

(English Translation)

Restricted

**Elderly Commission  
Minutes of the 52nd Meeting**

Room 1201, 12/F, Murray Building, Garden Road, Central  
2:30 p.m., 6 December 2007 (Thursday)

**Present:**

**Chairman**

Dr the Honourable LEONG Che-hung, GBS, JP

**Vice-Chairman**

Prof CHAN Cheung-ming, Alfred, BBS, JP

**Members**

Dr LUM Shun-sui, Susie

Ms WONG Yiu-ming, Anita

Mr CHAN Iu-seng, Star, BBS, JP

Dr LAM Ching-choi, JP

Mr CHAN Chi-yuk, Kenneth

Prof CHIU Fung-kum, Helen

Rev LAU Wai-ling, Dorothy, BBS, JP

Mr MA Chan-hang, Leo

Dr WONG Yee-him, John

Ms Sandra LEE, JP

Permanent Secretary for Food and Health

Mr Stephen Fisher, JP

Director of Social Welfare

Mr LIU King-leung, Tony

Representative of Secretary for Housing, Planning  
and Lands/Director of Housing

Dr CHAN Wai-man, JP

Representative of Director of Health

Dr Daisy DAI

Representative of Chief Executive of Hospital  
Authority

**In Attendance:**

Mr TANG Kwok-wai, Paul, JP	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Ms YIP Man-kuen, Carol, JP	Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Mr FUNG Kin-yip, Eugene	Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Mrs Kathy NG	Assistant Director (Elderly) Social Welfare Department
Mrs YUK KWOK Lai-sum, Kitty	Chief Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Mr. FU Tsun Hung	Chief Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Mr LAM Ka-tai	Chief Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Miss Sheila KONG	Chief Social Work Officer (Designate) Social Welfare Department
Mrs Senna SMITH	Executive Manager Social Welfare Department
Ms MAK Suk-kwan, Lorensa	Senior Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Ms TANG Lai-fan	Senior Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Mrs KWOK LI Mung-ye, Helen	Senior Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Ms LEUNG Mei-wah	Senior Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Miss CHEUNG Yun-ping, Mary	Senior Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Mr YAM Mun-ho	Senior Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Ms KWAN Shuk-ye, Nancy	Senior Social Work Officer Social Welfare Department
Dr David HO	Senior Medical and Health Officer

	Department of Health
Miss CHAN Nga-sze, Joyce	Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Mr CHIN Cheuk-hong, Ian	Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
Miss MOK Tik-shan, Elizabeth	Chief Executive Officer Labour and Welfare Bureau
Ms POON Ming-soo, Bonita	Executive Officer Labour and Welfare Bureau

**Absent with Apologies:**

Prof Jean WOO

Mr CHAN Han-pan

Dr YAM Yin-chun, Loretta, BBS

Secretary for Education

**Secretary**

Mr CHEUNG Doi-ching	Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
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**Agenda Item 1: Confirmation of the Minutes of the 51st Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were endorsed without amendments.

**Agenda Item 2: Matters Arising**

**Paragraph 2 of the Minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> Meeting**

2. The Chairman said that at the last meeting, Mr Matthew CHEUNG, Secretary for Labour and Welfare, told Members in his briefing on the new initiatives put forth in the 2007-08 Policy Address that the Government would earmark a one-off funding of \$200 million to

help needy elderly without family support improve their homes in the next five years. He asked the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) to report the progress of this programme to Members as and when appropriate.

**Paragraph 8(6) of the Minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> Meeting**

3. In addition, a Member suggested at the last meeting that the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) should consider producing TV API to promote the pilot scheme of health care vouchers. The Chairman hoped that he could be informed of the progress of this matter in due course.

**Paragraph 8(8) of Minutes of the 51st Meeting**

4. Dr Susie LUM, a Member of the Elderly Commission (EC) (also Chief Manager (Nursing)/Chief Nurse Executive of the Hospital Authority), briefed Members on her preliminary observations on the imbalanced demand and supply of manpower in the local elderly services sector and the areas that were initially considered worthy of further study, including improvement to the promotion prospects and on-the-job-training for nursing staff in residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs). On promotion prospects, she believed that promotion opportunities and a clear career path would be conducive to staff retention in RCHEs. In this connection, she expressed the view that consideration could be given to creating a new rank of “Senior Health Worker” between the rank of “health worker” and “enrolled nurse” to enable personal care workers and health workers to get promoted to “Senior Health Worker” upon acquisition of the qualification required, and to enrolled nurse or even registered nurse upon further acquisition of the relevant qualification.

5. Members agreed that nursing staff in RCHEs should be provided with better promotion opportunities. On how this goal could be achieved and how the imbalanced

demand and supply of manpower in elderly services sector could be solved, Members put forward the following questions/views:

Questions/views put forward by Members on expansion of the scope of duties that could be taken up by health workers

- (a) One of the major difficulties faced by the elderly services sector was the shortage of nursing staff. It was suggested that consideration should be given to providing “Senior Health Workers” with training so that they could take up three items of duties that currently could only be performed by nurses, namely, insertion of nasal-gastric tube, injection and insertion of urinary catheter. This suggestion was not intended to replace the functions of nurses, but rather for training skilled personnel to take up the duties which nurses could only marginally take up due to heavy workload with a view to enhancing the care for the elderly. Strengthening professional training for health workers and personal care workers and enhancing their skills was the best solution to the shortage of nursing staff as health workers and personal care workers formed the largest manpower base in the residential care services sector.
- (b) It was noted that nursing homes were required to employ and assign a nurse to handle the dispensing of drugs when they applied for renewal of their licences at the Department of Health (DH). It was suggested that consideration should be given to whether such work could be shared out among other nursing staff.
- (c) It was suggested that the universities should consider organising more associate degree or higher diploma programmes in nursing so as to provide RCHEs with skilled personnel in nursing to alleviate the shortage of nursing staff in RCHEs.

- (d) Some subvented non-government organisations (NGOs) would join hands with the Vocational Training Council to offer two advanced training programmes for health workers in September 2008 with a view to enhancing their work skills and enabling them to handle nursing duties of a more complicated nature.
- (e) The existing professional liability insurance did not cover health workers and personal cares workers. If these two types of workers were with recognised professional qualifications, it might be easier to negotiate with the insurance sector on the professional liability insurance required for the nursing duties to be performed by the proposed “Senior Health Workers”.
- (f) Views from the nursing sector should be taken note of and carefully considered on expanding the scope of duties that could be performed by health workers and on the creation of the rank of “Senior Health Worker”.

Questions/views put forward by Members on the imbalanced demand and supply of manpower in the elderly services sector

- (g) The nursing sector could further explore the proposal of importing from the Mainland nurses who intended to sit for the nurse registration examination in Hong Kong and issuing them with student nurse licences for taking up practical training in hospitals or RCHEs, which could then be provided with extra nursing staff. Members also noted that both the Government and the nursing sector had discussed the feasibility of importing nurses from other regions (including those from the Mainland) before. However, having regard to the language barrier, it was considered that nurses from Asian regions such as Singapore and Malaysia were not suitable carers of elderly persons in Hong Kong. While most of the nurses from the

Mainland were degree holders, they had to pass the registration examination in Hong Kong before they were allowed to take up employment here.

- (h) At present, there was a significant disparity in the remuneration package offered by private RCHEs and the Hospital Authority (HA) in their nurse recruitments. As it was difficult for RCHEs to compete with the HA, there was an acute shortage of nurses in private RCHEs.
- (i) The Government should keep abreast of the manpower and training needs of RCHEs in the coming five to ten years and the resources involved, so that it could hold discussion with the Nursing Council of Hong Kong and other stakeholders on feasible options to address the problem of imbalanced demand and supply of manpower in the elderly services sector.

6. The Chairman suggested that Dr LUM should invite Members and other parties who were interested in the discussion of this matter to make further study on her proposal, consult the relevant sector about their views and report the progress to the EC in due course.

**Paragraph 11 of the Minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> Meeting**

7. Mr Paul TANG, Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare, informed the meeting of the establishment of the Family Council (FC) under the chair of the Chief Secretary for Administration, as well as the appointment of the EC chairman as a member of the FC. The FC would convene its first meeting in this month.

**Paragraph 16 of the Minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> Meeting**

8. The Chairman extended his thanks to all staff in the LWB and the Social Welfare Department for their efforts in the Carers' Recognition Ceremony held on 18 November 2007.

The event enabled the community to have a better understanding of the carers' contribution to caring for the elderly, and enhanced public awareness of caring for the elderly in addition to promoting a caring society.

### **Agenda Item 3: Residential Care Services: Key Issues to Consider**

(Discussion Paper No. EC/D/01-07)

9-14. The item was reported under separate confidential cover.

### **Any Other Business**

15. Mr CHEUNG Doi-ching, EC Secretary, invited all Members to attend the kick off ceremony of the "Pilot Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project" scheduled to be held on 26 January 2008.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

16. The next EC meeting would be held on 6 March 2008 (Thursday).

### **Time of Adjournment**

17. The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

18 December 2007