

**For discussion on  
19 December 2023**

**Paper FC 14/2023**

## **Family Council**

### **The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address: Family-Related Policy Initiatives of the Labour and Welfare Bureau**

#### **Purpose**

We briefed the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services in November 2023 on the new and on-going initiatives pertaining to the welfare portfolio as covered in the Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address and Policy Measures. The relevant paper is at **Annex**. Members are invited to note the paper.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau  
December 2023**

For Information  
on 13 November 2023

**Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services**  
**2023 Policy Address**  
**Policy Initiatives of the Labour and Welfare Bureau**

**Introduction**

This paper sets out the new and on-going welfare initiatives announced in the 2023 Policy Address and Policy Address Policy Measures.

**Summary of New Initiatives**

2. The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and Social Welfare Department (SWD) will implement the following new welfare initiatives :

- Providing more choices for on cross-boundary elderly care (paragraph 3 to 4);
- Expanding the Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly (RCSV) and the Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care (I&T Fund) to strength support for frail elderly persons (paragraph 5 to 6);
- Injecting funds into the Elder Academy Development Foundation (EADF) to promote active ageing (paragraph 7 to 8);
- Raising the quality and quantity of rehabilitation services to address the different needs of persons with disabilities (paragraph 9);
- Strengthening the support for carers of elderly and persons with disabilities to relieve the pressure of carers (paragraph 10);
- Enhancing the emergency placement of children and strengthening professional support for abused children and their families to prepare for the implementation of the mandatory reporting regime for child abuse cases (paragraph 11);
- Substantially increasing the incentive payment for foster families and providing additional support to enhance residential child care and

related services (paragraph 12);

- Setting up a dedicated fund to support the development of welfare services organisations (paragraph 13);
- Introducing targeted poverty alleviation projects to address the needs of the target groups (paragraph 14); and
- Strengthening support for working families in childbearing and unleash their labour force (paragraph 15 to 16).

## **Details of Policy Priorities/New Initiatives**

### ***Caring for the Elderly***

#### **More choices for cross-boundary elderly care**

3. The Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong (GDRCS Scheme) provides an additional choice to elderly persons waitlisted for subsidised residential care services, and facilitates their retirement on the Mainland. The Government relaxed operators' eligibility under the GDRCS Scheme in July 2023. Hong Kong organisations, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private organisations, with experience and a good track record in providing subsidised residential care services for the elderly may apply to include their residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) located in the Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) in the GDRCS Scheme. This measure helps to attract more Hong Kong organisations with rich experience and high standards to provide quality residential care services in the concerned cities. We will explore extending the GDRCS Scheme to include specific RCHEs operated by Mainland organisations next year so that elderly persons retiring in the Mainland cities of the GBA will have more choices.

4. The Government currently implements various portable cash assistance initiatives to assist Hong Kong elderly persons who choose to retire in the Mainland cities of the GBA. These initiatives cover all cash assistances for the elderly, including the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) as well as the Old Age Allowance (OAA) and Old Age Living Allowance (OALA) under the Social Security Allowance (SSA) Scheme. To better support Hong Kong elderly persons with greater financial needs who choose to retire in the Mainland cities of the GBA, and based on the experience gained from the extension of the GDRCS Scheme, we will explore subsidising elderly recipients of the CSSA who opt to stay in RCHEs under the GDRCS Scheme.

### Expanding the RCSV Scheme

5. RCSV provides an additional choice for elderly persons waitlisted for subsidised residential care services. Eligible elderly persons may choose or change RCHE to stay in at their will. Under the principles of “money-following-the-user” and “co-payment”, elderly persons who can afford less receive more subsidies from the Government and the sector may improve service quality under market force. Starting from the second quarter of next year, the Government will extend the coverage of the RCSV from care-and-attention places to nursing home places, and provide 5 000 vouchers by adding 1 000 new ones, so that more eligible elderly persons can be admitted to RCHEs participating in the RCSV Scheme without waiting.

### Improving Quality of Life through Technology

6. The Government allocated \$1 billion to set up the I&T Fund in December 2018, and has expanded the eligibility under the I&T Fund from subsidised service units to cover private and self-financing RCHEs and residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) since September 2022, thereby increasing the number of potential benefiting service units to about 2 200. Thus far, grants totaling about \$610 million have been approved, subsidising about 1 800 elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure or rent over 17 000 technology products. In 2024-25, the Government will inject an additional \$1 billion into the I&T Fund to enhance subsidies for eligible elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure, rent and trial technology products, such as ultra-low beds for medical and nursing care and intelligent anti-wandering systems, with a view to improving the quality of life of the elderly and persons with disabilities and reducing the pressure of carers.

### Injecting Funds into EADF

7. The LWB and the Elderly Commission (EC)<sup>1</sup> jointly launched the Elder Academy (EA) Scheme in 2007 to enable elders to learn in a school setting. Currently, there are about 200 EAs in primary, secondary and post-secondary institutions throughout Hong Kong.

8. The Government allocated \$10 million for establishing the EADF in

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<sup>1</sup> The EC advises the Government on the formulation of comprehensive policies on elderly care. EC members include professionals from elder related services and other sectors, academics and community leaders.

2009, and injected \$50 million in 2014. In 2024-25, the Government will inject an additional \$80 million<sup>2</sup> into the EADF. In conjunction with generous donations and support from the community, the injection will encourage the elderly to pursue lifelong learning and integration into the community, as well as promote active ageing and the elderly's sense of worthiness. The above injection will facilitate the sustainable development of the EA Scheme, aligning with the Government's policy objective of "ageing in place as the core, with institutional care as back-up". We estimate that around 15 000 learning places will be provided under the EA Scheme in 2024-25.

### ***Support Persons with Disabilities***

9. To address the needs of persons with disabilities, the Government provides a variety of rehabilitation services catering to different types and levels of disability. These services include pre-school rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation, centre-based or home-based community support services, as well as hostels for severely mentally handicapped persons, halfway houses and hostels for severely physically handicapped persons, etc. The Government will continue to strengthen the support in this regard, including the following measures:

- (i) provide subsidy to encourage employment – We will implement a three-year pilot scheme to provide an additional subsidy of \$500 per month to employed disabled recipients of CSSA as a means of encouraging their employment. This will benefit some 6 800 persons with disabilities;
- (ii) strengthen the services of RCHDs and day training services – Given the ageing of users of RCHDs, the Government will increase nursing staff in RCHDs in 2024. We will also increase service places of the Extended Care Programme in Day Activity Centres and the Work Extension Programme to enhance care for persons with disabilities using day training services who are ageing or have deteriorating health conditions;
- (iii) encourage developers to construct and operate RCHDs in their development projects – Drawing reference from the prevailing arrangements applicable to private RCHEs, the Government will launch the "Incentive Scheme to Encourage Provision of Residential

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<sup>2</sup> The injection will be in two tranches with \$40 million each. The first one will be in 2024-25 and the timing for the second tranche will depend on the expenditure position of EADF.

Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities in New Private Developments” within 2023. Eligible RCHDs will be exempted from premium payment for lease modifications, land exchange or private treaty grants, and the relevant Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the RCHD will not be counted in the calculation of total permissible GFA for the entire project;

- (iv) increase the number of representatives of persons with disabilities and carers in the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee – The Government has completed the review of the Committee's composition. There will be more representatives of persons with disabilities and their carers in the next term of the Committee to better gauge their needs; and
- (v) enhance community support for persons with mental health needs - SWD will enhance the services of Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness in 2024, including strengthening early identification of persons with mental health needs and early intervention, and exploring to scale up the training of social workers in community mental health service units to raise their capacity in handling complicated cases.

### ***Support Carers of Elderly and Carers of Persons with Disabilities***

10. Carers play an important role in supporting elderly persons and persons with disabilities. The Government is committed to supporting carers of elderly and carers of persons with disabilities, including providing financial assistance, care skills training, counselling and emotional support etc., and in parallel providing the elderly and persons with disabilities with personal care, home cleaning, rehabilitation training, respite services, etc. With the aim of alleviating the physical and mental pressure of carers, the Government launched the 24-hour Designated Hotline for Carer Support in September 2023 to provide professional support on consultation, counselling, matching of respite services, etc., and will launch a one-stop Information Gateway for Carers in November 2023 to facilitate and encourage carers to seek timely assistance. We will continue our efforts to support carers through the following:

- (i) mobilise the District Services & Community Care Teams (Care Teams) – The Government will pilot in Tsuen Wan and Southern Districts to engage the Care Teams to help, through visits or contacts, identify carers of elderly persons and carers of persons with disabilities requiring support, and refer cases to the relevant social

welfare service units for follow-up. The Government will review the effectiveness of the implementation in the pilot districts, and consider extending the services to other districts. We will also assist households referred by the Care Teams to install emergency alarm systems as necessary;

- (ii) expand the network of respite services – Carers of elderly persons or persons with disabilities may need to rely on community respite services for temporary relief when they need to take short breaks or attend to personal matters. We will request about 140 RCHEs under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme, about 20 RCHDs under the Bought Place Scheme for Private RCHDs, and about 190 service units participating in the Community Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly (CCSV Scheme) to provide residential and day respite services when there are vacant residential care places or service places for care-receiving individuals. Carers in need will also be matched with respite services through the social workers of the designated hotline for carer support;
- (iii) strengthen peer support services – In the coming two years, SWD will set up four additional Parents/Relatives Resource Centres for carers of those in mental recovery to support persons in mental recovery and their carers;
- (iv) support special school leavers and their carers – Designated teams will be set up in the second quarter of 2024 to proactively contact carers of special school leavers six months before graduation to provide training on caring and interaction skills, arrange post-school care plans and link with community support services; and
- (v) utilise technology to reduce the burden and pressure of carers – We will expand the scope of the I & T Fund to cover gerontechnology products suitable for household use. Eligible elderly and rehabilitation service units can procure suitable technology products for lending to elderly persons, persons with disabilities and their carers for use at home. This will improve the quality of life of the care recipients and relieve the pressure of the carers.

### ***Protect Children***

11. The Government will fully co-operate with the LegCo in the scrutiny of the Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Bill and look forward to the early passage of the bill and the implementation of the mandatory reporting regime

for early identification and intervention into child abuse cases. The Government will provide training for mandated reporters and draw up guidelines. To make preparations for coping with the possible upsurge in the number of reported child abuse cases after the legislation comes into effect, the Government will also increase the number of emergency places for residential child care service and strengthen professional support for child abuse victims and their families.

12. The Committee on Review of Residential Child Care and Related Services, formed last year, has completed its review. The Government will follow up on and progressively implement the relevant recommendations, including stepping up inspections and unannounced visits, increasing the number of residential child care service places, strengthening the support and training for foster families, etc. To encourage more willing individuals to become foster families, the Government will substantially increase the incentive payment for foster families starting from next April. For foster care service, the payment will be more than doubled from around \$5,000 to about \$11,000 per month. For emergency foster care service, it will be doubled from around \$6,600 to about \$13,000 per month. Additional support will be provided to foster families taking care of children with special learning or care needs, including arranging foster children suspected to have special needs to receive early assessment and appropriate professional rehabilitation therapy or training.

### ***Support the Development of Welfare Services Organisations***

13. On the front of supporting the development of welfare services organisations, the Government will set up a dedicated fund of \$500 million to help NGOs operating subvented welfare services meet their development needs for staff training and system enhancement, particularly in enhancing professional knowledge of their staff and strengthening awareness of interdisciplinary collaboration, as well as encouraging and promoting the application of information technology etc, with a view to assisting relevant organisations to better implement the Government's social welfare policies, provide high-quality services and support to service targets, and make the best use of social welfare resources.

### ***Targeted Poverty Alleviation***

14. The current-term Government has adopted the strategy of targeted poverty alleviation by directing resources to those most in need. Based on the latest statistics and multi-dimensional analyses of household



characteristics, employment and income conditions, cash welfare assistance and living conditions, etc., the Commission on Poverty has identified three groups for targeted poverty alleviation: households residing in sub-divided units (SDUs), single-parent households and elderly households. In the coming year, the Government will implement various targeted poverty alleviation projects catering to the needs of these target groups, including:

- (i) enhance the Strive and Rise Programme – Through collaboration among the Government, the business sector and the community, focused support will be given to junior secondary students from underprivileged families, particularly those living in SDUs. The second round of the programme has been launched in October this year, including such new elements as: increasing the number of mentees from 2 800 to 4 000, with an extension to cover Secondary Four students; enriching the variety of group activities with more Mainland study and exchange tours; introducing mentorship groups; and establishing an Alumni Club for mentees who have completed the programme to provide them with diversified social activities and internship opportunities. The total number of benefited mentees will increase to 6 800 in the 2023/24 school year, reaching 12 000 in the 2025/26 school year;
- (ii) launch a Pilot Programme on Community Living Room – We will launch a Pilot Programme on Community Living Room (CLR) later this year. Under the pilot programme, the business sector will provide venues and the Community Care Fund (CCF) will provide the funding to commission NGOs to operate the CLRs. The CLRs will offer shared kitchens and dining rooms, as well as common spaces for doing homework, holding interest classes and group activities, providing SDU households with additional living space in their respective communities. To strengthen community support for the service targets, the pilot programme will also arrange information and talks, make referrals to other community services as appropriate, and approach the business sector and local organisations for in-kind donations, such as food or food vouchers, as well as providing volunteer services like homework guidance. The first CLR under the pilot programme will be rolled out at Fuk Wa Street of Sham Shui Po later this year, for a period of three years. The CLR is expected to serve at least 500 SDU households, with about 80 000 attendance a year. We will review the effectiveness one year after operation, and consider extending the pilot programme to other communities with more SDU households;
- (iii) operate the School-based After School Care Service Scheme – We will roll out a School-based After School Care Service Scheme in the

2023/24 school year to allow primary students in need to stay at school outside school hours for care and learning support. This will help their parents go to work and will also benefit single parent households. The scheme will be reviewed after one year of trial in some 50 primary schools in districts with more targeted students. Participating schools will provide the venues while NGOs will be engaged to run the scheme, benefiting some 3 000 students; and

- (iv) support singleton or doubleton elderly households – Despite the continuous development of elderly services and increasing dedication of resources, singleton or doubleton elderly households remain vulnerable, and we need to reach out proactively to offer support. To that end, the Government will mobilise community resources and will, starting from the first quarter of next year, engage the Care Teams in Tsuen Wan and Southern districts as pilots, to arrange visits and contacts for singleton or doubleton elderly households. The Care Teams will assist the households in seeking relevant government support services, and refer cases with welfare needs to the relevant social welfare units for follow-up. The Government will review the effectiveness of the implementation in the pilot districts, and consider extending the services to other districts.

## ***Assisting Working Families in Childbearing***

### *The Working Family Allowance (WFA) Scheme*

15. The Government will increase the rates of the household and child allowances under the WFA Scheme<sup>3</sup> by 15% across the board with effect from the claim month of April 2024, benefiting all households receiving WFA. Taking a four-person household with two eligible children as an example, their maximum monthly WFA will increase from the current amount of \$4,200 to \$4,830. Increasing the rates of WFA would help further alleviate the burden of grassroots working families and encourage more such families to join the labour market. As at end September 2023, there were more than 54 000 WFA “active households”<sup>4</sup>, which involved more than 180 000 persons (including about 74 000 children) and almost doubled the number of the then LIFA Scheme. The Government will continue to promote the Scheme to encourage more eligible households to apply for the allowances.

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<sup>3</sup> Formerly the Low-income Working Family Allowance (LIFA) Scheme.

<sup>4</sup> Referring to those households which have been approved with WFA and submitted the latest applications in the past six months.

## Supporting Working Parents

16. The Government will strengthen support for working families in childbearing. Measures include –

- (i) increase child care centre places and allowances – Over the next three years starting from 2024, 10 more aided standalone child care centres (CCCs) will be set up in phases, providing about 900 additional places for day child care services. Starting from next April, the Child Care Centre Parent Subsidy, which is applicable to all government-aided standalone CCCs and CCCs attached to kindergartens, will be increased from a maximum of \$600 to \$1,000 per month. SWD will also provide information and assistance to private organisations applying for registration to operate CCCs to encourage their provision of child care support for their employees;
- (ii) extend the After-School Care Programme for Pre-primary Children to cover all districts – Over the next three years starting from 2024, the After-School Care Programme for Pre-primary Children will be extended in phases to cover all districts in Hong Kong. The number of participating centres will be increased from 16 to 28, and the number of service places from about 670 to nearly 1 200; and
- (iii) strengthen the home-based child care service – To encourage more people to participate in the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project, starting from next April, the incentive payment at the standard rate of \$25 per hour for home-based child carers of the Project will be increased. For carers of infants and young children aged 0-3 or children with special learning needs, the rate will be more than doubled to \$60 per hour. For carers of children aged 3-9, the rate will be increased by 60%, to \$40 per hour. From the fourth quarter of next year, the number of service places under the Project will be doubled to about 2 000, with the estimated number of beneficiaries to be doubled to 20 000.

## **On-going Initiatives**

### ***Strengthening Support for Ethnic Minorities (EMs)***

17. SWD has commissioned NGOs with employment of EM staff to proactively reach out to EMs and connect those in need, as well as to provide case counselling, groups and activities for EMs. SWD will also extend the Ethnic Minority District Ambassador pilot scheme for three years to engage

EMs or designated persons to support EMs in the welfare service units of NGOs and SWD.

## *Cash Assistance Schemes*

### *The CSSA Scheme*

18. The CSSA Scheme provides a safety net of last resort for those who cannot support themselves financially due to old age, ill-health, disability, single parenthood, unemployment, low-earnings or other reasons to help them meet their basic needs. At present, the average amount of CSSA payable to an elderly singleton is around \$8,100 per month, while that payable to a four-person household is around \$18,200 per month<sup>5</sup>. Separately, all CSSA recipients enjoy a waiver of public healthcare services fees. In 2019, the Government conducted a major review of the CSSA Scheme and has fully implemented a host of improvement measures<sup>6</sup> since February 2021 to benefit most recipients. As at end September 2023, there were about 200 000 CSSA cases, covering some 280 000 recipients. In 2023-24, the estimated recurrent expenditure of the CSSA Scheme is about \$22.1 billion.

### *The SSA Scheme*

19. The SSA Scheme (including OALA, OAA and Disability Allowance) aims to help severely disabled Hong Kong residents or those aged 65 or above meet special needs arising from severe disability or old age. Thereof, OALA is the social security payment with the highest number of elderly recipients, benefitting over 700 000 elderly persons and accounting for over 40% of persons aged 65 or above. In 2023-24, the estimated recurrent expenditure of the SSA Scheme is about \$50.9 billion.

20. The Government continually enhances the SSA Scheme, including merging the Normal and Higher OALAs<sup>7</sup> with effect from September 2022 and relaxing the absence limit under the pre-application one-year continuous residence requirement of the SSA Scheme from 56 days to 90 days starting from September 2023 to facilitate applicants' longer period of absence from Hong Kong.

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<sup>5</sup> This refers to the situation when CSSA households do not have income other than CSSA payments (including standard rates, supplements and special grants).

<sup>6</sup> The relevant measures include significantly increasing the maximum level of the disregarded earnings by 60% to \$4,000, substantially raising the maximum rent allowance (by as much as 27% depending on household size), as well as extending various supplement and special grants to eligible non-elderly able-bodied recipients, such as the community living supplement, grant to cover costs of glasses and grant to cover costs of dental treatment.

<sup>7</sup> The merged OALA adopts the more relaxed asset limits of Normal OALA and the payment rate of Higher OALA, while the monthly income limits remain unchanged.

## *Elderly Services*

### *Supporting Ageing in Place*

21. The Government will continue to adhere to the policy of promoting “ageing in place as the core, with institutional care as back-up” to provide support to the elderly. At present, the Government provides subsidised community care and support services to over 60 000 elderly persons in need each year.

22. The Government has been implementing the CCSV Scheme on a long-term basis since September 2023. The number of beneficiaries has increased to 10 000, and will further increase to 12 000 in 2025-26 in stages. We have also expanded the Hospital Authority’s Integrated Discharge Support Programme for Elderly Patients by increasing the number of beneficiaries by one-third, from about 33 000 to 45 000 per annum. The number of beneficiaries who can be referred to home support services has increased from about 9 000 to 11 000.

### *Increasing subsidised residential care service places for the elderly*

23. As at September 2023, 2 350 additional subsidised residential care service places for the elderly have commenced service. The Government will continue to increase the number of subsidised residential care service places for the elderly, with a view to meeting the demand in the community.

### *Enhancing the quality and manpower of residential care homes*

24. In the face of a rapidly ageing population, there is an increasing demand for residential care services for the elderly in the community. The Government continues to implement relevant manpower initiatives, including the Special Scheme to Import Care Workers for Residential Care Homes, the Review of Manpower for Healthcare Services in Residential Care Homes, and subsidising students aspiring to join the welfare sector to study nurse training programmes, with a view to addressing the challenges of acute manpower shortage in the sector, and providing training and a career progression path to local job seekers.

25. The Government will continue to implement measures under the Residential Care Homes Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2023 by phases, amend the relevant codes of practice for residential care homes, formulate relevant guidelines for new regulations, and offer professional advice depending on actual needs of the residential care homes, so as to assist the homes to meet the new statutory requirements, and enhance

their quality in various aspects.

### Promoting Gerontechnology

26. The Government allocated \$1 billion to set up the I&T Fund in December 2018, with a view to improving the quality of life of service users and reducing the burden and pressure on care staff and carers. Thus far, grants totalling \$610 million have been approved, subsidising about 1 800 elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure or rent over 17 000 technology products. The Government extended the scope of CCSV Scheme in September 2023 to cover rental of assistive technology products, allowing eligible frail elderly persons to use CCSV to rent aids for daily living, aids for walking or mobility transfer and aids for bathing or toileting from Recognised Service Providers. At the same time, the Government has included the promotion of gerontechnology in the service scope of subvented elderly centres, so as to assist and encourage elderly persons to use technology products.

### ***Support for the Disadvantaged***

#### Improving Rehabilitation Services

27. The Government is committed to increasing the number of day rehabilitation, residential care and respite service places for persons with disabilities by 10% from about 35 100 in 2021-22 to about 38 800 by 2026-27. By end-August 2023, a total of 505 additional places for day rehabilitation, residential care and respite services were provided, bringing the total number of service places to 35 700. Besides, Tier 1 Support Services were regularised and integrated with On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services from September 2023 to provide support for children waiting for the services.

#### Support Carers of Elderly and Carers of Persons with Disabilities

28. The Government will continue to implement the territory-wide “Care the Carers Campaign”, encouraging people from all walks of life to show their empathy, support and care for carers. This campaign will last for three years. In the first year, under the theme of “Helping Carers Help Themselves”, publicity will focus on encouraging carers to help themselves. In the second year, under the theme of “Walk with Carers”, publicity will emphasise standing by carers. In the third year, under the theme of “Fostering a Carer-Friendly Community”, publicity will focus on creating a community environment that supports carers.

## **Conclusion**

29. The recurrent expenditure on social welfare in the financial year 2023-24 is estimated to be \$121 billion, accounting for around 22% of the recurrent expenditure of the Government. The Government will continue to strengthen collaboration with different sectors of the community, plan for and deliver suitable social welfare services.

30. To monitor the progress and effectiveness of implementing various policies, the indicators set by LWB are listed in the Annex.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau**  
**November 2023**

## Indicators on Welfare initiatives

### *Improve elderly services*

- Provide around **15 000** learning places under the Elder Academy Scheme in **2024-25** to encourage lifelong learning and integration into the community by more elderly persons.
- Extend the Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong **within 2024** to specific residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) operated by Mainland organisations.
- Extend the coverage of the Residential Care Service Voucher Scheme for the Elderly to nursing home places and provide **1 000** more vouchers starting **from Q2 2024**, so that more eligible elderly persons can be admitted to participating RCHEs without waiting.
- Provide **6 200** additional subsidised residential care service places for the elderly **by end 2027**.
- Provide **900** additional subsidised day care service places for the elderly **by end 2027**.
- Allow about **2 200** elderly and rehabilitation service units eligible to apply to the I&T Fund in **2024-25** to procure, rent and trial technology products.

### *Improve rehabilitation services and enhance the support for persons with disabilities*

- Achieve **zero waiting time from 2024-25** in respect of On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Service for children with special needs.
- Increase the number of day rehabilitation, residential care and respite service places for persons with disabilities by 10% from about 35 100 in 2021-22 to about **38 800 by 2026-27**.
- Launch a three-year pilot scheme from **Q3 2024** to provide an additional subsidy of \$500 per month to employed disabled recipients of CSSA as a



means to encourage employment. This will benefit some **6 800** persons with disabilities.

- Provide **in 2024** additional resources to increase nursing staff in some **200** residential care homes for persons with disabilities.
- Gradually increase around **500** service places of the Extended Care Programme in Day Activity Centres and about **800** places of the Work Extension Programme **within three years from 2024-25**.

#### *Better support carers*

- Continue to implement an array of support measures, including the introduction of a one-stop information gateway and a designated hotline, increase the service quota for respite services and improve the service enquiry system, spearhead community-based peer support service for carers, and launch a territory-wide publicity campaign to increase public awareness of the carers' needs.
- **Starting from Q1 2024** and piloting in Tsuen Wan and Southern Districts, engage the Care Teams to help identify carers of elderly persons and carers of persons with disabilities, singleton and doubleton elderly households requiring support through visits or contacts, and to refer cases requiring assistance to relevant social welfare service units for follow-up.
- **Starting from Q2 2024**, assist and subsidise eligible elderly persons, persons with disabilities and their carers referred by the Care Teams to install emergency alarm systems as necessary.
- Set up **in Q2 2024** a designated team in each of the 21 District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities across the territory to support special school leavers and their carers.

#### *Enhance support for persons in mental recovery and those with mental health needs*

- Enhance the services of Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness in **the second half of 2024** and commence scaling up training for about **1 000** social workers in community mental health service units.

- Increase the number of full-time peer supporter positions from 40 by 75% to at least **70 by Q4 2024**; and set up **four** additional Parents/Relatives Resource Centres **by Q3 2025**.

*Strengthen protection/care for children*

- Enhance child protection by increasing the incentive payment to foster families **starting from April 2024** for encouraging willing individuals to become foster families. For ordinary foster care service, the increase will be more than doubled, from about \$5,000 to about \$11,000 per month. For emergency foster care service, the increase will be doubled from around \$6,600 to about \$13,000 per month.
- Increase the Child Care Centre Parent Subsidy from a maximum of \$600 to \$1,000 per month **starting from April 2024**. The subsidy is applicable to all government-aided standalone CCCs and CCCs attached to kindergartens.
- Increase the number of service places under the Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project from 954 to about **2 000 starting from Q4 2024**.
- Increase the number of beneficiaries under the Fee-waiving Subsidy Scheme of the After School Care Programme for low income families to **4 600 by end-2026/27 school year**, an increase of more than 60% over the 2021/22 school year.
- Increase the number of service places under the After School Care Programme for Pre-primary Children from 672 to **1 176 by end-2027**.
- Increase the number of Aided Standalone Child Care Centre service for parents who cannot take care of their young children temporarily by 84% to about **1 900 by end-2027**.

*Support the development of welfare services organisations*

- Set up a dedicated fund of \$500 million **within 2024** to help NGOs operating subvented welfare services meet their development needs.

*Continue to take forward the strategy of targeted poverty alleviation*

- Roll out the second round of the Strive and Rise Programme **by October 2023**, enabling no less than **70%** of mentees who have completed the

one-year programme to achieve improvement in terms of personal development and positive thinking;

- Launch the first project under the Pilot Programme on Community Living Room **within 2024**, with the target of enabling no less than **70%** of service users to experience an enhancement in their living space, sense of belonging to the community and interpersonal networks; and
- Introduce the School-based After School Care Service Scheme on trial in about **50** primary schools **in the 2023/24 school year**, with the targets of having no less than **70%** of student beneficiaries consider that they have received more appropriate care and learning support upon completion, and no less than **70%** of parent/guardian beneficiaries consider that the Scheme helps reduce their child care pressure and allows them to consider seeking/taking up jobs.

#### *Strengthening Support for Ethnic Minorities*

- Extend the Ethnic Minority District Ambassador pilot scheme by three years to **2026**, engaging **46** EMs or designated persons to support EMs in the welfare service units of NGOs and SWD.