

## Strengthening Healthcare Protection

### **(A) Enhanced Medical Fee Waiving Mechanism**

#### 1. Relax the income and asset limit

Income Limit	Relax income limit from the current 75% of Median Monthly Domestic Household Income ( <b>MMDHI</b> ) <sup>1</sup> to: 2-person household or larger: MMDHI 1-person household: 150% of MMDHI <i>(to better assist 1-person household with lack of social support)</i>
Asset Limit	Relax to asset limit for Public Rental Housing application

<sup>1</sup> MMDHI based on the General Household Survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department. Upon enhancement, MMDHI (excluding foreign domestic helpers) will be adopted.

#### 2. Extend the scope of coverage and validity period of waiver

- Extend the scope of coverage for period waiver for those below 65 of age, to include general outpatient clinic (GOPC) services for episodic appointments<sup>2</sup>
- The longest validity period of medical fee waiver will be extended from 12 months to 18 months
- Within a maximum of 18 months, there is no need to submit financial documents for financial assessment for applying medical fee waiver

<sup>2</sup> Currently, if patient below 65 of age with period waiver needs to attend GOPC services for episodic appointments, s/he is required to approach (medical) social worker to apply for one-off medical fee waiver. For those patients age 65 or above, there is no need for them to apply for waiver additionally.

#### 3. Refine the definition of “household”

- Relax the definition of “household” to that for applying assistance from safety net\* for self-financed drugs or medical devices

Patient type	"Household" and Core Family Member Definition
Dependent patient <sup>3</sup>	The patient, his/her parents/legal guardians, and dependent siblings living together
Non-dependent patient	<u>If married</u> – the patient, his/her spouse, and dependent children (but not parents/legal guardians or siblings) living together <u>If unmarried</u> – the patient would be treated as a single person household (irrespective of whether parents/legal guardians or siblings are living together)

<sup>3</sup> A dependent is defined as a person who is unmarried AND either (i) under 18 years old; or (ii) 18-25 years old receiving full-time education. A patient who does not fulfill the above requirements is classified as a non-dependent patient.

\*Including Samaritan Fund

**(B) Introduction of Inpatient and Outpatient Cap of Annual Spending**

1. Cap of annual spending of HK\$10,000 per patient for all fee items (excluding self-financed drugs and medical devices)
2. Eligible for all Hong Kong residents

**(C) Enhanced Safety Net\* for Self-financed drugs and medical devices**

Accelerated introduction of innovative drugs and devices to (1) HA Drug Formulary; (2) Safety Net; and (3) Special Drug Categories. Relaxed eligibility criteria:

1. Relax the calculation of income for “annual disposable financial resources”  
*(applicable to applications for drugs and non-one-off non-drug items)*
  - Only 80% and 60% of the income will be used for assessment of new applicants and recurrent applicants respectively
2. Widen the sliding scale for calculating the amount of patient contribution  
*(applicable to applications for drugs and non-one-off non-drug items)*
  - By making reference to the sliding scale of Legal Aid Schemes, to widen the sliding scale for calculating the amount of patient contribution, reducing the amount of patient contribution for existing patients and providing a higher amount of subsidy, and support patients who are currently NOT eligible for subsidy due to relatively higher annual disposable financial resources
3. Relax the income limit  
*(applicable to applications for one-off non-drug items)*
  - Relax the income limit for 1-person household to 1.5 times of the current income limit for consistency of the enhancement measures on medical fee waiver

\*Including Samaritan Fund