

**Elderly Commission**  
**Minutes of the 88th Meeting**

Conference Room 4, G/F, Central Government Offices,  
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong  
10:00 a.m., 26 September 2016 (Monday)

**Present:**

**Chairman**

Dr LAM Ching-choi, BBS, JP

**Members**

Ms CHAN Man-ki, Maggie, MH, JP

Miss CHAN Man-yee, Grace

Mr CHEUNG Leong

Prof LEE Tze-fan, Diana, JP

Mr SHIE Wai-hung, Henry

Mrs SO CHAN Wai-hang, Susan, BBS

Dr TSE Man-wah, Doris

Dr TUNG Sau-ying, MH

Mr WONG Fan-foung, Jackson, BBS, MH

Mr WONG Kit-loong

Mr WONG Tai-lun, Kenneth

Mrs WONG WONG Yu-sum, Doris

Dr YEUNG Ka-ching

Miss TAM Kam-lan, Annie, GBS, JP

Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Mr NIP Tak-kuen, Patrick, JP

Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health)

Ms Carol YIP, JP

Director of Social Welfare

Ms PANG Kit-ling

Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly)

Mr TSOI Wai-tong, Martin

Assistant Director of Housing (Estate Management) (1)

Dr LEE Siu-yin, Ruby, JP

Consultant Family Medicine (Elderly Health Service), Department of Health

**In attendance:**

Miss CHANG Lai-chu, Stella

Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Mr TSE Ling-chun, Steve

Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Ms CHEUNG Jick-man, Lilian	Chief Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Ms CHU Wing-yin, Diana	Chief Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Mr TSE Shu-to, Sebastian	Chief Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Mr CHOW Cheung-pong	Senior Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Ms HO Suk-fun	Senior Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Ms POON Hau-yuk	Senior Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Ms YEW Suet-yi, Mary	Senior Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Ms YU Siu-ngan, Tammy	Senior Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department
Miss LO Chung-man, Florence	Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Mr TO Yick-ting, Justin	Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Mr LEUNG Sing-lung, Edric	Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Miss LEE Ngan-chau, Martina	Chief Executive Officer, Labour and Welfare Bureau
Miss HO Wing-wa, Vitinie	Executive Officer, Labour and Welfare Bureau
Miss LEE Hoi-kei, Jacqueline	Executive Officer, Labour and Welfare Bureau
Miss LEUNG Pui-yin, Sam	Executive Officer (Designate), Labour and Welfare Bureau

**Absent with apologies:**

Mrs CHAN LUI Ling-ye, Lilian  
Mr LAM Hoi-cheung, Victor, JP  
Dr Vivian LOU Wei-qun

**Secretary**

Mr CHONG Kwok-wing, Gordon                      Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare

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Dr LAM Ching-choi, the Chairman, welcomed Members to the meeting. In particular, he welcomed Mr Patrick NIP Tak-kuen, Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health), Mr Martin TSOI Wai-tong, Assistant Director of Housing (Estate Management) (1), and Dr Ruby LEE Siu-yin, Consultant Family Medicine (Elderly Health

Service) of the Department of Health, who attended the meeting for the first time.

2. The Chairman reminded Members to make a declaration when there was a potential conflict between their own interests and the matters to be discussed.

### **Agenda item 1: Confirmation of the minutes of the 87th meeting**

3. As Members had not proposed any amendments to the Chinese (revised) and English versions of the draft minutes issued by the Secretariat on 20 September 2016, the minutes were confirmed.

### **Agenda item 2: Matters arising**

4. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the 87th meeting.

### **Agenda item 3: 2017-18 Elderly Welfare Services Suggestions and Priorities**

(Discussion Paper No. EC/D/03-16)

5. The Chairman said that the Social Welfare Advisory Committee (SWAC) had submitted the Report on Long-term Social Welfare Planning in Hong Kong to the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) in July 2011. In the report, the SWAC suggested that the Government should conduct regular consultation and planning for the future development and delivery of welfare services every year at district, central and advisory committee (including the Elderly Commission) levels. As such, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) would collect views from districts annually through its District Social Welfare Officers, while the Hong Kong Council of Social Service would assist in consolidating the views of various stakeholders on elderly services at the welfare organisation level.

6. Mr Gordon CHONG Kwok-wing, Secretary to the Commission, advised that the comments made by welfare organisations and stakeholders on the 2017-18 Elderly Welfare Services Suggestions and Priorities were set out in the Discussion Paper No. EC/D/03-16, which had been distributed for Members' reference before the meeting. Mr CHONG then briefed Members on the discussion paper and invited Members to express their views on the 2017-18 welfare issues and suggestions, which would provide useful reference for the Government in preparing the 2017 Policy Address.

7. The Chairman and Members raised the following views in respect of the discussion paper and issues relating to elderly services:

Promoting active ageing

- (a) The Government could further promote the participation of elderly persons in voluntary services. For example, the “healthy young old” could be encouraged to assist in taking care of the frail elderly persons in the neighbourhood. This would relieve the manpower shortage of the elderly service sector and support elderly persons to “age in place”. The Government could also consider offering some kind of accreditation to those who had received carer training, thereby attracting more people to become carers for elderly persons.
- (b) The Government should support the industrial and commercial sectors in employing elderly persons by implementing policy measures such as preferential tax treatments and exemption from making Mandatory Provident Fund contributions. The Government could also encourage the sectors to create an elderly-friendly working environment in order to meet the needs of different elderly employees.
- (c) The Commission was pleased to note that the Labour Department would implement measures to motivate elderly persons to remain in or rejoin the workforce. To create more job opportunities for elderly persons who were lacking in professional knowledge and could not work on a full-time basis, the Government could encourage elderly centres to employ them as part-time assistants to provide some simple services for elderly persons in need.
- (d) To facilitate job matching between employers and elderly persons, the Government could consider setting up an online job market platform specifically for employers who were interested in employing elderly persons to publish their job offers. The Government could also act as a facilitator or promoter by providing well educated retirees with a platform on which those who intended to start their own business could exchange views and communicate with one another.
- (e) The Employees Retraining Board might conduct a comprehensive study on the employment market for retirees with a view to promoting employment of

elderly persons.

- (f) In the long run, the Government could consider reviewing the nature of the services provided by District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of these centres in promoting age-friendly communities.
- (g) When formulating future policies on elderly services, the Government should take into account the changes in the structure of the elderly population, including the education attainment and financial conditions of elderly persons to ensure that related measures could meet their actual needs.

#### Strengthening community and residential care services

- (h) Under the policy objective of “Ageing in Place”, the Government should, apart from funding the provision of community care services and improvement of community facilities for elderly persons, allocate additional resources to in-flat facilities alteration works for creating a suitable living environment for elderly persons in need. Moreover, through relevant provisions in the building-related legislation and policy measures, the Government could encourage private developers to adopt universal design to ensure that the buildings constructed were readily accessible to people with different needs.
- (i) Taking into consideration that the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) had housing estates specifically designed for elderly persons, a Member suggested the Housing Department (HD) to draw on the experience of HKHS for planning its public rental housing (PRH) estates with many elderly persons. HD could consider modifying the flats on the lower three floors to make them more elderly-friendly, so that elderly tenants could be transferred to these flats to facilitate the promotion of “Ageing in Place”.
- (j) A Member asked if it was possible to visit the flats built by HD under its Housing for Senior Citizens (HSC) Scheme and other elderly-friendly facilities in various PRH estates so as to gain a better understanding of the current living conditions and housing needs of elderly persons.
- (k) The Government should consider ways to apply modern technology and data analysis in formulating the policy on “Ageing in Place”. This would allow

more effective deployment of resources to suitable areas for serving more elderly persons.

- (l) The conditions for “Ageing in Place” varied from district to district, depending on the characteristics and situations of individual communities. As such, the Government should encourage districts to study and implement suitable “Ageing in Place” programmes in the future, having regard to their own actual circumstances and needs. A Member suggested putting “Needs of Elderly Persons” as a standing item on the agenda of Estate Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) meetings, so that the needs of the elderly would be brought to the attention of the EMACs from time to time.
- (m) As most of the community support services were available only during general office hours, support could not be provided for elderly persons on a round-the-clock basis. As such, the Commission should, in formulating the Elderly Services Programme Plan (ESPP), review the operating hours of various community care and health services with a view to meeting the elderly persons’ demand for such services.
- (n) The Commission might convene conferences with “Ageing in Place” as the theme on a regular basis so as to provide a platform to facilitate exchange and collaboration among stakeholders.
- (o) The Commission was pleased to note that the Government had, since 2014-15, allocated an additional recurrent funding of some \$22 million to 41 DECCs for employing more social workers to address the needs of demented elderly persons and their carers. The Commission believed that this would help enhance the support services provided by these centres for elderly persons with dementia living in the community as well as their carers.

#### Elderly services facilities and manpower planning

- (p) An increasing number of residential care places and day care service places for elderly persons would result in a growing demand for manpower. The Government should explore ways to make the primary care profession more attractive to newcomers and retain existing staff. For example, the Government could increase the supply of primary care personnel by improving the career ladder of the entire profession.

- (q) Introduced in 2015, the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services would provide a total of 1 000 training places for young people to take up care work in residential care homes for elderly persons. A Member enquired about the current utilisation rate of training quotas, which might shed light on the effectiveness of the scheme. In addition, taking into account the higher occupational mobility of young employees, the SWD should, apart from encouraging young people to join the elderly and rehabilitation care services sectors through such initiatives as the aforementioned scheme, explore ways to encourage those who had completed training to further their development in the care services sector.

#### Others

- (r) As problems relating to ageing of ethnic minorities started to surface, the Government should examine the needs of ethnic minority elderly persons and their demand for elderly services.

8. In response to the suggestions and comments made by Members, Miss Annie TAM Kam-lan, Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Patrick NIP Tak-kuen, Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health), Ms Carol YIP, Director of Social Welfare, Ms PANG Kit-ling, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly), and Mr Martin TSOI Wai-tong, Assistant Director of Housing (Estate Management) (1), replied as follows:

#### Promoting active ageing

- (a) The LWB would, in consultation with the Employees Retraining Board and welfare organisations, explore the feasibility of giving those who had completed carer training exemption from taking certain modules when they enrolled in the related health worker training courses. This would strengthen the bridging between the two types of training, thereby attracting more people to the elderly service and rehabilitation care service sectors.
- (b) When formulating the ESPP, the Government had taken into account the demographic changes in the community and the ageing population. The issue of retirement age for elderly persons might be revisited in the review of the ESPP in the future.
- (c) The Government, in collaboration with welfare organisations and stakeholders,

would continue to consider ways to further promote the employment of the elderly with different qualifications and skills.

#### Strengthening community and residential care services

- (d) HSC, a form of hostel-type housing provided by HD for elderly tenants in the past, was not well received by the elderly tenants because they had to share common facilities such as kitchen and toilet. In view of this, HD had stopped building HSC.
- (e) HD had adopted the concept of “universal design” in its new PRH estates since 2002 to promote “Ageing in Place” and create a harmonious environment for people with different physical abilities. For PRH estates built before 2002, HD had carried out improvement works according to the actual circumstances to cater for the needs of elderly tenants. HD could make arrangements for Members’ visit to the above estates.
- (f) The EMACs would, in collaboration with various organisations, regularly hold activities to promote home safety and healthy living for elderly persons.
- (g) Any changes in the current design of PRH estates or transfer of elderly tenants would involve complicated issues such as resource deployment, administrative measures, transfer arrangements and building modifications. HD had to be prudent when considering the proposals.
- (h) The Government was making inter-departmental efforts actively to develop a suitable platform for promoting exchange and collaboration between welfare organisations and technology companies. The aim was to encourage the use of technology to improve elderly services.

#### Elderly services facilities and manpower planning

- (i) The Government was conducting a strategic review of the healthcare manpower planning and professional development in Hong Kong. The review, which covers 13 statutorily regulated healthcare professions, was at the final stage and the review report was expected to be published in early 2017. The report would provide recommendations on the manpower supply of the said healthcare disciplines in the light of, among others, the service demand in healthcare institutions and the welfare sector.



- (j) Starting from the 2012-13 academic year, the Government had increased the number of degree places in the occupational therapy and physiotherapy programmes funded by the University Grants Committee. In addition, the self-financing degree programme in occupational therapy (providing 50 places a year) offered by the Tung Wah College was currently undergoing professional accreditation. It was expected that these measures would help alleviate the shortage of allied health professionals in the welfare sector.
- (k) The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) and the LWB had kept in view the shortage of primary care personnel in the healthcare and welfare sectors. They would continue to explore possibilities and formulate measures to strengthen the attractiveness to newcomers of working in these sectors and retain existing staff.
- (l) The SWD was exploring, in collaboration with the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, the setting up of a clear qualifications framework for health worker training courses. The framework would give those who were interested in joining the health worker profession a clear direction for career development and offer a well-defined career ladder for primary care personnel.
- (m) According to the SWD, the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services had recruited 555 trainees up to 20 September 2016. As the non-governmental organisations concerned were still inviting enrolment for the scheme, the number of trainees was likely to further increase. However, given the challenge posed by an ageing population and a shrinking workforce, the number of trainees still fell far short of the demand for primary care personnel in the welfare sector, and manpower shortage was expected to continue for some time in the near future. In view of this, the Government would discuss the short-term contingency measures with the labour sector. For long-term options, recommendations would be made in the ESPP on ways to strengthen elderly services facilities and manpower planning.

#### Others

- (n) The LWB would discuss with stakeholders the need of ethnic minority elderly persons for elderly services, with a view to providing them with appropriate support.

9. In conclusion, the Chairman said that the Commission had noted the 2017-18 Elderly Welfare Services Suggestions and Priorities put forward by the SWAC. As the FHB was conducting a strategic review of the healthcare manpower planning and professional development and had commissioned the Chinese University of Hong Kong to study the implications of ageing population for the long-term development of healthcare services, he hoped that the FHB would, upon completion of the review and the study, brief Members on the review findings.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Progress Reports by Working Groups and Committee**

##### Working Group on Elderly Services Programme Plan

10. The Chairman said that the Working Group on Elderly Services Programme Plan had finished the discussion about the initial recommendations relating to the 19 topics of concern at its 9th meeting held on 23 August 2016. Based on the views of the Working Group, the consultant team from The University of Hong Kong had drafted a report for the “Consensus Building Stage” and would submit it at the meeting on 27 September 2016 for the Working Group’s consideration. Upon completion of the report, the Working Group would launch public engagement exercises in 18 districts starting from October 2016 to gather views of stakeholders and members of the public on the initial framework and recommendations of the ESPP.

##### Working Group on Active Ageing

11. Mr Gordon CHONG Kwok-wing, Secretary to the Commission, informed the meeting that following the launch of the Funding Scheme for Age-friendly Community on 1 April 2016, the 18 districts had been implementing subsidised projects relating to age-friendly community. Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing and Sai Kung had obtained accreditation from the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2015 and became the first batch of “age-friendly communities” in Hong Kong. The Southern District obtained the accreditation in September 2016 and became the fourth age-friendly community in Hong Kong. Other districts were also encouraged to actively participate in the accreditation scheme.

12. The Chairman supplemented that he attended a conference on healthy cities held by WHO in South Korea in August 2016. At the conference, he gave a briefing on the proactive bottom-up approach adopted by Hong Kong to promoting age-friendly communities. The efforts made by Hong Kong were highly appreciated by other

participants of the conference.

#### Committee on Elder Academy Development Foundation

13. Mr CHONG said that the Vetting Sub-committee of the Elder Academy Development Foundation (EADF) had held a meeting on 27 July 2016 to consider the first round of funding applications for 2016-17. The EADF Committee had endorsed the recommendations of the Vetting Sub-committee. Funding would be allocated to 27 successful applicants in early October 2016. The deadline for the second round of funding applications for 2016-17 was 31 October 2016. The Secretariat would step up publicity to encourage school sponsoring bodies to participate in the Elder Academy Scheme.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Any other business**

14. There was no other business for discussion at the meeting.

#### **Time of adjournment**

15. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

#### **Date of next meeting**

16. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for 7 December 2016.

November 2016