

## **FAMILY COUNCIL**

### **Progress Report of Elderly Commission**

This paper sets out the background of the establishment of the Elderly Commission (EC), its progress of work and its work plan in 2008-09.

#### **Background**

2. In 1997, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the Government) designated “Care for the Elderly” as one of its three Strategic Policy Objectives, with the aim of improving the quality of life of our elders and providing them with a sense of security, a sense of belonging and a feeling of health and worthiness.

3. EC was established in 1997 and tasked with the responsibility to advise the Government on the policy and services of the elderly. Specifically, its terms of reference are –

- To advise Government on the formulation of a comprehensive policy for the elderly including matters relating to the care, housing, financial security, health and medical, psychological, employment and recreational needs of the elderly;
- To co-ordinate the planning and development of various programmes and services for the elderly, and to recommend priorities for implementation having regard to manpower, financial and other resources available; and
- To monitor implementation of policies and programmes affecting the elderly, and to make recommendations to Government to ensure the agreed objectives are met.

4. Non-official members of EC comprise medical and nursing professionals, academics, social workers, community leaders and service providers, who provide their experience / expertise to the work of EC. Its current membership is at **Annex I**.

## **Progress of Work**

5. Against the background of an ageing population, EC, during its initial years of establishment, had focused its attention on a review of the provision of elderly care services in Hong Kong and various measures to improve the services.

6. Another major mission of the EC is to bring about a mindset change in the image of ageing. Whilst some elders may require long term care services, the majority of elders are, however, healthy and capable of leading an active and independent life. Also, elders form an invaluable pool of assets to the community. To bring about a positive image of ageing, the Working Group on Active Ageing (WGAA) has been in place since November 2005 to advise EC on the strategic vision of active ageing; the need to develop and undertake studies to support the work on active ageing; and means to promote active ageing and disseminate related messages. On the advice of WGAA, EC launched various initiatives and activities to promote active ageing in the past two years, all of which achieved encouraging results and positive feedback in the community.

7. In parallel with the work of active ageing, the EC has also set up the Working Group on Long Term Care Model (WGLTCM) to advise on the means to further enhance long-term care (LTC) services for the elderly with a view to facilitating “ageing in the community” and enhancing the quality of residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs). WGLTCM also advises EC on means to co-ordinate and enhance the interface among the medical, health, welfare, housing and other departments and the private sector in the provision of elderly care services, and on possible options for LTC financing. On the advice of WGLTCM, EC has organized a number of programmes in the past two years to promote and support “ageing in the community”.

8. A list of major programmes / activities organized by EC in 2006-07 and 2007-08 is at **Annex II**.

## **Work Plan in 2008-09**

9. In the coming year, one of the focuses of EC will be on reviewing the longer term planning in the provision of subsidised

residential care services (RCS). EC has started discussion on the subject in late 2007 and will proceed to look into the various related issues such as the future demand of RCS, the impact of any proposed change to the current delivery mechanism, the waitlisting situation, the quality of private RCHEs, and the overall objective of encouraging “ageing in the community”.

10. On promotion of active ageing, EC will extend and deepen its work in terms of ambit and coverage. It will extend the Pilot Elder Learning Scheme to tertiary institutions, while further expanding the scheme at primary and secondary school levels. It will work to further strengthen neighbourhood support in the community through the Pilot Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project.

11. EC’s programmes and activities planned for 2008-09 are set out in **Annex III**.

### **Advice Sought**

12. Members are invited to note the contents of this progress report.

Labour and Welfare Bureau  
March 2008

**Membership list of the Elderly Commission  
(with effect from 30 July 2007)**

**Non-official Members**

Dr the Hon LEONG Che-hung, GBS, JP (Chairman)  
Prof CHAN Cheung-ming, Alfred, BBS, JP (Vice-Chairman)  
Mr CHAN Chi-yuk, Kenneth  
Mr CHAN Han-pan  
Mr CHAN Iu-seng, Star, BBS, JP  
Prof CHIU Fung-kum, Helen, MH  
Dr LAM Ching-choi, JP  
Rev LAU Wai-ling, Dorothy, BBS, JP  
Dr Susie LUM Shun-shui  
Mr MA Chan-hang, Leo  
Prof Jean WOO  
Dr John WONG Yee-him  
Ms Anita WONG Yiu-ming, MH  
Dr YAM Yin-chun, Loretta, BBS

**Ex-officio Members**

Secretary for Food and Health or representative  
Secretary for Labour and Welfare or representative  
Secretary for Transport and Housing / Director of Housing or representative  
Director of Health or representative  
Director of Social Welfare or representative  
Chief Executive, Hospital Authority or representative

Major Programmes and Activities Organized by EC  
in 2006-07 and 2007-08

- **Publicity on Active Ageing**

EC, in collaboration with RTHK, has produced TV APIs, radio APIs and TV programme series “Golden Age” series IV and V to promote the positive image of the elders. The “Golden Age” series has won 16 awards, including the Silver Plaque Award (documentary category) of the Chicago International Film and Television Festival.

- **Birthday Greetings to Centenarians**

To promote a positive image of ageing and as a sign of respect to centenarians, EC has been, since 2002, sending birthday greetings to Hong Kong residents who are 100 years old or over. After issuance of the first greeting, subsequent greetings will be sent on the 105<sup>th</sup> and subsequent birthdays. So far, EC has issued 1124 birthday greetings to centenarians living in Hong Kong.

- **Pre-retirement Workshop**

The Pre-retirement Workshop was organised in September 2006. The theme of the Workshop was on retirees’ needs for physical, psychological and social adaptation. Eight speakers from the business sector, government agencies and non-governmental organisations, and three other active retirees and soon-to-be retirees shared their experience at the Workshop.

- **Silver Hair Market Fair**

The two-day exhibition on products and services for the elders was held in November 2006. Its aim was to introduce to the elders, their carers and various service organisations the products, technology and services that catered for the needs of elders. It also encouraged and promoted the business opportunities of the “silver hair” market as well as the work for the betterment of the lives of elders. 15 companies / organizations participated in the exhibition and over 3000 persons attended the exhibition.

- **Seminar on “Ageing in the Community”**

The Seminar on “Ageing in the Community” was held on 18 November 2006 with speakers from Australia, the UK and Sweden sharing their experience in promoting and facilitating elders to age in the community in their respective economies. Over 120 key personnel from the local elderly service sector, professionals, academics and experts participated in the seminar.

- **Active Ageing Project 2007**

The project aimed to raise public awareness that many elders are capable of self-care, promote the image of elders in order to tie in with the celebration of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong SAR. It included the following items –

- (a) Story of Hong Kong Competition – Elders shared their personal experience through participating in a narrative “life story” competition. It aimed at highlighting the theme(s) of nice people and nice story, serving community and / or positive attitudes towards life. Over 80 participants took part in the competition.
- (b) Elder Community Works Competition – Elders were invited to submit proposals on district-based community works project to enhance their communities. Cross-generational efforts were encouraged in drawing up the proposal. More than 200 proposals were received.
- (c) Media Award for Promoting Active Ageing – To promote the image of elders, the printed and electronic media were invited to nominate their articles / programmes which would promote active ageing for the award. Two rounds of assessments were conducted. The first round involved professionals and academics while the second round involved over 80 representatives from District Elderly Community Centres, in order to come up with champions from the three categories, namely newspaper reports, radio program and TV program.
- (d) Promotion of Senior Citizen Card – A series of promotions, including engaging celebrities to leverage the image of

Senior Citizen Card, were put in place.

- (e) Active Ageing Evening – A variety show engaging both elderly and young performers to promote active ageing and encourage inter-generational solidarity as well as to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong SAR. The programme included fashion show, choir performance and social dance performance.

- **Pilot Elder Learning Scheme**

To promote active ageing so that elders can enjoy fruitful lives through engaging in learning, the EC launched a school-based Pilot Elder Learning Scheme, taking into consideration the unique situation of Hong Kong in early 2007. There are 32 Elder Academies which are jointly operated by schools and partner non-governmental organizations throughout the territory. Cross-sectoral and inter-generational collaborations are the modes of operation of these Elder Academies. The objectives are to encourage elders to continue to engage in learning, maintain the physical and mental well-being of elders, foster a sense of worthiness among elders, promote inter-generational harmony, strengthen civic education and promote cross-sectoral collaboration.

- **Pilot Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project**

The pilot project aims to promote the concept of active ageing through neighbourhood platforms.

Under the pilot project, non-governmental organisations enter into partnership with residents' organisations, elder academies, religious groups, schools or the commercial sector to train up volunteers to organise activities regularly for the elderly and pay visits to singleton elders to strengthen neighbourhood support. They can also help to identify hidden elders or elders-in-need for non-governmental organisations to follow up with district elderly community centres, neighbourhood elderly centres and social centres for the elderly.

The two-year pilot project will be carried out in 19 areas across the territory, reaching out to every sector of the community, including private residential estates, public housing estates, old tenement buildings and rural areas. The pilot project is expected to cover

about 32,000 elders.

- **Carers' Recognition Ceremony**

To raise the community's awareness of the contribution of informal carers in taking care of elders and to promote a caring society, EC, together with the Labour and Welfare Bureau and the Social Welfare Department, organized a Carers' Recognition Ceremony on 18 November 2007. Over 1 000 participants including elders, carers, family members and key stakeholders in the elderly services sector attended the ceremony to pay tribute to 12 outstanding informal carers and other informal carers in Hong Kong.

- **District-based Trial Scheme on Carer Training and Carer Services**

To equip individuals with basic elderly care skills, nurture a caring mindset, and develop "carer" services, EC, Labour and Welfare Bureau and Social Welfare Department launched the "District-based Trial Scheme on Carer Training" in October 2007.

Under the Scheme, 11 District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) in three districts (i.e. Eastern and Wan Chai, Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung, and Kowloon City and Yau Tsim Mong) were each provided with seed money of \$50,000 to run self-financing carer training courses and launch "carer" services in collaboration with community organizations.

- **Integrated Discharge Support Programme for Elderly Patients**

To support ageing in the community, EC considers it important to strengthen the interface between medical and welfare services for the elderly, especially in the provision of support services for the elderly after their discharge from hospitals. Taking EC's advice, the Government earmarked \$96 million in the 2007-08 Budget to launch a pilot scheme to provide integrated support to elderly hospital discharges who have difficulty taking care of themselves. Integrated support under the scheme will include discharge planning,

transitional rehabilitation services, transitional home-based community care services and carers' training and support. The first pilot has been implemented in Kwun Tong since 1 March 2008.

**EC's Programmes and Activities Planned for 2008-09**

- **Birthday Greetings to Centenarians**

EC will continue with the practice of issuing birthday greetings to centenarians.

- **Pilot Elder Learning Scheme**

In view of the enthusiastic response to the establishment of Elder Academies in secondary and primary schools among elders in different districts, the aspiration of many elders to “pursue studies in universities”, and the wish of some elders to have opportunities to engage in more academic and more in-depth learning courses, EC aims to further extend the concept of Elder Academies to tertiary institutes.

Under the first phase, support from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Lingnan University, Hong Kong Shue Yan University and the City University of Hong Kong have been received. They will, together, offer about 700 places for elders to pursue their studies in universities in 2008.

The Secretariat of WGAA will continue to work with other tertiary institutes to explore ways to further extend the concept of Elder Academies at the level of tertiary institutes.

- **Pilot Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project**

EC will encourage more partners (e.g. the District Councils and district organizations) to join the pilot project so as to strengthen and broaden the neighbourhood networks. The pilot project can also complement the Pilot Elder Learning Scheme and provide a more comprehensive platform to promote active ageing in the community.

- **Elder Community Works Competition**

EC will co-operate with the relevant sectors (e.g. District Councils and District Offices) to realize the awarded projects in various

districts.

- **Integrated Discharge Support Programme for Elderly Patients**

EC will launch the second pilot of this programme in Kwai Tsing in the third quarter of 2008. The location of a third pilot is being considered. Each pilot will serve a total of 3 000 high-risk elderly discharges and provide training to 1 000 carers annually.