

SWD announces arrangements for gradual resumption of welfare services

A spokesman for the Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (February 16) announced that, with the pandemic situation stabilising recently, all welfare services units subsidised by the SWD will on the basis of their present operations resume normal operation in a gradual manner from February 22. The subsidised services include residential care services, community care services, home care services and centre-based services for the elderly and persons with disabilities, families, youth and communities.

To minimise the risks of infection, various services (such as meal service provided by elderly centres, standardised care need assessment for elderly services, family or individual interviews) will be provided on an appointment basis; groups may be conducted online or physically with adequate social distancing in place, whereas mass programmes and drop-in services will continue to be suspended. In addition, areas within the above service units designated for public use, such as resource corners and game corners, will temporarily be closed.

Service operators should keep their service users informed of the latest arrangements while service users who have the need for the services may also contact the relevant service units. Service operators should continue to provide suitable personal protective equipment for their staff having regard to the relevant guidelines issued by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health. They should put in place measures to prevent communicable diseases, including keeping the premises clean, requiring service users and staff to wear masks and to wash hands with alcohol-based hand rub, and enhancing measures on the screening of body temperatures.

Regarding the arrangements for aided child care centres (including aided standalone child care centres and aided child care centres attached to kindergartens) as well as special child care centres after the Lunar New Year holidays, please refer to the SWD's press release issued on February 10.