

Government takes forward Elderly Health Care Voucher Greater Bay Area Pilot Scheme

"The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" put forward an initiative of Elderly Health Care Voucher Greater Bay Area Pilot Scheme (Pilot Scheme) to extend the coverage of the Elderly Health Care Vouchers to suitable medical institutions in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) next year. The preliminary target is to cover about five additional medical institutions as trial service points for provision of primary healthcare services at GBA cities where Hong Kong elderly have closer ties with, as well as to include individual designated medical institutions providing dental services in places such as Shenzhen.

The Health Bureau and the Department of Health (DH) have already commenced to take forward the Pilot Scheme. Relevant Mainland authorities will also be invited to recommend medical institutions suitable for inclusion in the Pilot Scheme. The DH is at the same time conducting a market research by inviting Hong Kong medical institutions to provide for the Government's reference the information and operational details of medical institutions which are set up, being operated or supervised by them in the GBA.

The targets of the market research are Hong Kong medical institutions which are participants of the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme and familiar with its proper practices and claim procedures. At least one large-scale medical institution should be set up or being operated by the relevant Hong Kong medical institutions in the GBA to provide integrated medical and primary healthcare services or dental outpatient services for the elderly. Meanwhile, among the persons-in-charge, directors or senior management of that GBA medical institution, there should be at least one Hong Kong registered medical practitioner or registered dentist. This market research does not constitute any screening procedure nor agreement with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government.

The Pilot Scheme is anticipated to tie in with the HKSAR Government's policy objective of promoting primary healthcare, supporting the healthcare needs of the elderly and assisting the elderly in enhancing their awareness of disease prevention and self-management of health. In this connection, the Government will consider all relevant factors as the criteria for selecting medical institutions for the Pilot Scheme, including the location of the GBA medical institution, the availability of proven quality accreditation, relevant experiences in management and operation, its familiarity with the operation of Elderly Health Care Vouchers, as well as its ability to provide and handle a certain amount of outpatient healthcare services such as preventive, curative and rehabilitative services.