

The District Health Centre (DHC) Scheme “DHC Express” in Islands District

PURPOSE

This paper briefs Members on the District Health Centres (DHCs) Scheme and progress in establishing “DHC Express” in Islands District.

BACKGROUND

2. Hong Kong’s public healthcare system is under enormous pressure due to an ageing population and the increasing prevalence of chronic and complex diseases. Meanwhile, members of the public are mostly relying on treatment-oriented healthcare services.

3. In a bid to shift the emphasis of the present healthcare system and people’s mindset from treatment-oriented to prevention-focused, the Government is committed to enhancing district-based primary healthcare services by setting up DHCs in 18 districts progressively. Through district-based services, public-private partnership and medical-social collaboration, the DHC is a brand new service model and will be a key component of the public healthcare system. To this end, the Chief Executive announced the setting up of DHCs in the 2017 Policy Address.

4. In the 2019 Policy Address, the Chief Executive further announced that the Government would expedite the setting up of DHCs in all 18 districts. The first DHC in Kwai Tsing District commenced operation in September 2019. The Government expects to set up DHCs in six more districts¹ within the term of the current Government.

¹ Sham Shui Po, Wong Tai Sin, Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun and Southern District

5. For the remaining 11 districts² where full-fledged DHCs would yet to be set up within the term of the current Government, it is proposed in the 2019 Policy Address that the interim “DHC Express” will be established to provide health promotion, consultation and chronic disease care.

6. Following Sham Shui Po and Wong Tai Sin, DHCs in four more districts, namely Tsuen Wan, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun and Southern District, are expected to be set up within the term of the current Government. We would earmark suitable sites for setting up DHCs in all districts, and further consult the District Council on the location of DHC in Islands District.

THE “DHC EXPRESS” SCHEME

7. To build up a critical mass of district-based primary healthcare services throughout the territory as early as practicable to maintain the momentum for promoting primary healthcare, we propose to set up a “DHC Express” Scheme with a view to funding NGOs to set up smaller interim “DHC Express” in each of the remaining 11 districts, including Islands District, pending the establishment of DHCs.

THE SERVICE OF “DHC EXPRESS” SCHEME

8. The core services of “DHC Express” Scheme should cover the following major areas –

(a) Primary prevention

Health promotion and disease prevention activities would be provided to enhance public awareness of disease prevention and capability in self-management of health. Healthcare professionals of “DHC Express” would also provide care co-ordination, consultation and counselling services.

(b) Secondary prevention

Basic health risk assessment followed by health risk factor management would be provided to facilitate early identification of the target chronic diseases and health risk factors. Clients with risk factors for Diabetes

² Wan Chai, Eastern, Yau Tsim Mong, Kwun Tong, Tai Po, Islands, North, Shatin, Kowloon City, Sai Kung and Central & Western Districts.

Mellitus (DM) or Hypertension (HT) will be referred to medical practitioners for further assessment, including laboratory investigations and complication screening, as required.

(c) Tertiary prevention

“DHC Express” would provide patient empowerment programmes, with advice and support by nurses and allied health professionals for patients with DM and HT.

9. In addition, “DHC Express” would also serve as a district health resource hub to collect information on healthcare and social related resources available in the district for the use of the general public and provide individualised health related information to clients when needed.

THE SERVICE OF “DHC EXPRESS” SCHEME IN ISLANDS DISTRICT

10. We announced on 30 April 2021 that the The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council will be the operator of Islands District “DHC Express” with a three-year service contract, which will commence in October 2021.

11. In addition to the core services of “DHC Express” Scheme mentioned above, the Operator also suggested the additional service below:

(a) Tertiary prevention services –

- i. Patient Empowerment Programmes for patients with chronic low back pain and osteoarthritic knee pain;
- ii. Individual healthcare professional sessions for patients with DM, HT, chronic low back pain and osteoarthritic knee pain provided by allied health professional;

(b) Obesity and Overweight Management Programme;

(c) Sarcopenia; and

(d) Sleeping Problem Recovering and Restoring Programme.

12. The “DHC Express” Operator will identify a core site for its services and suggest to set up 9 service points in Islands district to enhance accessibility of services. Details are listed below:

(a) Core Site

Address : To be confirmed

Service Hours : Shown in table below

Time	Monday - Thursday	Friday & Saturday
9:00a.m. – 6:00p.m.	✓	
12:00p.m. – 9:00p.m.		✓

Closed on Sundays and General Holidays.

(b) Service Point

Service Point	Address (To be confirmed)	Service Hours
I	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council Tung Chung Integrated Service Centre; Room 2, Rooftop, Carpark 2, Yat Tung Estate, Tung Chung	1 st Monday am*
II	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council Tung Chung Integrated Service Centre, Tai O sub-office; Shop Units 2A & 3-6, Lung Tin Commercial Centre, Lung Tin Estate, Tai O, Lantau Island	1 st Tuesday am*
III	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council Tung Chung Integrated Service Centre, Discovery Bay sub-office (BMSE); 1/F, Discovery Bay, North Integrated Services Centre, 99 Siena	1 st Wednesday am*

	Avenue, Discovery Bay	
IV	Hong Kong PHAB Association Peng Chau Neighbourhood Elderly cum Children/Youth Centre; Room N10A, G/F, Kam Peng House, Kam Peng Estate	1 st Thursday am*
V	Cheung Chau Rural Committee; 2 Church Road, Cheung Chau	1 st Friday am*
VI	Masjid Ismail; 8 Yat Tung Street, Tung Chung	2 nd Monday pm*
VII	Tai O Rural Committee; 29 Tai O Market Street, Tai Oi, Tung Chung	2 nd Tuesday pm*
VIII	Office of TSUI Sang-hung, Sammy the District Council; G/F Ying Fook House Ying Tung Estate Tung Chung	2 nd Wednesday pm*
IX	Chan Shi Sau Memorial Social Service Centre, Shop G2, G4-G10, G/F Silver Plaza, No. 8, Chung Shing Street, Mui Wo, Lantau Island, N.T.	2 nd Thursday pm*

** The operating hours of each service point is proposed to be 3 hours on a weekday in every two weeks. Actual operating hours will be confirmed in due course with the site's operator according to the above schedule.*

13. The Operator of the “DHC Express” in accordance to the scheme requirement and service need will recruit a staffing team including at least one care coordinator (registered nurse) and one social worker. The Islands District “DHC Express” will also recruit Registered Nurses, Physiotherapist and other administrative and supporting staff in addition to the minimum requirements.

ELIGIBILITY FOR DHC SERVICES

14. Individual who is a holder of the Hong Kong Identity Card³, a resident in the district of the corresponding DHC, and agrees to enroll in the electronic Health Record Sharing System (eHRSS) and share the information on eHRSS for relevant service needs will be eligible to join the SHC scheme.

GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL SUBSIDY

15. Primary prevention services provided by the “DHC Express”, including nursing, pharmacy and social worker consultation service, and health promotion and activities are free of charge. The patient empowerment programme and related group activities are also free of charge.

16. To encourage the general public to develop a healthy lifestyle for disease prevention and early health risk identification, proper chronic diseases management and strengthening of self-care capability through rehabilitation, the Government will provide subsidies to clients for medical laboratory tests, individual allied health services, Chinese Medicine acupuncture and acupressure by private service providers in the community. Co-payment for part of the service costs will be required to strengthen the ownership of individuals on health management.

17. The use of Health Care Vouchers would be allowed at the DHC. Clients who are eligible for medical fee waiver for public hospital and clinic services can also receive the extra subsidy.

TRANSITION TO DHCs

18. The operators of the future full-fledged DHCs would be awarded through open tender as and when the permanent premises are ready. The “DHC Express” services will migrate as appropriate to the local DHC.

³An individual who is a holder of the Hong Kong Identity Card issued under the Registration of Persons Ordinance (Cap. 177, the Laws of Hong Kong), except those who obtained their Hong Kong Identity Cards by virtue of a previous permission to land or remain in Hong Kong granted to him and such permission has expired or ceased to be valid; or a child who is a Hong Kong resident and under 11 years of age

ADVICE SOUGHT

19. Members are invited to note and advice on the above information on the “DHC Express” Scheme.

Food and Health Bureau
June 2021