



Our Ref.: SWD 782/95 V  
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25 February 2009

To: All RCHE Operators/Supervisors

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Elderly Health Care Voucher Pilot Scheme**

The Government launched a 3-year Elderly Health Care Voucher Pilot Scheme ("Pilot Scheme") on 1 January 2009 to provide all elderly residents in Hong Kong aged 70 or above with five health care vouchers of \$50 each annually to partially subsidise their use of private primary healthcare services.

To assist eligible elderly persons living in residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) to make the best use of health care vouchers, the RCHEs under your charge should pay attention to the following:

1. All RCHE staff should be conversant with the implementation details of the Pilot Scheme.
2. Posters printed by the Department of Health should be posted and relevant leaflets should be placed at conspicuous location(s) at the RCHE to facilitate enquiries and understanding of the Pilot Scheme by the elderly residents and their family members.

3. When creating a voucher recipient account and using vouchers:
  - 3.1 Where an elderly resident is mentally fit and understands the healthcare services received and the condition under which vouchers are used, he/she should sign the Voucher Account Creation Form (the “Form”) and the Consent of Voucher Recipient to Use Vouchers (the “Written Consent”) on his/her own.
  - 3.2 Where an elderly resident is mentally fit and understands the healthcare services received and the condition under which vouchers are used but is illiterate, he/she may put a mark or affix his/her finger print in the column of signature on the Form and/or the Written Consent under a witness who can be the RCHE staff member accompanying him/her to receive healthcare services. The witness should put down his/her name in English, Hong Kong Identity Card Number and signature on the Form and/or the Written Consent.
  - 3.3 Where an elderly resident is mentally unfit or cognitively impaired, the Form and Written Consent should be signed by his/her guardian/guarantor/family member/relative. The RCHE Person-in-charge/staff should not sign on his/her behalf.
4. Vouchers can only be used for paying charges for healthcare services but not for purchasing drugs, medical items or accessory devices, or for any other purposes.
5. Vouchers cannot be used on public healthcare services subsidised by the Government.
6. Where the elderly residents use vouchers to purchase the paid healthcare services provided by RCHEs, the following requirements should be observed:
  - 6.1 RCHEs should respect contractual spirit and maintain the charge standards and payment items as agreed by both the RCHEs and the elderly residents or their guardians/guarantors/family members/relatives. Unless written consent is obtained from the elderly residents or their

guardians/guarantors/family members/relatives, RCHEs should not amend charge standards and add payment items unilaterally. Nor should RCHEs collect any charge for healthcare services which have already been included in the home fees (e.g. consultation fee of visiting medical officers, fees for nursing care) in the form of vouchers or in any other forms.

- 6.2 No administration charges or additional charges shall be collected from the elderly residents for their use of vouchers or for assisting them to use vouchers (e.g. RCHE staff serving as witness).
- 6.3 RCHEs should explain clearly to the elderly residents and/or their guardians/guarantors/family members/relatives the kind of healthcare services provided by RCHEs or visiting medical officers that can be paid by vouchers, the service charge required after debiting vouchers, the procedures for purchasing the healthcare services, etc.
- 6.4 RCHEs should explain clearly to the elderly residents and/or their guardians/guarantors/family members/relatives that they have absolute discretion to decide:
  - whether to purchase the healthcare services provided by RCHEs or visiting medical officers;
  - whether to use vouchers; and
  - the number of vouchers used on each occasion.
- 6.5 RCHEs should not advise the elderly residents or their guardians/guarantors/family members/relatives to use vouchers to purchase any unnecessary healthcare services.
- 6.6 RCHEs should inform the elderly residents and/or their guardians/guarantors/family members/relatives of the arrangement before the elderly residents use vouchers to purchase any healthcare services provided by RCHEs or visiting medical officers, and should write down their responses, feedback and/or instructions.
- 6.7 RCHEs or visiting medical officers should, after the elderly residents have purchased the healthcare services provided by them, issue receipts specifying clearly the services received by the elderly residents, the date

on which the elderly residents received the services, the service charges, the number of vouchers used, the amount of charges paid by the elderly residents in cash, etc. Besides, RCHEs should keep a copy of the receipts in the health records of the elderly residents for inspection by the elderly residents and/or their guardians/guarantors/family members/relatives or the inspectors of the Licensing Office of Residential Care Homes for the Elderly or the staff members of the Health Care Voucher Unit of the Department of Health.

7. Where the vouchers of the elderly residents are found or suspected to be misused, RCHEs should report to the Department of Health as soon as possible and inform the residents concerned and/or their guardians/guarantors/family members/relatives.

The posters and leaflets on the Pilot Scheme have been sent to all RCHEs by the Department of Health earlier on. For more posters and leaflets, or to learn more about the Pilot Scheme, please contact the Department of Health on 2838 2311 or visit the Health Care Vouchers website ([www.hcv.gov.hk](http://www.hcv.gov.hk)).

Should you have any enquiry on the content of this letter, please feel free to contact the social work inspector(s) of this Licensing Office who oversee(s) your RCHE(s).

Yours faithfully



YAM Mun-ho

(for Director of Social Welfare)