



香港失明人協進會  
HONG KONG BLIND UNION

HKCSS

27 JUL 2010

July 26, 2010

Social Welfare Advisory Committee Secretariat  
Room 805, 8/F., West Wing  
Central Government Offices  
11 Ice House Street  
Central  
Hong Kong

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Long-term Social Welfare Planning in Hong Kong – consultation paper**

I refer to the captioned consultation paper and would like to put forth our views on it as follows:

- It seems that the consultation paper has put too much emphasis on the investment and preventive roles of social welfare. In the White Paper "Social Welfare into the 1990s and Beyond" (1991), social welfare was defined as "embraces laws, programmes, benefits and services which address social needs accepted as essential to the well-being of a society. It focuses on personal and social problems, both existing and potential." The subsequent Five Year Plan for Social Welfare Development in Hong Kong also recognized that social welfare "plays an important developmental role by providing an organized system of services and institutions which are designed to aid individuals and groups to achieve satisfying roles in life and personal relationships which permit them to develop their full capacities and to promote their well-being in harmony with the needs and aspirations of their families and the community." While stressing the mission of building a caring society in the consultation paper, we believe that the government should not reduce the scopes and functions of social welfare in the future planning.



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- We are very much concerned about the proposed user pays principle in guiding our future welfare planning. It has been clearly spelt out in the established welfare policy papers that "social welfare services should not be regarded as some form of charity but should be made available to all those who need them." The contribution of service users as active participants should not hinge on their ability to pay.
- If social welfare is construed as a social investment, our concern is how to define the outcome and output. We believe that the outcome should not be in the form of income charged for services. We believe that the outcome should be social good being achieved. For examples, in the case of employment, the employment rate of visually impaired people. To quote another example, it can be in the form of quality of life for the elderly blind.
- In promoting the integration of blind people in the community, we have encountered obstacles in social attitudes and in market barriers. The followings are areas that need to be addressed:
  - lack of employment opportunities;
  - caring for the elderly;
  - change in the attitudes of the public;
  - public policies.
- As a self-help organization of visually impaired persons in Hong Kong, we are in full support of the principle to promote users' participation as an integral part of our welfare planning mechanism. We do look forward to the Government's further involvement of concerned users' groups in developing the long term welfare planning strategies in Hong Kong.



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Should you require any clarification on our views, please feel free to contact Ms. Stella Ho, our Executive Director at 2339 0666.

Yours sincerely,

Chong Chan-yau  
President

c.c. Ms Christine Fang, Chief Executive, HKCSS  
Hon Cheung Kwok Che, Legislative Councillor