

Fourth phase of the Elderly Dental Assistance Expanded Programme to be launched in February

The following is issued on behalf of the Community Care Fund Secretariat:

The Community Care Fund (CCF) will launch the fourth phase of the Elderly Dental Assistance Expanded Programme on February 1 (Friday) to cover people who are Old Age Living Allowance (OALA) recipients aged 65 or above with a view to enabling more elderly persons who have financial difficulties and do not receive Comprehensive Social Security Assistance to benefit from free removable dentures and other related dental services.

Refinements of the fourth phase of the expanded programme include relaxing the number of visits for other free dental services from one time to two times for elderly persons for whom removable dentures are not appropriate, and raising the maximum number of claim applications for X-ray films in each case from four films to six for each eligible dentist. The Programme will continue to provide free removable dentures and other related dental services to eligible elderly people. No additional funding is required for the above measures.

Under the Elderly Dental Assistance Programme, some 190 district service units, including elderly centres, community centres and dental clinics which process applications directly, will handle applications and arrange the first dental appointment for eligible elderly persons. These units are located in various districts across the territory.

After completion of the necessary dental treatments, the project office set up under the implementing agent of the programme, the Hong Kong Dental Association (HKDA), will disburse the subsidy to the dentists directly. The dentists should not charge the participating elderly persons any fee.

With effect from February 1, eligible elderly persons aged 65 or above can bring along the necessary documents to apply in person at the district service units.

The relevant leaflet and a list of district service units handling applications will be available for distribution at the elderly centres in various districts from next Friday. The eligibility and application procedures of the programme and the list of district service units can also be found on the websites of the CCF (www.communitycarefund.hk) and the HKDA (www.hkda.org). For enquiries, please call the hotline of the programme at 2525 8198.

The Elderly Dental Assistance Programme was introduced in September 2012 to provide free removable dentures and other related dental services to low-

income elderly persons who are users of home care service or home help service schemes subvented by the Social Welfare Department. The programme was expanded by phases in September 2015, October 2016 and July 2017 to cover elderly persons who are OALA recipients aged 80 or above (first phase expansion), aged 75 or above (second phase expansion) and aged 70 or above (third phase expansion) respectively.