

Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit to be held this month (with photo)

The Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit (GIES) 2018 will be held from November 22 to 25 this year to showcase new technology products developed in various places worldwide. The event will continue to foster Hong Kong's development of innovative technology with a view to tackling population ageing, addressing the needs of persons with disabilities, and enhancing the quality of life of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

The GIES will be held at Halls 1A and 1B of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. It is co-hosted by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, and co-organised by the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation.

Speaking at a press conference today (November 6), the Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Rehabilitation and Medical Services), Mr Kok Che-leung, said that the Government attaches great importance to the development and application of innovation and technology. The success of the first GIES last year, which attracted over 43 000 visitors and won a positive response from various sectors of society, showed great local interest in gerontechnology and innovative advancements.

Mr Kok noted that the Innovation and Technology Commission has approved funding of about \$7.5 million under the Innovation and Technology Fund to support this year's GIES. He said he believed that the event would enhance public knowledge on the application of innovative technology and allow stakeholders from different parts of the world and sectors, including the Government, elderly and rehabilitation service operators, academics, businesses and the general public, to gather for cross-sectoral exchange and collaboration, so as to embrace the opportunities brought about by population ageing in Hong Kong as well as helping persons with disabilities integrate into the community.

Mr Kok said that the \$1 billion Innovation and Technology Fund for Application in Elderly and Rehabilitation Care will be launched in December this year to subsidise elderly and rehabilitation service units to procure, rent or trial use technology products, equipment and tools, as well as smart applications and systems, so as to improve the efficiency and quality of caregiving. It was estimated that over 1 260 service units might apply for the subsidy and details of the fund will be announced later.

The GIES will consist of two parts, the Summit and the Expo. The Summit will feature a keynote session and three plenary sessions on November 22 and 24. International, Mainland and local experts and stakeholders will exchange

views on issues related to population ageing and gerontechnology. Guest speakers will deliver keynote speeches on policies supporting the application of innovation and technology in elderly and rehabilitation care and the role of different stakeholders in the development of gerontechnology. Plenary sessions will focus on topics including the future of elderly care, promoting ageing in place through adoption of technologies and the use of technologies to enhance the quality of living of persons with disabilities. The Age-Friendly Hong Kong Summit, to be held on November 25, will explore how to promote employment of elderly persons in the technology era.

As regards the Expo, the over 8 000-square-metre exhibition floor will be divided into three thematic pavilions and two interactive zones to showcase around 380 inventions and products from some 130 local and international exhibitors. Some products to be shown at the Expo will be exhibited for the first time in Hong Kong. The Expo, the plenary sessions of the Summit and the workshops will be open to the public for free.

The public may visit the GIES website (gies.hk) for more details.

