

Elderly Health Care Voucher Pilot Reward Scheme

Highlights

- ◆ To promote primary healthcare by optimising the use of resources, from 13 November 2023 onwards, the Government will provide rewards to eligible Hong Kong elderly persons aged 65 or above to encourage their **use of Health Care Vouchers (“Vouchers”) for receiving designated primary healthcare (“PHC”) services such as health assessment, chronic disease screening and management provided by private healthcare service providers.**
- ◆ As long as an elderly person’s **principal reason for visit** to a healthcare service provider is to receive designated PHC services, the amount of Vouchers used by the elderly person on that occasion can be accumulated for earning reward, which can be used for settling fees for such designated PHC services in future.
- ◆ Once an elderly person has **accumulated Voucher spending of \$1,000 or above on designated PHC services within the same year**, the eHealth System (Subsidies) will automatically allot **\$500 reward** to his/her Voucher account.
- ◆ The **three-year** Elderly Health Care Voucher Pilot Reward Scheme (“Pilot Reward Scheme”) will run up to 31 December 2026. An elderly person can be allotted the reward once each year at most; that is, an elderly person can obtain **\$1,500 reward at most** over the term of the Pilot Reward Scheme.

What are Designated Primary Healthcare Services?

Designated PHC services under the Pilot Reward Scheme include:

Medical practitioners, Chinese medicine practitioners and Dentists enrolled in the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme (“EHVS”)

- ◆ Services on preventive and follow-up/monitoring of long-term conditions, such as:
 - ◆ Medical practitioners: health assessment, body check, screening, vaccination, prescription of preventive drugs, and treatment for chronic diseases, etc.
 - ◆ Chinese medicine practitioners: health assessment and chronic disease management, etc.
 - ◆ Dentists: dental examination, scaling, extraction and filling, etc.

Chronic Disease Co-care Pilot Scheme

- ◆ Hypertension and diabetes mellitus screening services
- ◆ Medical consultations, drugs (if applicable), laboratory investigations, nurse clinic services and allied health services in the treatment phase

District Health Centres/District Health Centre Expresses

- ◆ Personalised services including the Chronic Disease Management Programme on osteoarthritic knee pain and low back pain; as well as the Community Rehabilitation Programme focusing on post-myocardial infarction, hip fracture and stroke, etc.

The University of Hong Kong - Shenzhen Hospital and its Health Centre

- ◆ Outpatient services on preventive and follow-up/monitoring of long-term conditions provided at the following venues:
 - ◆ 11 designated Outpatient Medical Centers: Family Medicine Clinic, Health Assessment and Management Center, Accident and Emergency Department, Orthopedic Clinic, Ophthalmology Clinic, Dental Clinic, Chinese Medicine Clinic, Medicine Clinic, Gynaecology Clinic, Surgery Clinic, Rehabilitation Clinic
 - ◆ Huawei Li Zhi Yuan Community Health Center

Reward Mechanism

	Reward for Year 2024	Reward for Year 2025	Reward for Year 2026
Reward amount	After having accumulated Voucher spending of \$1,000 or above on designated PHC services each year, \$500 reward will be allotted (at most once a year) for using on designated PHC services in future.		
Period for accumulating use of Vouchers to obtain reward	13 November 2023 to 31 December 2024	1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025	1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026
Period for using reward	13 November 2023 to 31 December 2025	1 January 2025 to 31 December 2026	1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027

- ◆ The three-year Pilot Reward Scheme will be rolled out on 13 November 2023. As a special arrangement, the period for accumulating Voucher spending for the first-year reward (i.e. reward for year 2024) will begin on 13 November 2023 and end on 31 December 2024. The corresponding accumulation period for the following two years will begin on 1 January and end on 31 December of the year.
- ◆ An elderly person who has **accumulated Voucher spending of \$1,000 or above on designated PHC services within the same year** will be **automatically allotted \$500 reward** to his/her Voucher account. \$500 reward will only be allotted to an elderly person when he/she has used Voucher to pay for designated PHC services and such spending has reached \$1,000. The reward will be allotted **once a year at most**.
- ◆ **Only the Voucher amount used within the same year will count towards the accumulated amount. Accumulated Voucher spending will be reset to zero at the start of each year (normally 1 January), and any previously accumulated amount will lapse on that day.**
- ◆ The reward will be immediately allotted once the accumulated Voucher spending recorded in the eHealth System (Subsidies) reaches \$1,000. An **SMS message** will be sent to the Hong Kong mobile phone number provided by the elderly person as notification, which will also show the expiry date of the reward.
- ◆ The reward can be used for designated PHC services such as health assessment, chronic disease screening and management.
- ◆ **The reward will expire by the end of the following year. Unused reward cannot be accumulated and will lapse after the expiry date.**

Points to Note

- ◆ When an elderly person uses Vouchers to pay for designated PHC services, the eHealth System (Subsidies) will **automatically deduct the relevant fee from the reward (if available) first**, and then deduct the remaining fee from the balance in his/her Voucher account (if necessary).
- ◆ The amount of reward used to pay for designated PHC services **will not count towards the accumulated Voucher spending for obtaining reward**; in other words a reward cannot be used to earn another reward.
- ◆ Reward allotted will be kept separate from the annual Voucher amount provided to an elderly person. The accumulation limit of Vouchers (currently set at \$8,000) will not be affected.
- ◆ According to the **“user accumulates” principle**, if an elderly person uses his/her spouse’s Vouchers to pay for designated PHC services, the amount spent will only be recorded as his/her own accumulated Voucher spending instead of his/her spouse’s.
- ◆ After using the reward to pay for designated PHC services, an elderly person will receive an SMS message showing the balance of the reward and the expiry date.
- ◆ **Shared use of reward between spouses is not allowed.**
- ◆ Elderly persons may consult the healthcare service provider when receiving healthcare services for queries about the related record.

Let us take a look at Uncle Hong’s example:

Year 2024

Uncle Hong uses Vouchers amounting to \$400, \$500 and \$600 respectively from January to June 2024 for designated PHC services.

As his Voucher spending on designated PHC services on the three occasions was over \$1,000 in total, \$500 reward is allotted for year 2024, which can be used on or before 31 December 2025.

Year 2025

Uncle Hong uses Vouchers amounting to \$1,600 in May 2025 for designated PHC services.

The eHealth System (Subsidies) will first deduct \$500 reward (i.e. reward for year 2024) from his Voucher account first, and the shortfall (i.e. \$1,100) will be deducted from the remaining balance in his Voucher account.

As the amount of Vouchers deducted (\$1,100) is spent on designated PHC services, \$500 reward is allotted for year 2025, which can be used on or before 31 December 2026.

Year 2026

Uncle Hong uses Vouchers amounting to \$400 in February 2026 for designated PHC services. The system will deduct the amount from his reward for year 2025 in his Voucher account. The amount of reward left in his account is thus \$100.

Uncle Hong later on uses Vouchers amounting to \$1,300 in October 2026 for designated PHC services. The system will first deduct the remaining reward amount of \$100 in his Voucher account, and the shortfall (i.e. \$1,200) will be deducted from the balance in his Voucher account.

As the amount of Vouchers deducted (\$1,200) is spent on designated PHC services, \$500 reward is allotted for year 2026, which can be used on or before 31 December 2027.

Reminder

- ◆ **The reward** for each year **comes with an expiry date, after which it will lapse.** Elderly persons should take note and make **thorough plan on how to make the best use of the reward** for designated PHC services **before it expires.**
- ◆ The Department of Health (“DH”) and healthcare service providers will never, in relation to the use of Vouchers (including reward) , ask elderly persons to provide information about their bank accounts (including passwords) via phone calls or SMS messages, or to click on a web link. **Elderly persons should stay vigilant against scams.**
- ◆ The DH will strictly deal with all suspected cases of non-compliance in accordance with the established monitoring mechanism, and take appropriate measures / actions such as referring cases to the law enforcement agencies and / or the relevant professional regulatory boards / councils for follow-up as appropriate.

Want to know more?

Scheme Website: www.hcv.gov.hk

Scheme Hotline: 2838 2311