the Hospital Authority (HA). The Chairman invited Ms LEE to say a few words.

2. Ms LEE pointed out that the growth in the elderly population would become much more pronounced in the coming two to three decades. The community should take an early preparation for this. She would like to see that both the Elderly Commission (EC) and the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB) would make concerted efforts to explore viable options to meet the challenges and promote active ageing with the ultimate aim of achieving social harmony and integration.

#### **Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of the Minutes of the 45th Meeting**

3. The minutes of the last meeting were endorsed without amendments.

#### **Agenda Item 2: Presentation on “CADENZA: A Jockey Club Initiative for Seniors”**

4. Mr William YIU and Ms Bonny WONG of the HKJC briefed Members on “CADENZA: A Jockey Club Initiative for Seniors”, a five-year project designed to meet the challenges brought about by our aging population. With HK\$380 million funding from the HKJC Charities Trust, the project aimed at changing the attitude of the general public towards the elderly, identifying viable new approaches to elderly care and upgrading the quality of elderly services.

5. In addition to offering training on gerontology to academics teaching social work at local tertiary institutions, the project would also provide carers of the elderly, including executives and frontline workers, with training and practice in elderly care, while inculcating into them the correct concept of elderly care. The project included subjects such as civic education to enhance the self-image of the elderly, encourage and promote inter-generational

solidarity, initiatives to pilot new approaches to elderly service models, as well as an evaluation of all the above initiatives.

6. Members welcomed the CADENZA project, and hoped that the project could help change the negative public perception towards elders and elderly care. A Member pointed out that it was common for elders overseas to participate in voluntary work after retirement. As most of the elders in Hong Kong were in good health, they could continue to contribute themselves to the community in a similar way.

7. Dr the Honourable LEONG Che-hung, the EC Chairman, said he was pleased that the HKJC and the EC shared the same vision in elderly matters. He hoped that both parties would join hands to work for the well-being of elders in Hong Kong.

8. Ms Salina YAN, Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food thanked the HKJC for its longstanding support for the Government's policy for the elderly, and for the financial support to non-profit-making bodies in promoting elderly care. She called on the HKJC's continual support for the development of elderly services in Hong Kong.

[Mr William YIU and Ms Bonny WONG left the meeting at this juncture.]

### **Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising**

#### **Paragraph 4 of the Minutes of the 45th Meeting**

#### **Enrolled Nurse Training Programme for the Welfare Sector**

9. Mrs Kathy NG, Assistant Director of the Social Welfare Department (SWD), reported that students of the first batch of the enrolled nurse training programme for the welfare sector were undertaking clinical placement, and that applications for the second batch training programme would close on 23 May 2006. For the second batch training programme,

she said that in order to attract more quality applicants from serving workers in the welfare sector, priority would still be given to applicants who were currently working in the welfare sector, with the targets widened to include serving clerical staff, social workers and programme assistants, etc.

10. A Member welcomed SWD and HA's move to continue organizing the training programme, but raised the concern that private residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) might encounter difficulties in recruiting nurses graduating from the programme, as nurses preferred working in hospitals and NGOs.

11. The Chairman noted that the Government had been doing its best in the training of enrolled nurses for the welfare sector, and in requiring graduates of the welfare-oriented enrolled nurse training programme to work in the welfare sector for at least two years as a means to help ease the nursing staff shortage problem faced by the sector. He pointed out that policy considerations aside, a consensus between the Government and the Nursing Council of Hong Kong would be necessary if full-fledged enrolled nurse training programme were to be organized.

**Agenda Item 4: Reports on the Progress of the Working Group on Long Term Care**  
**(LTC) Model and Working Group on Active Ageing (WGAA)**

12. Dr LAM Ching-choi, Chairman of the Working Group on LTC Model, reported that the Working Group had started preliminary discussions on the Fee Assistance Scheme (commonly known as the “money following the user” Scheme). It would initially look into the fundamental issues including the objectives of the Scheme, the effectiveness of the Scheme in addressing the existing challenges faced by LTC services and how the Scheme could facilitate the implementation of the concept of “ageing in place” at the same time.

13. A Member said he would like to see the Working Group and the Government committed to developing a forward-looking and sustainable Scheme and implement the Scheme at the earliest possible date. The Scheme should be conducive to the long-term and balanced development of elderly services, and the optimal use of public resources, with a view to providing subsidised elderly services to elders most in need.

14. The Chairman expressed his support for the direction adopted by the Working Group and stressed the importance of mindset change. He suggested that in order to further encourage families to share the responsibility of caring the elders, the Working Group might consider ways to commend carers for their caring attitude and contributions.

15. Prof Alfred CHAN, Chairman of the WGAA, reported the work progress of the Working Group. The WGAA had been promoting active ageing through a series of programmes, including TV and radio announcement of public interest (APIs) to enhance the image of elders, as well as seminars to encourage enterprises to organise pre-retirement planning programmes for their retiring staff. Besides, an exhibition on Silver Hair Market Fair would be organised later this year to promote the development of elderly consumer market. Members hoped that the above programmes might help drive home the message of “Active Ageing”.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Presentation of TV and Radio APIs on Active Ageing**

16. A representative of the Adbrownies Advertising Ltd. showed Members the revised version of the TV and Radio APIs. Members commented on details such as the content, colour scheme and voice-over of the APIs. Adbrownies said they would incorporate Members’ views into the APIs as far as possible and more editings would be expected. Each TV and Radio API lasted for 30 seconds and would be aired on television and radio for a period of six months.

## **Agenda Item 6: Social Capital Development and Inter-generational Initiatives -**

### **Progress Report by the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF)**

(Information Paper No. EC/I/01-06)

17. Mr Freely CHENG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food, briefed Members on the overall progress of the CIIF and its strategic focus for the coming year. Mrs Grace NG, CIIF Project Management Officer, then updated Members on the latest position of the CIIF by way of a PowerPoint and video clip presentation. She also provided Members with an assessment of the impact achieved since its establishment and highlighted relevance of its concepts, particularly the inter-generational solidarity and mentorship initiatives, to the EC. Since its establishment in 2002, the CIIF has approved a total of 102 projects, with about one quarter of them involved elders as core organisers or participants.

18. Last year, the CIIF commissioned a joint University Evaluation Consortium consisting of 16 academics from five local universities to perform research and assessment work. The Consortium reports were completed in March this year and the findings were encouraging. Apart from affirming the overall effectiveness of the CIIF's social capital development strategies, the Evaluation Consortium also confirmed that the CIIF strategies had effectively increased elders' community participation, sense of belonging and inter-generational solidarity, and developed elders' positive image. The Vice-Chairman, Prof Alfred CHAN, gave Members further information about the definition of social capital as well as the importance of inter-generational solidarity and community networks with regard to the development of social capital.

19. Members noted the findings of the report and put forward the following comments:

- (i) the CIIF strategies are appropriately positioned producing encouraging results;



- (ii) given its more abundant resources, the EC would like the CIIF to continue with its efforts to actively promote the role of elders in social capital building;
- (iii) It was hoped that the CIIF could take forward its work in the same direction as EC, encouraging elders to integrate into the inter-generational support networks in the community, enabling their positive aging within their own homes and facilitating their effective contribution to the community;
- (iv) It was hoped that the CIIF could collaborate with EC to facilitate elders' continuous contributions to the society in various respects, minimizing negative stereotyping of elders' roles;
- (v) All parties must persist with their efforts to promote social inclusion of elders, in view of the persistent age discrimination.

20. Mr Freely CHENG added that the CIIF had been adopting a proactive strategy and would extend some successful project models in collaboration with other NGOs to other districts.

21. Mrs Grace NG thanked Members for their time and said that she would provide them with the CIIF visit schedule via the EC Secretariat. Members were welcome to join the visits.

[Dr Loretta YAM left the meeting at this juncture.]

## **Agenda Item 7: Training for Formal and Informal Carers of the Elderly**

(Information Paper No. EC/I/02-06)

22. Mrs Kathy Ng briefed Members on the training programme for formal and informal carers of the elderly currently provided by the SWD, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), the Employees Retraining Board and other training institutes and service units. Formal carers included health workers and care workers, while informal carers generally referred to family members, relatives, neighbours and friends of the elders, domestic helpers and/or volunteers.

23. Dr CHAN Wai Man, Assistant Director of Health, elaborated on the support provided by the DH in this respect. Members noted that DH's Visiting Health Teams (VHTs) provided RCHEs with on-site training. Also, VHTs and HA's geriatric/psycho-geriatric teams had been working in collaboration with various professional bodies, training institutes and the private sector to provide educational programmes and training to informal carers.

24. Members expressed the following views:

### Training

- (i) Members generally felt that the Government and training institutes had offered diversified training options for carers to meet their different needs.
- (ii) Informal carers played a key role in taking care of elders who aged at home. The Government should in future develop more training programmes specifically for informal carers and raise their awareness of the importance of training.

- (iii) Many elders living in private residential care homes were extremely frail. The authorities or relevant organisations concerned should render assistance to those homes by providing their carers with the necessary training. They should also conduct a comprehensive review of the whole system to identify ways to attract young people to work in private residential care homes, to fill the gap in the supply of care staff in private residential care homes.

#### Job nature

- (iv) The job nature of carers was limited. Generally speaking, there were only two functional grades for care staff, namely health workers and nurses. Members proposed that EC should explore with the EMB on the feasibility of creating a new grade with training on nursing, rehabilitation and social work.

#### Social education

- (v) Considerations should be given to incorporating courses/activities on elderly care (e.g. “lifting and transfer” skills, etc.) into the extra-curricular activities of secondary school students.
- (vi) Should foster the concept of care for the elderly among the younger generation, so that they would, like their Japanese counterparts, be proud of taking care of the elderly, and take pride in joining the elderly care profession.

#### Others

- (vii) The efforts and contributions of carers had not been duly recognised by the public. The image of carers as a profession should be promoted. Thoughts

should also be given to identifying ways to enhance the promotional prospects of the carer profession.

[Ms Sandra LEE, Prof Jean WOO and Mr Leo MA left the meeting at this juncture.]

### **Agenda Item 8: Any Other Business**

#### **(1) Handling of drugs at RCHEs**

25. The Chairman invited Mrs Kathy NG to brief Members on the incidents regarding the earlier reports of mishandling of drugs at RCHEs and the follow-up actions taken by the SWD.

26. Mrs NG said that SWD's Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (LORCHE) was alerted by the HA in March this year that nine RCHE residents felt ill due to suspected intake of hypoglycaemic medication by mistake. LORCHE carried out investigations immediately. Among the nine cases involving RCHEs, one of them was already known to the SWD and the complaint had been substantiated. The SWD had taken enforcement and other follow-up actions against the RCHE, including issuing a warning letter to the RCHE while on-site training was provided by the Community Geriatric Assessment Team of the HA to enhance the knowledge of the RCHE staff on drug safety and management. As for the other eight cases, though it was unable to confirm if the RCHEs concerned had mishandled the medication of these elders, SWD referred the cases to the VHTs of the DH to hold talks on drug safety for the eight RCHEs concerned. LORCHE would continue to monitor closely the handling of medication for the elders in the RCHEs concerned.

27. In addition, Mrs NG said that SWD had revised the training courses for health workers early this year and raised the minimum educational requirement for enrollees of health worker courses from Form 3 to Form 5. In addition, both the course content and

training time on drug management were enhanced (from 6 to 12 hours). Drug management was made a compulsory examination subject.

28. Members noted that HWFB, SWD and DH would hold meetings with the HA, the local pharmaceutical professionals and the RCHE operators to explore ways to enhance the ability and knowledge of RCHE staff on drug management.

29. Mr Paul TANG, Director of Social Welfare, said that LORCHE had to act pursuant to the legal provisions when imposing penalty on RCHEs. Under the Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance, the SWD was required to give RCHEs in breach of the licensing requirements the opportunities to rectify the mistake and make improvements. Should the RCHEs fail to rectify and improve to the satisfaction of the SWD within the prescribed time, the SWD was empowered to impose penalty pursuant to the Ordinance including cancelling the license and/or instituting prosecutions against the RCHEs. In this particular case, LORCHE issued a warning letter to the RCHE concerned last year, instructing it to rectify the situation and take improvement measures promptly. A written note was also issued to its health worker, reminding him to discharge his duties diligently and in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Code of Practice for Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) failing which the SWD would consider deregistering him as a health worker. Apart from that, the VHTs of the DH had taken follow-up actions in the other eight RCHEs, and given talks on drug safety to their staff.

(2) **Consumer Council's report on the fees and charges of private RCHEs**

30. Mrs Kathy NG briefed Members on the findings of the survey jointly conducted by the SWD and the Consumer Council on the fees and charges of private RCHEs. The findings were published in the Choice Magazine on 15 May this year. She remarked that the report would enable the consumers to gain a better understanding of the fees, charges and

services of local private RCHEs, as well as the relevant considerations in choosing RCHEs. The SWD would expect the private RCHEs to take on board the Consumer Council's recommendations proactively and further increase the transparency of their fees and charges as and when possible. This would strengthen consumers' confidence and further enhance private RCHEs competitiveness in the market.

31. Mrs NG explained that private RCHEs were operating on a commercial basis. Their fees and charges are fixed according to market force just like any other businesses. Therefore the level of the fees and charges in private RCHEs were not subject to regulation by LORCHE. However, they were required by LORCHE to maintain a high degree of transparency, as far as reasonable and practicable, regarding their fees and charges and the basis upon which they were set.

32. Mrs NG added that SWD issued a circular letter entitled "Guidelines on Management of Elderly Residents' Belongings and Collection of Fees and Charges" and attached the Consumer Council's "Good Corporate Citizen's Guide" to all private RCHEs in early May this year to further remind them of the need to observe the relevant requirements of the guidelines and to urge them to follow the charging principles and guidelines proposed by the Consumer Council for the services sector.

**(3) Sharing Session of the Commission on Poverty and the Elderly Commission**

33. The Chairman reported to Members that he and the Chairmen of the two Working Groups held a meeting with the Commission on Poverty on 10 April during which issues like the social security system, ageing population and ageing in place were discussed.

**(4) The IFA 8th Global Conference**

34. The Chairman informed Members that he would attend the IFA Global Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark at the end of the month, together with several Members and colleagues from the HWFB, SWD and DH. Prof Alfred CHAN, the Vice-Chairman, and Ms Salina YAN of the HWFB would present the findings of the Study on Image of Ageing at the Conference. After the Conference the delegation would visit the local elderly services and technical aids for the elderly in Sweden. They would report to the EC on the experience gained from the Conference and the visit in due course.

**(5) Meeting with the Society for Community Organization**

35. Prof Alfred CHAN briefed Members on his meeting with some elders as arranged through the Society for Community Organization. The elders expressed their concern about those singleton elders who had no one to take care of their burial arrangements as their children had migrated. They enquired about whether their funeral service could be undertaken by voluntary agencies, how to notify the mourners and matters pertaining to the ritual hall, etc.

36. In response, Mr Paul TANG of the SWD remarked that, the elders might rest assured that, apart from the assistance long provided by the SWD, there were sufficient supportive services offered by the NGOs. For example, apart from the assistance offered to write last will and testaments, St. James' Settlement and Tung Wah Group of Hospitals would also organise talks to help the elders and their carers get acquainted with matters such as will making and funeral service. He added that CSSA recipients' families, relatives/friends, neighbours and even RCHEs could arrange funeral service for the deceased recipients. Application for special grant from the Social Security Field Unit of SWD could be made to

meet the burial expenses of the deceased recipients if situation warranted and the ceiling of the grant was \$10,450.

37. Members noted Prof CHAN's briefing and SWD's additional information.

**Date of Next Meeting**

38. The next EC meeting would be held on 21 September 2006 (Thursday).

**Time of Adjournment**

39. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

2 June 2006