

**For discussion on
24 October 2025**

Family Council

**The Chief Executive's 2025 Policy Address
Family-Related Policy Initiatives of the Labour and Welfare Bureau**

Purpose

We briefed the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services in September 2025 on the new and on-going initiatives pertaining to the welfare portfolio as covered in the Chief Executive's 2025 Policy Address and Policy Address Supplement. The relevant paper is at **Annex**. Members are invited to note the paper.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau
October 2025**

For Information
on 30 September 2025

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services
2025 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 2025 Policy Address and Policy Address Supplement.

Summary of Policy Priorities/New Initiatives

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

- Implementing targeted poverty alleviation projects (paragraph 3);
- Strengthening support for ageing in place (paragraphs 4 to 6);
- Strengthening residential care services (paragraphs 7 to 8);
- Enhancing the elderly services in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) (paragraphs 9 to 11);
- Strengthening support for carers (paragraphs 12 to 14);
- Strengthening support for persons with disabilities (paragraph 15);
- Strengthening child care services (paragraph 16); and
- Strengthening family cohesion and safeguarding children (paragraph 17).

LWB will also participate actively in the Working Group on Ageing Society Strategies to jointly tackle challenges of an ageing society (paragraph 20).

Details of Policy Priorities/New Initiatives

Targeted Poverty Alleviation

3. The Government has adopted the strategy of targeted poverty alleviation by directing resources to those most in need. This approach is well-received by the community. We will focus on the following key areas:

- (i) Enrich activities of the Strive and Rise Alumni Club with \$10 million funding from The Hong Kong Jockey Club, providing young people with training and experience that integrate Hong Kong pop culture and traditional Chinese arts; and inject \$180 million into the Child Development Fund to continue implementing projects promoting the long-term development of upper primary students from disadvantaged communities, and further enhance elements of the projects by drawing on the successful experience of the Strive and Rise Programme, with a view to reducing intergenerational poverty;
- (ii) Set up six additional Community Living Rooms (CLRs). Together with the nine CLRs already launched, they are expected to benefit about 7 000 SDU households in total, serving over 1.4 million attendances a year;
- (iii) Enhance the School-based After School Care Service Scheme by uncapping the number of places to expand support for primary students and parents in need;
- (iv) Roll out the “Co-building a Caring Society Funding Scheme” to encourage family offices involved in philanthropic endeavours to provide resources for implementing projects benefitting the disadvantaged groups;
- (v) Launch a pilot programme to provide time-limited cash incentive to households leaving the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme and receiving the Working Family Allowance (WFA) to encourage self-reliance; and
- (vi) Publish the Report on Impact of Targeted Poverty Alleviation Strategy in Hong Kong in mid-2026.

Care for the Elderly

4. The Government adheres to the principle of promoting “ageing in place as the core, with institutional care as back-up” and strives to provide diversified subsidised community and residential services for needy elderly persons.

Strengthening Support for Ageing in Place

5. With the growth of the elderly population, the demand for ageing in the community is on the rise and diversifying. The Government will increase the number of Community Care Service Vouchers (CCSV) for the Elderly by 4 000, bringing the total to 16 000 to provide more frail elderly persons in need with community care services under the funding mode of “money-following-the-user” and “affordable users pay”. At the district level, the Government will set up three new Neighbourhood Elderly Centres in 2026-27 to strengthen support for the elderly, which are expected to serve some 3 000 elderly persons annually. In addition, the Government will lease newly built government welfare facilities on a pilot basis to allow service operators greater flexibility in offering day care and support services for the elderly under different funding modes.

6. The Government has provided elderly persons discharged from hospitals who have a higher risk of emergency re-admission with transitional and integrated support services for six to eight weeks through the Integrated Discharge Support Programme for Elderly Patients (IDSP) in recent years. To further support discharged elderly persons, the Government will enhance the IDSP by continuing the provision of welfare service support to needy elderly persons discharged from public hospitals after receiving treatments, thereby better leveraging the synergy of medical-social collaboration.

Strengthening Residential Care Services

7. The Government will provide about 700 new subsidised residential care service places in 2026-27, and provide an addition of 1 000 Residential Care Services Vouchers (RCSV), bringing the total to 7 000, so as to benefit more elderly persons.

8. On the other hand, the SWD will establish the Professional Diploma Subsidy Scheme for Health&Care Practitioners (HCPs), supporting operators

of residential care homes (RCHs) to recommend serving health workers with potential and meeting the admission requirements to enrol in the professional diploma programme for HCPs. After graduation, they will become HCPs who specialise in providing care services in the residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs), residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) and other elderly/rehabilitation welfare service units, nurturing specialised care professionals for the welfare sector.

Enhancing the Elderly Services in the GBA

9. The Government continuously expands and enhances the Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong (GDRCS Scheme), offering elderly persons more choices on cross-boundary elderly care. Starting from this October, nine Mainland RCHEs will be added to the GDRCS Scheme, raising the total number of participating RCHEs from 15 to 24, while the number of GBA Mainland cities covered will increase from six to eight. The participating RCHEs will be situated in Guangzhou, Foshan, Shenzhen, Zhongshan, Zhaoqing, Jiangmen, Zhuhai and Huizhou. We will launch a two-year pilot arrangement by the end of this year to share part of the medical expenses that Hong Kong elderly participants of the GDRCS Scheme need to bear on their own under the National Basic Medical Insurance Policy, with an annual ceiling of RMB10,000 per person for outpatient services and RMB30,000 per person for inpatient services.

10. The Government will also launch a three-year Pilot Scheme for Elderly Recipients of CSSA to Reside in Residential Care Homes in Guangdong by end this year to subsidise elderly CSSA recipients who opt to retire in Guangdong to reside in the RCHEs under the GDRCS Scheme, with a view to improving their quality of life. Each eligible elderly person will receive a monthly subsidy of \$5,000, subject to 1 000 quotas.

11. The Government currently implements various portable cash assistance schemes¹ to support Hong Kong elderly persons retiring in the Guangdong and Fujian Provinces. To provide further convenience, the Government will enhance the disbursement arrangements for portable cash assistance next year. Elderly recipients may opt to directly receive the amounts from the SWD through their designated bank accounts with Mainland banks.

¹ Such schemes include the Portable CSSA Scheme as well as the Guangdong Scheme and the Fujian Scheme under the Social Security Allowance Scheme.

Support Carers

12. The Government has contributed great efforts to enhance carer support in recent years. In addition to providing carers' allowance to carers from low-income families, strengthening respite services, setting up the 24-hour Designated Hotline for Carer Support 182 183 manned by social workers, launching the one-stop Information Gateway, etc., the Government also extended the "District Services and Community Care Teams – Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers" to all 18 districts across the territory in April 2025. Care Teams, through visits or contacts, help identify singleton and doubleton elderly households as well as carers of elderly persons and persons with disabilities in need; and collaborate with the Carer Hotline 182 183 to strengthen community support for the elderly persons and carers. As at the end of August 2025, Care Teams of all districts visited/contacted over 40 000 singleton and doubleton elderly households as well as carers of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, and referred more than 1 900 cases to social welfare organisations for follow-up. In addition, over 1 500 households had been referred by the Care Teams and received subsidy for installation of emergency alarm system (EAS, commonly known as "Safety Bell"), involving over 1 970 elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

13. The Government will earmark an annual recurrent expenditure of \$500 million to roll out a series of measures to enhance support for carers, including:

- (i) The Government has launched the first phase of the Carer Support Data Platform, which initially connected the data of the SWD, the Hospital Authority (HA) and the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA), and will progressively connect the data of more government departments and public organisations to expand the Carer Support Data Platform;
- (ii) Upon learning from the HA that a high-risk carer has been hospitalised, the SWD will arrange outreach to the care recipients and offer emergency support according to their needs. As at the end of August 2025, over 150 cases were contacted, and emergency support was provided to two cases, allowing carers to keep their mind at ease while receiving treatment;
- (iii) We have consolidated the data of the HKHA and the SWD to identify high-risk carers of elderly persons and carers of persons with disabilities, as well as singleton or doubleton elderly households lacking sufficient community support, and deploy Care Teams to conduct visits. As at mid-August of 2025, Care Teams in the pilot

districts of Kwun Tong and Sha Tin have visited nearly 3 000 high-risk households and made over 340 service referrals;

- (iv) We will continue implementing the “District Services and Community Care Teams – Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers” for three years by inviting Care Teams to actively provide support for and pay visit to high-risk families, and assisting households referred by Care Teams in installing and using the emergency alarm system as necessary;
- (v) We will install intelligent accident detection system for 300 high-risk households;
- (vi) We will continue implementing the Support for Carers Project for three years, with a view to providing training for frontline property management personnel in assisting carers in need; and
- (vii) We will enhance the AI chatbox function of the Information Gateway for Carers.

14. As we improve the Carer Support Data Platform, and integrate and connect more datasets, it is expected that there will be a need for enhancing services and increasing service capacity to support more carers in need identified. The Government will keep in view the situation for necessary service reviews and enhancement.

Support Persons with Disabilities

15. To address the multifarious 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, residential care, vocational rehabilitation and a series of community support services. The Government will continue to strengthen the support in this regard, including the following measures:

- (i) providing additional 450 places for day, residential and pre-school rehabilitation services in 2026-27;
- (ii) progressively introducing one-stop support and care services at hostels for severely and moderately mentally handicapped persons starting from the second quarter of 2026. Additionally, the number of extended care places at hostels co-located with Day Activity Centres or Integrated Vocational Rehabilitation Services Centers will be increased. These measures not only better cater to the needs of

ageing persons with disabilities but also release around 700 day rehabilitation training places. This will enable persons with disabilities in the community to receive day training, shorten the waiting time, and alleviate the pressure on carers; and

- (iii) collaborating with university teams to formulate guidelines for consumers of rehabilitation products, with electric wheelchairs, electric smart beds, and robotic exoskeletons as pilot items. The guidelines will set out basic technical and operational requirements of rehabilitation products, to assist the elderly, persons with disabilities and their carers in selecting suitable products.

Strengthen Child Care Services

16. To support families who wish to have children as well as working families with infants and toddlers, the Government will further strengthen day care services for infants and toddlers. Over the next three years starting from 2026-27, it is expected that 15 new aided standalone child care centres will be set up, providing a total of approximately 1 500 day child care service places for children aged zero to three years old, nearly doubling the current capacity. In addition, the SWD will allocate more service places to care for infants and toddlers aged zero to two years old as appropriate with a view to strengthening support for families with newborn infants and toddlers.

Strengthen Family Cohesion and Safeguard Children

17. Family harmony is vital to children's healthy development and serves as the cornerstone of a harmonious society. The Government will introduce the following measures to strengthen family functions, enabling children and young people to thrive in a healthy and stable environment. These measures include:

- (i) The Government will set up a new Integrated Family Service Centre in Kwu Tung North New Development Area of the Northern Metropolis to provide one-stop preventive, supportive and crisis intervention services for families in the district. This will strengthen family functions and increase family cohesion, thereby enhancing the family resilience;
- (ii) To promote the concept of continued joint responsibility for children among divorced parents at various fronts of the community, the

Government will enhance public education through collaboration with relevant stakeholders. This helps divorced parents understand the importance of prioritising the best interests of their children, working together harmoniously, and jointly fulfilling the ongoing responsibility to care for their children;

- (iii) The Government will provide transitional support to young people leaving residential child care services without family support. This includes career planning and vocational training, mentoring, financial management and life skills training, etc., to assist them in integrating into society and embarking on independent lives; and
- (iv) To prepare for the commencement of the Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Ordinance on 20 January 2026, the Government will continue to provide training and relevant resources to specified professionals in the social welfare, education, and healthcare sectors. To this end, the Government has already promulgated the Guide for Mandated Reporters and the online learning module on the legal and reporting aspects of the Ordinance in July this year, enabling them to make reports as required by the law upon the commencement of the Ordinance.

Enhance Support for Children with Special Needs

18. To assist pre-school children with special needs in their transition to primary school education and to relieve the stress of their family members and carers, the Government will provide bridging and support services for children receiving On-site Pre-school Rehabilitation Services during the first school term of Primary One.

Promote Mental Health

19. The Government will continue to enhance community mental health services and strengthen support for the mental health of youth. The SWD will implement/ take part in the following measures:

- (i) launching the Pilot Programme on Training for Mental Health Promotion Ambassadors to mobilise and train mental health promotion ambassadors to promote healthy lifestyles, foster resilience and establish care support networks;

- (ii) making good use of the Dedicated Fund for subvented welfare service organisations, providing training to enhance school social workers' capabilities in handling students' mental health issues; and
- (iii) enhancing the text counselling platform for online emotional support and the Cyber Youth Support Teams of the SWD by strengthening AI application for more precise identification of high-risk targets in need of support.

Tackle Challenges of an Ageing Society

20. To tackle challenges of an ageing society, the Government will set up a Working Group on Ageing Society Strategies under the steer of the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration as the Leader and the Secretary for Labour and Welfare as the Deputy Leader to co-ordinate the efforts of various bureaux in formulating the relevant strategy responses. Aside from covering areas such as elderly care, healthcare, housing, culture and leisure, and gerontechnology, the working group will consider promoting the further development of silver economy. The working group will take into account the views of the Elderly Commission, and submit a report next year. Due to the extensive impact of societal ageing, the working group will include members from all policy bureau, and LWB will participate actively in its work.

On-going Initiatives

Setting up Community Parents and Children Centres

21. To strengthen the prevention of child abuse from source, the Government announced in 2024 the setting up of four Community Parents and Children Centres on a pilot basis to promote parent-child interaction through play-based services and instil positive parenting skills in parents, render support for families with parenting needs. The four Community Parents and Children Centres are planned to commence operation progressively starting from 2026. It is expected that a total of around 40 000 beneficiaries will be catered every year.

Strengthening Support for Ethnic Minorities (EMs)

22. The SWD has commissioned non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with employment of EM staff for setting up outreaching teams in order to proactively reach out to and connect EM individuals in need with

mainstream welfare services and to provide referral service, enquiry service and transitional support to them. The SWD has also extended the Ethnic Minority District Ambassador pilot scheme for three years until September 2026, while encouraging NGOs to engage EMs or other persons to strengthen the welfare support for EMs.

Cash Assistance Schemes

CSSA Scheme

23. 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 \$8,600 per month, while that payable to a four-member household is around \$19,600 per month². Separately, all CSSA recipients enjoy fee waiver for public healthcare services. The Government has substantially improved the CSSA Scheme in recent years, and has implemented a host of enhancement measures³ since February 2021 to benefit most recipients. As at end July 2025, there were about 190 000 CSSA cases, involving some 260 000 recipients. In 2025-26, the estimated recurrent expenditure of the CSSA Scheme is about \$23.1 billion.

Social Security Allowance (SSA) Scheme

24. The SSA Scheme (including the Old Age Living Allowance (OALA), Old Age Allowance and Disability Allowance) helps Hong Kong residents who are severely disabled or aged 65 or above meet special needs arising from severe disability or old age. The Government continually enhances the SSA Scheme, including merging the Normal and Higher OALAs⁴ 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

² Referring to the amounts of CSSA payments (including standard rates, supplements and special grants) when the CSSA households do not have other income.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

to 90 days starting from September 2023 to facilitate applicants' longer period of absence from Hong Kong. As at end July 2025, there were about 1.36 million SSA recipients. In 2025-26, the estimated recurrent expenditure of the SSA Scheme is about \$57.9 billion.

WFA Scheme

25. The WFA Scheme supports lower-income working households who are not receiving CSSA, and promotes full-time employment and self-reliance, as well as rewards hard work. The Scheme also provides child allowance to households with eligible children. The Government reviews the WFA Scheme from time to time. The rates of the household and child allowances under the WFA Scheme have been increased by 15% across the board with effect from April 2024, benefiting all households receiving the WFA. Taking a four-person household with two eligible children as an example, the maximum monthly WFA they may receive has increased from the original amount of \$4,200 to \$4,830 at present. As at end July 2025, there were more than 49 000 "active WFA households", involving more than 165 000 persons (including more than 68 000 children). In 2025-26, the estimated recurrent expenditure of the WFA Scheme is about \$2.1 billion.

Elderly Services

Subsidised Long-term Care Services

26. The Government provides subsidised community or residential care services for frail elderly with long-term care need as confirmed by the Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services (SCNAMES). On subsidised community care and support, elderly in need can choose the Centre-based community care services, Home-based community care services, CCSV or home-support services, with more than 65 000 beneficiary elderly persons every year. Among them, the CCSV Scheme has been made permanent since September 2023 and its applicable scope has been expanded to cover rental of assistive technology products to meet frail elderly persons' needs for ageing in place. As at end July 2025, around 13 100 eligible elderly persons were receiving subsidised community care services under the CCSV Scheme⁵.

⁵ To optimise resources utilisation and serve more needy elderly persons, the SWD has been closely monitoring resources usage and increasing the number of vouchers issued where resources allow. Thus, the actual number of vouchers issued may exceed the original cap on CCSV. In other words, resources allocated to one CCSV may serve more than one user.

27. On subsidised residential care services, in end June 2025 there were about 39 000 subsidised residential care service places in Hong Kong⁶. Depending on the care needs of the elderly persons, subsidised residential care service places are categorised into care and attention places and nursing home places, offering residential care, meals, personal care and nursing care services. Elderly persons who are assessed by the SCNAMES as in need of residential care and are queuing for subsidised residential service care places can opt to join the RCSV Scheme and freely choose to stay in quality RCHEs. The RCSV Scheme also adopts the funding mode of “users pay in accordance with affordability” and “money follows the users”, with around 5 600 eligible elderly persons receiving subsidised residential care services through the Scheme as at end July 2025.

Promoting Gerontechnology

28. The Government set up the \$1 billion Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care (I&T Fund) in December 2018 to improve the lives of service users and alleviate the burden and pressure of care staff and care givers. The Government injected an additional \$1 billion into the I&T Fund in 2024-25 to strengthen the subvention for eligible elderly and rehabilitation service units and expanded its scope to cover gerontechnology products suitable for household use. As at end August 2025, the I&T Fund has allocated a total of about \$890 million, subsidising about 2 100 elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure or rent over 26 000 technology products.

Support Persons with Disabilities

Improving Rehabilitation Services

29. The Government is committed to increasing the number of rehabilitation (including day, residential and respite care) service places for persons with disabilities from about 35 100 in 2021-22 to about 38 800 by 2026-27, and will further increase to about 39 900 by 2028-29. By end-June 2025, the total number of service places has been increased to 37 700.

30. The Government is setting up 14 Integrated Community Rehabilitation Centres (ICRCs) across the territory in phases, including

⁶ The SWD provides subsidised residential care services through various means, including subventing NGOs to operate RCHEs; contracting out the operation of RCHEs to service providers; and purchasing bed places from private homes and NGOs. In addition, the SWD also subsidises elderly persons to reside in RCHEs through RCSV.

regularising the Pilot Project on ICRC in the third quarter of 2025, as well as integrating the existing four Community Rehabilitation Day Centres, six teams of Home Care Service for Persons with Severe Disabilities and two teams of Integrated Support Services for Persons with Severe Physical Disabilities progressively. In addition, the Government will create 90 additional peer supporter posts at District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities (DSCs) and Parents/Relatives Resource Centres in the fourth quarter of 2025, and set up an additional DSC in New Territories East in the third quarter of 2026 so as to enhance the support for persons with disabilities and their carers.

Support the Development of Welfare Services Organisations

31. On the front of supporting the development of welfare services organisations, the Government launched a 5-year dedicated fund of \$500 million in end-May 2024 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 inter-disciplinary 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.

Conclusion

32. The recurrent expenditure on social welfare in the financial year 2025-26 is estimated to be \$130.4 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 and provide appropriate social welfare services.

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

Indicators on Welfare initiatives

Continue to take forward the strategy of targeted poverty alleviation

- Launch the fourth round of the Strive and Rise Programme **by end-2025**, 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.
- Complete the evaluation **within 2025-26** 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.
- Complete the comprehensive evaluation on the School-based After-School Care Service scheme **in the 2025/26 school year** with the targets of having no less than **70%** of student beneficiaries who have completed the scheme to find that they have received more appropriate care and learning support, and no less than **70%** of parent/guardian beneficiaries to find that the scheme helps reduce their child care pressure and allows them to consider seeking/taking up jobs.

Improve elderly services

- 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**.

Caring and Inclusive Community

- Extend the “District Services and Community Care Teams – Supporting Elderly and Carers Scheme” to 18 districts over the territory in **Q2 2025**.

Improve rehabilitation services and enhance the support for persons with disabilities

- Increase the number of rehabilitation (including day, residential and respite care) service places from about 37 300 in 2023-24 to about **39 900 by 2028-29**.
- 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**.

Strengthen protection/ care for children

- Prepare for setting up **four** Community Parents and Children Centres on a pilot basis **within 2025** so as to commence service progressively **starting from 2026**.
- 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 the end of the 2026/27 school year**, an increase of no less than 60% over the 2021/22 school year.
- Further increase the number of Aided Standalone Child Care Centre service for parents who cannot take care of their young children temporarily to about **2 000 by end-2027**, an increase of 94% over 2022-23.

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

- Set up **four** additional Parents/Relatives Resource Centres **by Q3 2025**.
- Extend and enhance the Three-Tier School-based Emergency Mechanism until **end-December of 2025**.