

Means test mechanism of Samaritan Fund and Community Care Fund medical assistance programmes enhanced

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (January 15) welcomed the Commission on Poverty's approval to include new drugs and a medical device (seven self-financed cancer drugs and one medical device related to percutaneous coronary intervention) in medical assistance programmes under the Community Care Fund (CCF) as well as in the budget of relevant programmes next year. The Commission on Poverty also approved enhancement measures for the means test mechanism of medical assistance programmes.

The spokesperson for the HA said, "The Commission on Poverty has endorsed enhancement measures for the means test mechanism of medical assistance programmes under the CCF. For the programme on Subsidy for Eligible Patients to Purchase Ultra-expensive Drugs, including those for treating uncommon disorders, the enhancement measures are applicable for applications under this programme submitted from January 2019. With the implementation of the enhancement measures, it is anticipated that the financial burden of patients' households on medical expenses will be alleviated.

"In addition, for the Samaritan Fund (SF), CCF Medical Assistance Programme (First Phase Programme) and the Subsidy for Eligible Patients of HA to Purchase Specified Implantable Medical Devices for Interventional Procedures, the enhancement measures on means test will take effect on February 16."

The spokesperson said a consultancy study was commissioned in December 2017 to review the existing means test mechanism for SF and CCF Medical Assistance Programmes. Based on the review findings, the Government and the HA will introduce enhancement measures to the existing means test mechanism, which include modifying the calculation of annual disposable financial resources for drug subsidy applications and refining the definition of "household" adopted in financial assessments. The enhancement measures are also applicable to patients who are subsidised by the Funds and for contributing to part of the drug cost upon implementation of the enhancement measures. The HA will write to inform these patients individually about the details of the arrangement, as well as posting the details on the HA website.

Members of the public or people in need may ask medical social workers at public hospitals or visit the HA website for details of the SF and CCF Medical Assistance Programmes, as well as the enhancement measures for the means test mechanism. Details of the enhancement measures will also be

promulgated via posters in public hospitals.