

DH clarifies scope of Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme

In response to media enquiries, the Department of Health (DH) today (January 3) clarifies that Elderly Health Care Voucher (EHCV) does not cover online/telemedicine services.

A spokesman for the DH stresses that, elderly persons shall receive the healthcare services in person by the enrolled health care providers (EHCPs) in Hong Kong, or attend the outpatient services provided by designated Outpatient Medical Centers, Medical Service Departments of the University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Hospital and its Huawei Li Zhi Yuan Community Health Center in order to use EHCV. All medical services with fees paid by using the EHCV shall not be conducted by telemedicine.

To ensure the proper use of public money, the DH will conduct regular or sampling checks in accordance with the monitoring mechanism. All suspected cases of violating the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme (EHVS) rules or making false declarations will be strictly dealt with. Appropriate action or measures will be taken, including referring relevant cases to law enforcement agencies for investigation. Making a false declaration is a criminal offence and offenders are liable to a fine or imprisonment upon conviction.

"The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" announced an initiative of rolling out the "Elderly Health Care Voucher Greater Bay Area Pilot Scheme" (Pilot Scheme) to extend the coverage of the EHCV initially to about five suitable medical institutions in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) as trial service points for provision of primary healthcare services, as well as to include individual designated medical institutions providing dental services at places near Hong Kong, such as Shenzhen. The Health Bureau and the DH have already been taking forward the Pilot Scheme, including inviting relevant Mainland authorities to recommend medical institutions suitable for inclusion in the Pilot Scheme and conducting a market research by inviting medical organisations with EHCPs participating in the EHVS to provide, for the Government's reference, information and operational details of medical institutions which are set up, being operated or supervised by them in the GBA. The Government will announce further details under the Pilot Scheme at appropriate times.