

Government launches Phase 1 of Mental Health Initiatives Funding Scheme

The Government announced today (July 30) the launch of Phase 1 of the Mental Health Initiatives Funding Scheme. Eligible organisations, including subvented non-governmental organisations (NGOs) receiving recurrent subventions from the Social Welfare Department, agency members of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service and tertiary institutions registered under the laws of Hong Kong, may submit proposals to the Secretariat of the Advisory Committee on Mental Health by August 31 to apply for funding support for the implementation of mental health projects.

Projects that fall into one of three areas, namely training of lay leaders in the community for establishing a community network of mental health support; support for carers; and information technology support for the elderly, will be accorded priority under Phase 1 of the Funding Scheme. Assessment of each application will be based on the proposal submitted, taking into account the project strength, impact, design and feasibility as well as the experience and track record of the applying organisation.

As announced by the Chief Executive in the 2020 Policy Address, the social unrest in 2019, together with the persisting COVID-19 epidemic since early 2020, have brought different levels of impact and influence on the mental well-being of citizens. The Government has therefore decided to earmark \$300 million under the Beat Drugs Fund to provide better support to the needy in the community and raise public awareness of mental health. The Advisory Committee on Mental Health is responsible for co-ordinating the Funding Scheme and working with service providers and NGOs in the relevant sectors to identify needs and set priorities, with a view to facilitating or promoting relevant projects. The Funding Scheme will be implemented in two phases. Details about Phase 2 of the Funding Scheme will be announced next year.

Application arrangements under Phase 1 of the Funding Scheme are set out at the webpage of the Food and Health Bureau (www.fhb.gov.hk/en/fund/210700_mhifs/index.html).