

SWD invites eligible elderly persons to apply for fourth batch of vouchers under Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher for the Elderly

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (August 15) invited eligible elderly persons to apply for the fourth batch of vouchers under the Pilot Scheme on Residential Care Service Voucher (RCSV) for the Elderly.

A spokesman for the SWD said that letters will be sent to eligible elderly persons to invite them to join the Scheme. Elderly persons who have been assessed as moderately impaired under the SWD's Standardised Care Need Assessment Mechanism for Elderly Services and waitlisted for care-and-attention (C&A) places under the Central Waiting List (CWL) for Subsidised Long Term Care Services for the Elderly with application dates on or before the end of December 2017 (not including those who are RCSV holders, and those whose status on the CWL is "inactive" or who are offered subvented/subsidised placement) are eligible to apply for the fourth batch of RCSVs. The closing date for applications is September 11. Successful applicants will be issued with RCSVs from the end of September onwards.

The spokesman said, "Adopting the 'money-following-the-user' principle, the Scheme provides an additional choice for elderly persons in need of residential care service by allowing them to choose the residential care services provided by eligible residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) under the Scheme according to their needs. The Scheme is being implemented in three phases with the first phase and second phase launched in March 2017 and September 2017 respectively. There are, as of today, 93 RCHEs participating as Recognised Service Providers (RSPs) offering beds which accept RCSV holders. The RSPs are RCHEs providing non-subsidised residential care places in subvented homes, contract homes, self-financing homes and EA1 private RCHEs under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme (EBPS). The third phase will be extended to cover all RCHEs meeting the requirements. The SWD has earlier invited RCHEs to join the third phase of the Scheme. Successful RSPs joining the third phase will offer service to RCSV holders in September 2018 at the earliest, and the numbers of RSPs and residential care places available for RCSV holders are expected to increase gradually."

Under the principle of "users pay in accordance with affordability", the Scheme adopts a sliding scale of co-payment at eight levels (Level 0 to Level 7). Elderly persons are assessed on an individual basis in the means test in which both income and assets will be taken into account in determining the co-payment level. The payment percentages of the elderly users range from 0 per cent at the lowest to 75 per cent at the highest. The current voucher value under the Scheme is \$12,609 per month while voucher value will be adjusted to \$13,287 per month with effect from October 1. The RSPs has to

provide a "standard service package" under the voucher value for RCSV holders. The scope of the package is comparable to that of subsidised C&A places under the EBPS.

The spokesman added that the Residential Care Service Voucher Office of the SWD will assist RCSV holders to select suitable RSPs and provide follow-up support for them after admission, such as regular visits and assistance with change of RSPs when necessary. If elderly persons or their carers/family members have enquiries about application, they may contact the above-mentioned office on 3107 3280 or 3107 3290. The telephone lines will be operating from 9.30am to 1pm and 2.30pm to 5pm on Mondays to Fridays, except for public holidays.

For details of the Scheme and the list of RSPs, citizens may visit the SWD website (www.swd.gov.hk). The SWD will update the list of RSPs in the website from time to time. Citizens may also browse the SWD Elderly Information Website (elderlyinfo.swd.gov.hk) to get more details such as information on manpower and facilities for each of the RSPs.