

71pc get infirmity allowance

About 71 per cent of the population aged 75 and above were receiving a \$90 a month infirmity allowance from the Government by the end of last October, a recently published study from the Social Welfare Department said.

The study considered the 71 per cent ratio "satisfactory" bearing in mind that the allowance scheme had only been in operation for 2½ years.

The allowance is part of the Disability and Infirmity Allowance scheme introduced on April 1, 1973. It provides non-contributory, non-means tested allowances to the severely disabled, and the elderly infirm (those aged 75 and above) who are not living in residential institutions.

The present scale rate is \$90 per month for infirmity cases and \$180 per month for disability cases.

The study also found that the average age of infirmity allowance recipients is 80, and generally a male case can expect to benefit from the scheme for about 80 months, a year less than female cases.

At the end of last October there were 50,099 infirmity allowance cases while population projections estimated there was about 70,000 people in the relevant age group.