

## 2016-17 Hong Kong Government Budget - Poverty Alleviation Measures

### Supporting the Underprivileged

135. The Elderly Commission (EC) is pressing ahead with the formulation of the **Elderly Services Programme Plan** for Hong Kong. In the meantime, Government is putting in place a series of forward-planning initiatives to meet the challenges brought about by the continuous growth in demand for elderly services due to an ageing population, including –

- (a) **strengthening and enhancing community care services** to support "ageing in place", the cherished wish of elderly persons. Starting from 2016-17, a recurrent provision of \$17 million will be allocated to provide 160 additional day care places for the elderly;
- (b) **speeding up the provision and improving the quality of residential care places for the elderly.** Allocate a recurrent provision of \$140 million from 2016-17 onwards to provide more subsidised residential care places, enhance existing residential care services and progressively upgrade 1,200 places under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme;
- (c) **providing more elderly facilities.** Reserved space in 15 development projects or vacant buildings for the provision and conversion of existing facilities into residential care homes and day care centres for the elderly. Pressing ahead with the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses to provide additional places for elderly services through the redevelopment or expansion of existing service facilities; and
- (d) **piloting a new model of elderly services.** The Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly will be **extended to all 18 districts** in the territory this year and the number of service vouchers will be increased to 3 000. EC is also actively examining the implementation of the Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly. Government has earmarked \$800 million for providing 3 000 service vouchers under the three-year pilot scheme.

137. Many of senior citizens are looking for investment products with steady returns. Government will launch a pilot scheme to **issue Silver Bond** this year and next year, targeting at Hong Kong residents aged 65 or above, with a maturity of three years for the first issuance.

138. Our society is ageing. This has far-reaching implications for our future public finances. Have earmarked \$50 billion to improve the retirement protection for the elderly in need. The Commission on Poverty is conducting a **public engagement exercise on how retirement protection can be improved**. Any retirement protection scheme must be financially sustainable to avoid shifting the significant retirement protection expenses to future generations.

139. In respect of children and family, Government will allocate a recurrent provision of **\$2.9 billion** to implement the **Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme** starting this year. The scheme aims to alleviate intergenerational poverty through encouraging employment and assisting poor families with children.

140. Government seeks to help women to manage family commitments alongside work. On top of the additional places of **Extended Hours Service** for eligible child care centres last year, an additional **3 800 places** will be provided in phases. A pilot scheme will also be introduced in the first quarter of this year to **provide child care training for grandparents**.

141. Starting from 2016-17, we shall allocate a recurrent provision of **\$180 million** to strengthen various **residential care services, special transport services and community support services** for persons with disabilities, and to provide support services for children with special needs and their families.

142. The validity period of the **one-off electricity charges subsidy scheme** will last until the end of June 2016. Up till last October, seven per cent of households eligible for the subsidy still had unused credits in their accounts. I shall **extend** for the last time the validity period of the unused subsidies for **two years** to 30 June 2018.

Let's pray for the Government policy and the budget can help the people in need!  
May the Lord reign in our society!