

Community Care Fund
“Special Care Subsidy for the Severely Disabled”
Evaluation Report

Purpose

This paper aims at reporting the implementation of the “Special Care Subsidy for the Severely Disabled” (the Programme) subsidised by the Community Care Fund (CCF), findings of the consultancy study, and the follow-up work on regularisation of the subsidy upon the completion of the Programme.

Implementation

2. The Programme was launched in September 2011 which aims at providing persons with severe disabilities aged under 60, who are living in the community, requiring constant attention and not receiving the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA), with a special care subsidy for use in purchasing care goods and services or for other purposes related to nursing care.

3. The Programme was extended in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018 and 2020, till September 2023 to continue to provide support for persons with severe disabilities and their families. As at end July 2023, there were 5 441 beneficiaries in total and a cumulative total of 16 841¹ person-times of beneficiaries, with a total amount of subsidy disbursement of around \$531.58 million.

4. When the Programme was first extended in 2012, the household income limit was relaxed from its original 75% of the Median Monthly Domestic Household Income (MMDHI) applicable to the corresponding household size to 100% of the respective MMDHI. The extension of the Programme in 2013 further relaxed the income limit to 150% of the MMDHI applicable to the corresponding household size while the rates of subsidy have been changed from a unified amount (\$2,000 monthly) to a three-tier² amount, i.e. full grant (\$2,000 monthly), three quarters grant (\$1,500 monthly), or half grant (\$1,000 monthly)

¹ The number of beneficiaries and the number of person-times of beneficiaries of this Programme may vary as eligible persons shall undergo re-confirmation of its eligibility or re-application during the Programme extension.

² There were 91% of beneficiaries receiving full-grant, 6% receiving three quarters grant and 3% receiving half grant of the subsidy rates respectively during the 2020 extension within three-tier amount.

of the subsidy rate, which will be given according to the household income not exceeding 100%, over 100% to 125% or over 125% to 150% of MMDHI respectively.

Consultancy Study

5. The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) commissioned the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in July 2020 to conduct a consultancy study on the needs and support to carers of elderly people and of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Hong Kong. Out of the eight areas under study, one included the evaluation of the Programme and exploration of its way forward. In June 2022, the LWB released the report of “Consultancy Study on Needs and Support Required of Carers of Elderly Persons and of PWDs in Hong Kong” (Consultancy Study Report) submitted by the consulting team. According to the Consultancy Study Report, the beneficiaries and their carers held positive views towards the Programme. They considered that the Programme was helpful in improving their lives. Most of the beneficiaries were living with their carers. The beneficiaries very often did not have a stable income, and this subsidy provided them with a certain amount of financial assistance. Also, the findings from both the focus groups and the questionnaire survey indicated that the subsidy was usually used on nursing care-related expenses such as medications and nutritional foods, which is in line with the objectives of the Programme.

6. Based on the research findings, the Consultancy Study Report recommended reviewing and increasing the amount of the subsidy in accordance with the increasing costs of daily supplies which are required by PWDs.

Follow-up Actions

7. To enhance the support for persons with severe disabilities, the Government has regularised the subsidy under the Programme³ since October 2023 while increasing the subsidy amount. Taking into consideration the Composite Consumer Price Index, the monthly full grant was increased from \$2,000 to \$2,500.

³ And rename as “Special Care Subsidy Scheme for Persons with Severe Disabilities”.

Conclusion

8. The Programme has provided financial assistance to persons with severe disabilities in purchasing care goods and services or for other purposes related to nursing care. The Government has regularised the subsidy under the Programme since October 2023 and increased the subsidy amount in order to continue the support for persons with severe disabilities.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
Social Welfare Department
May 2024