

Minutes of the Thirteenth Meeting of the
Social Welfare Committee
under Eastern District Council

Date: 10 February 2026 (Tuesday)
Time: 2:30 pm
Venue: Eastern District Council Conference Room

Present

Mr TING Kong-ho, Eddie, MH (Vice-chairman)	Mr LAM Wing-shing	Mr CHAN Hoi-wing, Joseph
Mr TING Wong, Kacee	Mr LAM Wing-cheung	Ms TSANG Cheuk-yi
Mr WONG Chi-chung	Mr CHAU Chi-yan, Benny	Mr CHENG Chi-sing, MH
Ms HO Sau-yin, Zareenah (Chairlady)	Ms LIN Cai-ying	Ms LAU Suk-yin
Mr YUEN Kin-chung, Kenny	Mr HUNG Chi-kit	Ms LAU Dana Sing-she
Ms LI Lee	Mr HUNG Lin-cham, MH, JP	Mr LAU Hing-yeung, MH
Ms NG Ching-ching	Mr HUNG Chiu-kwan	Mr LAI Nuen-san
Ms LEE Ching-har, MH	CHAN Hang, MH, JP	Mr LU Xiaofeng, Anthony
Mr HO Ngai-kam, Stanley	Mr KWOK Ho-king, Calvin	Mr CHEUNG Man-sung (Co- opted Member)
Mr LAM Sum-lim, MH	Mr KWOK Wing-kin	Ms TSOI Ka-yu (Co-opted Member)

In Regular Attendance (Government Representatives)

Ms CHIU Man-nga, Jasmine	Assistant District Officer (Eastern)1, Eastern District Office
Ms LUONG An-an, Jacqueline	Senior Liaison Officer (2), Eastern District Office
Miss NGAI Ka-man, Carman	Senior Liaison Officer (4), Eastern District Office
Ms HAU Suet-fan, Iris	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Eastern/ Wan Chai)3, Social Welfare Department

In Attendance by Invitation (Government Representatives)

Mr Axel SIU	Deputising Chief of Service (Accident & Emergency), Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital, Hospital Authority
Ms Edith Yim	Coordinator of Medical Social Service, Hong Kong East Cluster, Hospital Authority
Ms Michelle PANG	Public Affairs Officer, Hong Kong East Cluster, Hospital Authority

Ms LAU Mei-te, Angela

Chief Manager (District Health Centre), Primary Healthcare
Commission, Health Bureau

Secretary

Ms NG Sze-chung, May

Executive Officer I (District Council)3, Eastern District Office

Opening Remarks

The Chairlady welcomed all Members and government representatives to the meeting.

Agenda 1. Confirmation of the Draft Minutes of the 12th Meeting of Social Welfare Committee (SWC)

2. The above draft minutes were confirmed by the SWC without amendment.

Agenda 2. Concern over the Impact of Public Healthcare Fees and Charges Reform on Eastern District Residents
(SWC Paper No. 1/2026)

3. The Chairlady welcomed the representatives of the Hospital Authority (HA)'s Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (Eastern Hospital) and Hong Kong East Cluster to the meeting.

4. A Member briefed the meeting on Paper No. 1/2026.

5. Members' views and suggestions about the agenda item were summarised as follows:

- (a) Members relayed the views of Eastern District residents on the public healthcare fees and charges reform, including:
 - (i) The recent doubling of fees and charges had discouraged many elderly people from seeking medical consultation due to financial concerns, particularly for specialist outpatient clinic services and blood tests;
 - (ii) The reallocation of healthcare resources had not benefited the sandwiched middle-class;
 - (iii) The substantial increase in fees and charges did not appear to

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have significantly alleviated the pressure on waiting times at Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments;

- (iv) The application procedures for medical fee waivers were overly complicated; and
- (v) Residents might not fully understand the HK\$10,000 cap on the annual spending for public medical fees and charges without requiring financial assessment (i.e. Annual Spending Cap);

(b) Members proposed a number of suggestions, including:

- (i) Optimising the user interface of the “HA Go” one-stop mobile application to prioritise the display of useful functions;
- (ii) Exploring the feasibility of linking the fee waiver system with the claim records under the Old Age Living Allowance to streamline the assessment procedures;
- (iii) Strengthening co-operation with District Council (DC) members and local groups to proactively explain the details of the reform to the public;
- (iv) Setting up service counters at locations such as public transport hubs and public housing estates to provide fee waiver application and enquiry services;
- (v) Conducting timely reviews on the new measures in the future to provide better healthcare protection for residents from all walks of life; and
- (vi) Regularly publishing information on the effectiveness of the reform, supporting measures and directions for enhancement in the future.

6. The representative of the HA noted Members’ views and suggestions, and responded as follows:

- (a) The HA cited data showing a reduction in the number of non-urgent patients attending A&E departments and shorter waiting times for urgent patients, indicating initial success in resource allocation;
- (b) The HA pointed out that the majority of the most common blood tests and all non-blood pathology tests were classified as free basic items. Upon learning of the charges for less-common blood tests/sophisticated genetic blood tests at private hospitals, patients generally considered the new charges of \$50 (for intermediate items) / \$200 (for advanced items) at public hospitals to be at an acceptable level;

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- (c) The HA introduced the advance and transitional arrangements for fee waiver applications, including:
 - (i) The establishment of a Designated Team prior to the implementation of the reform to process advance applications, including 2 900 applications from patients of the Eastern Hospital;
 - (ii) The deployment of additional Designated Team members/volunteers/service ambassadors at high-traffic locations, such as shroff offices and pharmacies in outpatient clinics, to publicise the reform during its initial phase;
 - (iii) The setting up of information counters and a dedicated hotline to handle enquiries;
 - (iv) The introduction of “conditional waivers” to allow patients to submit documents for financial assessment after receiving medical services;
 - (v) The adoption of household-based assessment approach to expedite the financial assessment process; and
- (d) The HA expected that, by the end of the second quarter of 2026, members of the public would be able to submit fee waiver applications directly via “HA Go”. It had also invited local partners (including DC members) to assist in distributing promotional leaflets and organising multiple briefing sessions.

Agenda 3. Concern over the Implementation Progress of Primary Healthcare Blueprint in Eastern District **(SWC Paper No. 2/2026)**

7. The Chairlady welcomed the representatives of the Primary Healthcare Commission (PHC Commission) and Eastern District Health Centre (DHC) of the Health Bureau (HB) to the meeting.

8. A Member briefed the meeting on Paper No. 2/2026.

9. The representative of the HB elaborated on the commencement details of the Eastern DHC located at the Siu Sai Wan Health Integrated Building and the implementation of primary healthcare services. Members expressed their appreciation, and their suggestions and enquiries about the agenda item were summarised as follows:

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- (a) Members sought information on the number of Eastern District residents participating in the “Chronic Disease Co-Care Pilot Scheme” (“CDCC Scheme”) who required treatment following screening;
- (b) Members enquired whether the current service hours could cater to the needs of working people;
- (c) Members raised questions about the reasons for the relatively high proportion of “social worker, administrative staff and supporting staff” in the staff establishment;
- (d) Members asked how frontline staff could identify vulnerable groups so that they could introduce to them appropriate primary healthcare services; and
- (e) Members proposed strengthening the DHC’s external connections, for example by collaborating with the Care Teams to promote their facilities and services to the public.

10. The representative of the HB noted Members’ suggestions, and responded as follows:

- (a) The number of attendances of the Eastern DHC was approximately 57 000;
- (b) According to data analysis of screening results, among the participants who had completed the screening under the “CDCC Scheme”, approximately 40% had been diagnosed with prediabetes¹, or with diabetes mellitus, hypertension or dyslipidaemia;
- (c) The Core Centre of the Eastern DHC operated from Monday to Friday and on Sundays, and the two Satellite Centres located at Electric Road in North Point and Tai Hong Street in Sai Wan Ho were expected to commence operations in March this year. The opening hours of the three centres would be extended to better cater for the needs of working people, including weekends and night sessions, with some days opening until 9:00 pm;

¹ Prediabetes with glycated haemoglobin level of 6.0 to 6.4 per cent or fasting plasma glucose level of 6.1 to 6.9 mmol/L.

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- (d) Regarding staff establishment, among the 58 non-medical professional staff, some were social workers and physical instructors, with the latter primarily supporting physiotherapists/occupational therapists in conducting group activities;
 - (e) Upon registration as a member of the DHC, frontline staff would, based on the information provided, recommend appropriate services and inform the member of the primary care providers available;
 - (f) The HB would later distribute detailed information on the DHC to DC members and the Care Teams via the District Office to facilitate publicity efforts;
 - (g) The HB tentatively planned to invite DC members to visit the Core Centre between March and April this year; and
 - (h) The HB would further explore specific ways of collaboration with the Care Teams.
- (Post-meeting note: (i) Regarding the sub-item (a) above, the HA added that the services provided by the Eastern DHC were divided into two categories: Category 1 services included health promotion/education; Category 2 services included health risk assessment, diabetes and hypertension screening, chronic disease management, community rehabilitation and women's health services. To date, the cumulative number of attendances for Category 2 services had reached 57 000.
- (ii) The PHC Commission invited Eastern District Council (EDC) members to visit the Core Centre of the Eastern DHC and the Women Wellness Satellite (Hong Kong) on 21 April 2026.

Agenda 4. Invitation for Nomination of District Council Member to the Committees under the Eastern and Wan Chai District Social Welfare Office (SWC Paper No. 3/2026)

11. The representative of the Social Welfare Department (SWD) briefed Members on Paper No. 3/2026.

12. The Chairlady announced the recommended list as follows:

Names of Committees	Required No. of Member for Recommendation	Names of the Recommended Members
Eastern and Wan Chai District Welfare Strategy and Development Committee	1	Ms HO Sau-yin, Zareenah
Eastern and Wan Chai District Co-ordinating Committee on Family and Child Welfare Services	1	Mr TING Kong-ho, Eddie
Eastern and Wan Chai District Co-ordinating Committee on Elderly Service	1	Ms LEE Ching-har
Eastern and Wan Chai District Co-ordinating Committee on Rehabilitation Service	1	Mr HUNG Chi-kit
Eastern and Wan Chai District Local Committee on Services for Young People	1	Mr CHAN Hoi-wing, Joseph

13. The Chairlady requested the department and recommended Members to note that the five Members would serve in the aforementioned positions in their capacity as Members of the seventh term EDC until the end of their term of office (i.e. 31 December 2027), and asked the Secretary to submit the above list to the Eastern & Wan Chai District Social Welfare Office (E/WDSWO) of the SWD for consideration.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat submitted the above list to the E/WDSWO of the SWD on 11 February 2026.)

Agenda 5. Progress Report of Matters Arising from Previous SWC Meetings under Eastern District Council
(SWC Paper No. 4/2026)

(i) “Improvement to Difficulties in Appointment Booking with General Outpatient Clinics in the Eastern District”

HA 14. The agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

(ii) “Suggesting the Government to Conduct Joint Operations in Stamping Out On-street Prostitutes on Chun Yeung Street in North Point to Restore Community Peace”

15. The SWC noted the written replies from the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) and the Immigration Department (ImmD).

16. Members considered that the arrest figures provided by the law enforcement agencies showed that the problem of street prostitution on Chun Yeung Street remained persistent. They therefore hoped that the Police and the ImmD would continue to monitor the situation, conduct joint operations and review the effectiveness of enforcement actions in a timely manner, with a view to minimising the nuisance caused to the local community.

HKPF/ImmD 17. After discussion, the SWC agreed to follow up on the agenda item at the next meeting.

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(iii) “Establishment of a Support Service Centre for Ethnic Minorities in Chai Wan for Enhancing Support for Ethnic Minorities in Eastern District”

Housing
Department/
District Lands
Office, Hong Kong
East/Planning
Department/
Home Affairs
Department/
Education Bureau

18. The agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

(iv) “Concern over Future Development Plan of Eastern Hospital”

HA

19. The agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

(v) “Concerns about Ageing Population in Eastern District”

20. The Chairlady welcomed the representative of the PHC Commission of the HB to the meeting.

21. The HB reported that the Eastern DHC Express was upgraded into the Eastern DHC in December 2025, and had provided the SWC with specific details including its address, floor area and scope of services. Furthermore, the HB added that the Eastern DHC would roll out elderly healthcare services in phases within 2026, including health screenings, health risk assessments, family doctor pairing and rehabilitation services.

22. Given the HB’s progress report above and that Members could regularly follow up on the issue of “Ageing Population in Eastern District” through various routine discussion items under the EDC, the SWC agreed to cease following up on the agenda item.

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(vi) “Concern over the Merger of the Hong Kong East and Hong Kong West Hospital Clusters”

- HA 23. The agenda item would be followed up on upon further progress.

Agenda 6. Any Other Business

24. There was no other discussion item for the SWC.

Agenda 7. Date of Next Meeting

25. The fourteenth SWC meeting would be held at 2:30 pm on 21 April 2026 (Tuesday).

26. The meeting ended at 4:20 pm.

Eastern District Council Secretariat
April 2026