

# Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme Shared Use of Vouchers between Spouses and the Launch of Electronic Consent



## Highlights

- ❖ The Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme (EHVS) now allows **shared use of Health Care Vouchers (Vouchers)** between two eligible<sup>Note 1</sup> elderly persons in spousal relationship<sup>Note 2</sup> upon their mutual consent and completion of procedures to pair up their eHealth (Subsidies) Accounts (Voucher accounts). Prior application is not required. Once your Voucher accounts are paired up through a one-time registration, either party can, upon exhaustion of your Voucher account balance, use the Voucher balance in your spouse's account.
- ❖ To make it more convenient to use Vouchers, the EHVS has introduced the use of **electronic consent (eConsent)**<sup>Note 3</sup> to replace the original Consent of Voucher Recipient in paper form. In order to safeguard your interests, the system will notify you or your designated family member/carer by **SMS**<sup>Note 4</sup> immediately upon your use of your own or your spouse's Voucher account to pay for healthcare services.

Note 1: Elderly person aged 65 or above who holds a valid Hong Kong Identity Card (HKIC) or a Certificate of Exemption (CoE) issued by the Immigration Department.

Note 2: For the purpose of EHVS, two Voucher Recipients are in a spousal relationship if they are married under monogamous marriage to one another as recognised by the laws of Hong Kong. "Monogamous marriage" means a marriage which was

(a) if it took place in Hong Kong —

(i) celebrated or contracted in accordance with the provisions of the Marriage Ordinance (Chapter 181 of the laws of Hong Kong);

(ii) a modern marriage validated by section 8 of the Marriage Reform Ordinance (Chapter 178 of the laws of Hong Kong) and registered under Part IV of that Ordinance; or

(b) if it took place outside Hong Kong, celebrated or contracted in accordance with the law in force at the time and in the place where the marriage was performed and recognised by such law as involving the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

Note 3: eConsent is not available under the Scheme at the University of Hong Kong – Shenzhen Hospital.

Note 4: SMS, or short message service, is only available to Hong Kong mobile phone numbers. The phone number can belong to the concerned elderly person, his/her family member or carer.

## How do My Spouse and I Pair up Our Voucher Accounts?



- ❖ You and your spouse are not required to apply for account pairing in advance. When either of you need to use Vouchers to pay healthcare service fees, you only need to attend the practice of a healthcare service provider **together in person**<sup>Note 5</sup> and request for a **one-time pairing** of your Voucher accounts, and your accounts will be paired up immediately in the system.



- ❖ Once your accounts are paired up, upon exhaustion of your or your spouse's Voucher account balance, either of you can use the Voucher balance in the other's account. Whenever your spouse's Vouchers are used, you are required to produce **a copy of his/her latest HKIC (or CoE, if applicable)** to the healthcare service provider for verification.





- ❖ Both of you are required to produce your **valid HKICs or CoE(s)** to the healthcare service provider when you request to pair up your accounts. You should also **declare your spousal relationship** and **give your consent to share use of vouchers**. The healthcare service provider will then pair up your Voucher accounts in the system. (Elderly couples are **not required** to produce documents in support of their spousal relationship at the time of account pairing. You will receive a direct request from the Government to provide supporting documents for verification when necessary.)
- ❖ Each of you should provide an SMS-enabled **Hong Kong mobile phone number** to the healthcare service provider. If necessary, you can choose to provide the Hong Kong mobile phone number of your family member/carer instead. Upon successful pairing of your accounts, an SMS will be sent to your designated phone number. To safeguard the interests of you both, the system will also notify you and/or your spouse immediately by SMS when either of you settle the fees for healthcare services with Vouchers in your accounts.

Note 5: For mentally incapacitated elderly persons, it should be done by completing the “Consent of Sharing Health Care Vouchers between Voucher Recipients in Spousal Relationship”.

## Consequences of Making False Declaration about Spousal Relationship

- ❖ The Department of Health (DH) will conduct regular/sampling checks in accordance with the monitoring mechanism. All suspected cases of false declaration about spousal relationship will be strictly dealt with and referred to the law enforcement agencies for investigation. Persons involved may be subject to criminal liability and imprisonment.

## New “Consent of Voucher Recipient” <sup>Note 6</sup>

- ❖ The amount of Vouchers that you agree to use will be confirmed **electronically** <sup>Note 3</sup>, in lieu of signing the “Consent of Voucher Recipient” in paper form as required previously.
- ❖ Once you have received the service of an enrolled healthcare service provider in person and agreed to the amount of Vouchers to be charged for the relevant service, all you need to do is **insert your HKIC into the Smart ID card reader** to confirm the amount of Vouchers agreed to be used (including the amount of your spouse’s Vouchers agreed to be used, if applicable).
- ❖ A notification of the amount of Vouchers used will be sent immediately by **SMS** <sup>Note 4</sup> to your designated phone number. If your spouse’s Vouchers have been used, he/she will also be notified by SMS via his/her designated phone number.
- ❖ Unless there are exceptional circumstances in which the “Consent of Voucher Recipient” cannot be given by electronic means, you are **not required to sign the “Consent of Voucher Recipient” in paper form**.
- ❖ After using the Vouchers, you will receive a “Notice on Use of Health Care Vouchers” with an updated balance of Vouchers as usual.



Note 6: If the elderly person receiving the service is mentally incapacitated and has to be represented by a guardian, the voucher amount to be used shall continue to be confirmed with the Consent of Voucher Recipient in paper form.

## Exceptional Circumstances

- ❖ If your spouse is unable to pair up Voucher accounts at the practice of a healthcare service provider with you in person due to exceptional circumstances such as immobility or bedriddenness, etc., you and your spouse may download a “Consent of Sharing Health Care Vouchers between Voucher Recipients in Spousal Relationship” (Shared Use Consent) available at the EHVS website ([www.hcv.gov.hk](http://www.hcv.gov.hk)) and fill it in to declare your spousal relationship and give consent to share use of Vouchers. When you attend the practice of a healthcare service provider to receive healthcare services, you should bring along the Shared Use Consent duly completed and signed by both of you and a copy of the HKIC (or a CoE (if applicable)) of your spouse, who is unable to attend in person, for pairing up your Voucher accounts. Notification of successful pairing of your accounts will be sent by SMS to the **Hong Kong mobile phone number(s)** provided by both of you in the Shared Use Consent.
- ❖ The DH will conduct regular/sampling checks in accordance with the monitoring mechanism. All suspected cases of **false declaration about spousal relationship** will be strictly dealt with and referred to the law enforcement agencies for investigation. Persons involved may be subject to criminal liability and imprisonment.

## Points to Note

- ❖ If both of you consent to pair up your Voucher accounts, you may use your own Vouchers as usual but it also means that you give consent to your spouse’s use of any Vouchers remaining in your account after exhaustion of his/her own Vouchers.
- ❖ If either one of you wish to cease the sharing of Vouchers after successful pairing of your Voucher accounts, you may complete a “**Notification for Withdrawal from Pairing up eHealth (Subsidies) Accounts**” (available for download at the EHVS website: [www.hcv.gov.hk](http://www.hcv.gov.hk)) and submit it to the DH for processing.

## Reminder

- ❖ The EHVS provides subsidies to elderly persons to facilitate their choice of private primary care services that best suit their health needs in terms of disease prevention and health management. As such, before you consent to sharing the Vouchers between you and your spouse, you must consider your personal needs for using Vouchers and make thorough plans with your spouse on how to **make the best use of them** after pairing up your accounts.
- ❖ Please note that the DH and healthcare service providers will not, in relation to the use of Vouchers (including Voucher account pairing), ask for your bank account details (including passwords) via phone calls or SMS, nor will they ask you to click on a web link. **Please stay vigilant against scams.**

## More Information

For more information regarding the EHVS, please visit the Scheme website at [www.hcv.gov.hk](http://www.hcv.gov.hk) or call **2838 2311**.

