

Elderly Commission
Minutes of the 92nd Meeting

Conference Room 4, G/F, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong
3:00 p.m., 1 September 2017 (Friday)

Present:

Chairman

Dr LAM Ching-choi, BBS, JP

Members

Ms CHAN Mei-kit, Maggie, MH
Ms CHAN Yee-ching, Tammy
Mr CHUA Hoi-wai
Ms CHUNG Wai-yee, Diana
Mr LAM Hoi-cheung, Victor, JP
Prof LEE Tze-fan, Diana, JP
Ms LI Fai, Grace
Ms LO Dak-wai, Alexandra, JP
Dr LOU Wei-qun, Vivian
Dr PANG Fei-chau
Mrs SO CHAN Wai-hang, Susan, BBS
Dr TSE Man-wah, Doris
Mr WONG Kit-loong
Ms CHANG King-yiu, JP

Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly)
Assistant Director of Housing (Estate Management) (1)
Assistant Director of Health (Family and Elderly Health Services)
Director (Strategy and Planning), Hospital Authority

Ms PANG Kit-ling

Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly)

Mr TSOI Wai-tong, Martin

Assistant Director of Housing (Estate Management) (1)

Dr LI Mun-pik, Teresa

Assistant Director of Health (Family and Elderly Health Services)

Dr LEE Ha-yun, Libby

Director (Strategy and Planning), Hospital Authority

In attendance:

Mr CHEN Yee, Donald, JP

Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Miss CHANG Lai-chu, Stella

Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Ms CHU Wing-yin, Diana

Chief Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department

Ms WOO Mei-hing, Patricia

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 NG Lai-sheung, Ruby	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
Mr POON Leung-hoi, Leo	Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Ms YU Sin-ting, Cindy	Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Ms LEE Ngan-chau, Martina	Chief Executive Officer, Labour and Welfare Bureau
Miss LEUNG Pui-yin, Sam	Executive Officer, Labour and Welfare Bureau

Absent with apologies:

Mr CHEUNG Leong	
Mr WONG Tai-lun, Kenneth	
Dr YEUNG Ka-ching	
Ms TSE Man-yee, Elizabeth, JP	Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health)

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 extended his welcome to new Members of the Commission, including Ms CHAN Mei-kit, Maggie, Ms CHAN Yee-ching, Tammy, Mr CHUA Hoi-wai, Ms CHUNG Wai-yee, Diana, Ms LI Fai, Grace, Ms LO Dak-wai, Alexandra and Dr PANG Fei-chau. He also welcomed Ms CHANG King-yiu, the new Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare and Ms TSE Man-yee, Elizabeth, the new Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health). Ms TSE was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments. The Chairman also expressed his sincere gratitude to outgoing Members, including Mrs

CHAN LUI Ling-yee, Lilian, Ms CHAN Man-ki, Maggie, Miss CHAN Man-yee, Grace, Mr SHIE Wai-hung, Henry, Dr TUNG Sau-ying, Mr WONG Fan-foung, Jackson and Mrs WONG WONG Yu-sum, Doris for their contribution to the Commission during their tenure.

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 91st meeting

3. As Members had not proposed any amendments to the Chinese (revised) and English (revised) versions of the draft minutes issued by the Secretariat on 11 August 2017 and 28 August 2017 respectively, the minutes were confirmed.

Agenda item 2: Matters arising

4. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the 91st meeting.

Agenda item 3: 2018-19 Elderly Welfare Services Suggestions and Priorities

(Discussion Paper No. EC/D/03-17)

5. Mr CHEN Yee, Donald, Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare, said that the Social Welfare Advisory Committee 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 Committee suggested that the Government should conduct regular consultation and planning for the future development and delivery of welfare services every year at the district, central and advisory committee (including the Elderly Commission) levels. In this connection, 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 suggestions made by various stakeholders on elderly services at the welfare organisation level. He indicated that suggestions and views made by welfare organisations and stakeholders on the 2018-19 Elderly Welfare Services Suggestions and Priorities mainly covered four areas, namely, strengthening dementia services, improving the allowance for carers, enhancing end-of-life care services in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (RCHEs) and welfare planning. The suggestions

and views were set out in the Discussion Paper No. EC/D/03-17, which had been distributed for Members' reference before the meeting. Mr CHEN invited Members to express their views on the 2018-19 welfare issues and suggestions, which would provide useful reference for the Government in preparing the Policy Address.

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

Strengthening dementia services

- (a) The Government could consider further extending the coverage of the Dementia Supplement to private RCHEs not participating in the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme with a view to enhancing the care and support provided by these RCHEs for elderly persons with dementia and their carers.
- (b) Members considered that offering assistance to carers of the elderly in forming mutual support groups could foster mutual support among carers at the district and neighbourhood levels, thereby achieving the aim of promoting self-reliance. Apart from reserving sites in the community for mutual support groups to provide day respite services and mutual support activities for elderly persons, the Government should also consider providing emotional support for carers.
- (c) Members pointed out that elderly persons with dementia were generally more prone to other diseases as they grew older. In providing care services for elderly persons with dementia, the Government should also meet their care and nursing needs arising from other diseases with the objective of rendering holistic care in mind.

Increasing the allowance for carers

- (d) Members were pleased to note that the Government had launched Phase II of the Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low Income Families in October 2016. In its future evaluation of the Pilot Scheme, the Government should take into account factors like inflation and increase the monthly allowance for carers to an amount between \$3,000 and \$4,000.

Enhancing support for terminally-ill elderly residents of RCHEs

- (e) Members hoped that the Government could implement the strategic plan for promoting palliative care and end-of-life care services as soon as possible. They also expected that, upon completion of the three-year commissioned study conducted by The Chinese University of Hong Kong on the impact of an ageing population on the long-term development of healthcare services, the Government would brief the Commission on the findings so that the Commission could initiate discussion on the subject.
- (f) Members were of the view that the services provided by the community geriatric assessment teams were effective in supporting the terminally-ill elderly residents of RCHEs and could help improve the service quality of RCHEs. The Hospital Authority (HA) should further strengthen the services of these teams and work in partnership with RCHEs to render support for the terminally-ill elderly residents of RCHEs in all the districts across the territory.

Welfare planning

- (g) The Commission was pleased to note that the Elderly Services Programme Plan (ESPP) had recommended the reinstatement of the planning ratios for elderly services in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines. It was expected that the LWB and the SWD would discuss with the Development Bureau and the Planning Department as soon as possible on how the recommendation could be implemented, especially the proposed plan of providing one Neighbourhood Elderly Centre (NEC) or District Elderly Community Centre (DECC) in each new or redeveloped public rental housing estate and new residential area to support “ageing-in-place” for elderly persons and facilitate the development of the medical-social collaboration service model.
- (h) Noticing that the existing elderly facilities in some old districts with a higher proportion of elderly persons were insufficient to meet the demand of the elderly persons living there due to environmental constraints, the Commission proposed that apart from reserving adequate sites in new public rental housing estates and new residential areas for premises for elderly services, the Government should also conduct regular reviews to improve the elderly facilities in old districts.

- (i) The Commission suggested that the Government might consider operating some services of the DECCs and NECs under the self-programming group model on a trial basis to engage more elderly persons in organising recreational and social activities in these centres so that social welfare personnel, such as social workers, could focus on the provision of professional services.
- (j) In reviewing the functions and roles of DECCs and NECs, the SWD should enhance the understanding and management of the members of these centres so that members with different needs could use appropriate services while resources could be consolidated under a triage system.
- (k) The Housing Department (HD) might draw reference from the House Captain Projects implemented in the estates of the Hong Kong Housing Society, under which residents of the estates voluntarily served as house captains to watch over elderly persons and other people in need in the neighbourhood. Through developing a spirit of mutual assistance in the neighbourhood, the demand for professional carers could be reduced.
- (l) Moreover, the HD might consider in its estates providing suitable facilities in the public space not intended for residential or other purposes so as to provide places for residents to get together and hold activities, thereby enhancing mutual support networks in the neighbourhood.
- (m) Ways to optimise utilisation of space in RCHEs should be explored. Specifically, the provision of additional day care and respite services for elderly persons in existing RCHEs should be strengthened in order to meet the increasing demand for the services. A platform should also be provided for elderly persons living in the district to learn more about the services and environment of RCHEs.
- (n) In face of population ageing and under the policy of ageing-in-place, elderly persons in need of residential care services in the future would probably be the more severely impaired elderly persons requiring long-term care services. In the long run, the Government should increase the supply of care and attention places and nursing home places to meet the demand of elderly persons for long-term care services.
- (o) The Government should actively promote the development and application of gerontechnology to enhance the quality of elderly services and ease the manpower shortage of the elderly care sector.

- (p) Noting the inadequacy of the rehabilitation services currently provided for elderly persons at the community level, the Commission suggested that the Government should enhance the community rehabilitation services for elderly persons who would prefer ageing in place in its future planning of welfare facilities and manpower.

Others

- (q) The Government should explore ways to further promote medical-social collaboration and strengthen the interface between elderly services and healthcare services.

7. In response to the views raised by Members, Ms PANG Kit-ling, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly), and Dr LEE Ha-yun, Libby, Director (Strategy and Planning) of the Hospital Authority, replied as follows:

Enhancing support for terminally-ill elderly residents of RCHEs

- (a) The HA planned to further strengthen the end-of-life care and support provided by the community geriatric assessment teams for terminally-ill elderly residents of RCHEs in 2018-19 and extend the services to all teams, with a view to supporting more terminally-ill elderly residents, improving their quality of healthcare and offering relevant training to RCHE staff.

Welfare planning

- (b) The SWD had reviewed the Schedule of Accommodation for elderly services and raised the standard of the net operational floor areas of NECs and DECCs. The SWD had been helping these centres meet the prescribed accommodation standards by extension, relocation or setting up sub-bases. For those centres yet to attain the prescribed standards, the SWD would continue to identify suitable sites through other departments such as the HD and the Government Property Agency.
- (c) Apart from obtaining community support services at NECs and DECCs, elderly persons in need could also obtain professional services for themselves and their families through the Integrated Family Service Centres in their respective districts.

Others

- (d) The HA was planning to further strengthen and improve collaboration and exchanges between its hospital clusters and welfare organisations in the respective clusters so as to foster medical-social collaboration.

8. The Chairman concluded that the Commission had noted the Social Welfare Advisory Committee's suggestions and proposed priorities on the 2018-19 elderly services issues and offered its opinions on various aspects. To sum up, the Commission opined that the Government should promote the development and application of gerontechnology by allocating additional resources and formulating facilitating policies to enhance the quality of elderly services and relieve the manpower shortage in the sector. Regarding the promotion of the community participation in elderly care services, the Commission noted that the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund was currently funding various service projects to support elderly singletons and elderly couples living in the community. The Commission was of the view that the Fund should consider regularising this type of service projects in the future so as to encourage the participation of different social service agencies. By engaging the community, elderly care services could be provided in a more cost-effective manner.

9. The Commission also suggested that the Government might consider operating some services of the DECCs and NECs under the self-programming group model on a pilot basis and explore ways to optimise utilisation of space in existing RCHEs in order to meet the increasing demand for services. To further promote medical-social collaboration and strengthen the interface between elderly services and healthcare services, the Commission might consider holding meetings or forums and inviting the participation of the HA and social welfare organisations so as to facilitate the exchange of views and promotion of partnership.

(Post-meeting note: A forum is scheduled to be held on 17 January 2018 (p.m.).)

Agenda item 4: Pilot Scheme on Training for Foreign Domestic Helpers on Elderly Care

10. Ms PANG Kit-ling, Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Elderly), briefed Members on the Pilot Scheme on Training for Foreign Domestic Helpers on Elderly Care (the Pilot Scheme) with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation. Ms PANG said that, as stated in the

2016 Policy Address, the Government would invite the Lotteries Fund to consider implementing a pilot scheme to enhance training for foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) in taking care of elderly persons with a view to facilitating ageing-in-place for frail elderly persons. The SWD, the Department of Health (DH) and DECCs operated by non-governmental organisations would work together to implement the Pilot Scheme and provide free elderly care training for a total of 300 FDHs in three districts, with one in Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories respectively. The objectives would be to equip FDHs with basic knowledge and skills for taking care of frail elderly persons, helping elderly persons develop a healthy lifestyle which would in turn reduce their potential health risks, and enhancing their quality of life in the community. The training would be provided in the form of groups, with a maximum of 30 FDHs in each group. Classroom teachings, skills demonstration and practical sessions would be conducted by nurses, dietitians, physiotherapists and occupational therapists of the DH, covering eight core and four elective subjects. During the classes, DECCs would arrange activities for the elderly persons under the care of those FDHs. Trainees would be awarded a certificate of attendance upon completion of the training. The Government would seek funding from the Lotteries Fund for the implementation and publicity of the Pilot Scheme while the related administrative costs incurred would be borne by the SWD and the DH respectively. The Government proposed that the Pilot Scheme be launched in March 2018 for a period of 18 months.

11. After the briefing, the Chairman and Members raised the following suggestions, views and questions:

- (a) The Commission was pleased to note the Government's plan to launch the Pilot Scheme and considered it conducive to enhancing FDHs' skills for taking care of elderly persons, thereby improving their quality of life. However, the 300 training places could only serve a small portion of the total number of FDHs in Hong Kong. The Commission therefore suggested an increase of the number of training places if the Pilot Scheme was well received so that more FDHs would be given the opportunity to receive the training.
- (b) Would only domestic helpers from the Philippines be invited to join the Pilot Scheme?
- (c) Members envisaged difficulties in recruiting trainees and therefore suggested the provision of training in the form of small classes of around 10 to 20 trainees each, so that FDHs could have more opportunities to ask questions and practise in class.

- (d) The Commission suggested that the Government should actively publicise the Pilot Scheme through different channels. For instance, the Government might cooperate with District Council members to promote this scheme to the elderly persons and their FDHs within their districts.
- (e) A Member was concerned that FDHs might request a pay rise or quit their jobs after receiving the training. To safeguard the interests of employers, a condition might be added under the Pilot Scheme requiring a participating FDH to obtain the recommendation or consent of his/her employer or even undertake to continue working for his/her employer for a specified period of time/until the end of contract.
- (f) Employers should also be encouraged to participate in the training so that they would be able to assess the FDHs' level of elderly care skills after the training.

12. In response to the suggestions, views and questions raised by Members, Ms PANG and Dr LI Mun-pik, Teresa, Assistant Director of Health (Family and Elderly Health Services), replied as follows:

- (a) The target trainees of the Pilot Scheme were FDHs from different countries, including the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. Simultaneous interpretation services would be provided in class to ensure that FDHs of different nationalities would understand the content being delivered.
- (b) While the maximum number of trainees in a group would be set at 30, arrangements would be made for a class to commence once the number of enrolment reached 10. The SWD would launch publicity activities and make use of the network and service experience of DECCs in recruiting FDHs within their districts to participate in the Pilot Scheme.
- (c) Employers were also encouraged to participate in the Pilot Scheme. Under the Pilot Scheme, a training package would be provided for employers to ensure that they had knowledge of the content of the training received by their FDHs, and employers would be invited to give their views on the effectiveness of the training programme upon its completion. In addition, employers would be welcome to attend the training classes together with their FDHs.
- (d) In order to attract wider participation of FDHs, classes under the Pilot Scheme would be provided free of charge. During the classes, support services would be provided by DECCs for elderly persons in need.

- (e) Subject to the timing of the training courses (i.e. whether it would fall within or outside the FDHs' working hours), the Government would examine whether a recommendation or prior consent is required from employers for their FDHs to participate in the Pilot Scheme.
- (f) As the objective of the Pilot Scheme would be to equip FDHs with basic knowledge and skills for taking care of elderly persons, the certificates issued would only serve as proof of attendance at the training classes, but not as certificates of qualification.

13. In conclusion, the Chairman indicated that the Commission gave its full support to such a landmark scheme and opined that the response to the scheme and its effectiveness might serve as reference when the Government reviewed how supportive services could be strengthened to facilitate “ageing-in-place” in the future so as to ease the huge demand of long-term care services for the elderly.

Agenda Item 5: Progress Reports by Working Groups and Committee

Working Group on Elderly Services Programme Plan

14. The Chairman said that the Working Group on Elderly Services Programme Plan had completed the formulation of the ESPP in June this year and would follow up and oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the ESPP on a regular basis.

Working Group on Active Ageing

15. Mr Gordon CHONG Kwok-wing, Secretary to the Commission, said that at present, nine districts, namely Tsuen Wan, Kwai Tsing, Sai Kung, the Southern District, Kwun Tong, Sha Tin, Tai Po, North District and Wan Chai had been accredited by the World Health Organization as age-friendly communities.

Committee on Elder Academy Development Foundation

16. Mr CHONG said that the Vetting Sub-committee of the Elder Academy Development Foundation (EADF) had held a meeting on 19 July 2017 to consider the first round of funding applications for 2017-18. The EADF Committee had endorsed the recommendations of the Vetting Sub-committee. Funding would be allocated to 26 successful applicants in early September 2017. The deadline for the second round of

funding applications for 2017-18 was 31 October 2017. The Secretariat would step up publicity to encourage school sponsoring bodies to participate in the Elder Academy Scheme.

Agenda Item 6: Any other business

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

Time of adjournment

18. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Date of next meeting

19. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for 1 December 2017.

October 2017