

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
Standing Committee on Service Development & Liaison
Progress Report (December 2006 – January 2007)

Service Planning & Development

1. **Impact of Minimum Wage for People with Disabilities**

Council made a submission to Economic Development and Labor Bureau in late December highlighting the concerns of rehabilitation sector toward the minimum wage issue. In view that a substantial number of people with disabilities may face great difficulty in seeking employment in open market if minimum wage is legislated, we proposed the Government to set up a system of productivity based assessment to determine the wage level of individuals with disabilities according to their working ability. Exemption should be exercised for those trainees receiving vocational rehabilitation in social enterprises. EDLB appreciated our suggestion and replied that they would examine it in details with reference to overseas experiences.

2. **International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

After a 4 years effort of continued negotiations, the “International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” was formally adopted by the United Nations at its General Assembly on December 13, 2006. The Convention will be open for signature on March 30, 2007 and most probably China would be among the first batch of signing countries. Since Hong Kong, as part of China, has the obligation to comply with the Convention, Council has formed a working group with representation of different disability communities to map out strategies for the promotion of this treaty and study its impacts on our disability policies, services, facilities and legislations.

3. **IFSC Review**

Regarding the service review of Integrated Family Service Center (IFSC), the NGO IFSC operators appreciated that the Social Welfare Department would help to compile the SIS data of all 61 IFSCs to facilitate better understanding and review of the IFSC service. A special meeting was held to collect views from the sector, suggestion on the data required for the review were made and channeled to SWD for their consideration.

4. **Comments on the guideline drafted by DH on ‘Drug Management System at Elderly Residential Home’**

A meeting was held for NGOs to discuss the guideline and the practice of drug management workflow proposed by DH. Feedbacks and views were submitted to the Government in Jan, 2007. A briefing-clarification session by the DH is expected in Feb-March.

5. **Race Discrimination Bill**

Meeting with operators of Ethnic Minority service was held to further discuss the implications of the Bill in both EM & service operators. To arouse more awareness and discussion among both EM groups and mainstream service operators, a seminar is being planned for February 2007.

Topical Discussion & Mutual Learning

6. Elderly Learning- U3A Project

Elder Learning is one of the key subjects in Elderly Commission this year. The Council had started the project of U3A since 2005. With the sponsorship of \$458,000 from Hong Kong Electric, the new U3A project in 2007 was started on 11th Jan. The project is targeted for the third-aged persons, aged 50 or above. The project objective is to promote the Concept of Learning through “Self-initiate; Self-learning; Self-teaching and Self-management” approach.

7. The 6th Children and Youth Health Course for the Workers in Social Welfare Sector

The course was co-organized with Hong Kong College of Paediatricians Foundation and 6 sessions concerning children and youth mental health was held on Saturday afternoons from Nov 11, 2006 to Jan 6, 2007. Speakers with different professional backgrounds, including clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, paediatrician as well as experienced social worker, were invited to give the talks. Over 187 workers of various service settings enrolled for the course. Positive feedback was received from participants.

8. Good practice sharing on mentorship scheme

To explore the future development of mentorship scheme in partnership between NGOs and different sectors, a small-scale explorative survey on the mentorship scheme was being conducted to identify good practice, as well as difficulties and solutions. An advisory committee, with cross sector participation was formed to provide suggestion and opinions on the subject.

9. Report back session for the study visit on youth mental health service of L.A.

Report back session for the study visit on youth mental health service of L.A., USA was held on January 19, 2007. Apart from the report back, focus would be placed on the future development of youth mental health service in HK. Prof. Yip Kam Shing had been invited to be our commenter and facilitator for the session and discussion forum.

10. The 2nd “Not One Student Less” Award Scheme

In order to promote good practices of schools and the welfare sector in helping students to achieve sustainable development in the education system, the Award Scheme, which is jointly organized by the Council and EMB, was launched in December 2006. We are also glad to have 10 education organizations to support the scheme this year. Schools and NGOs were encouraged to submit project reports and/or successful stories to share on their valuable experience. An award ceremony cum sharing forum will be held on March 28, 2007.

11. Briefing Session on 2007 Best Practice Awards in Social Welfare

The 2007 Best Practice Awards in Social Welfare had been launched in the Council’s AGM in November 2006. Besides promoting and encouraging sharing of best practices, the Briefing Session was held on January 19, 2007 to facilitate the participants to prepare for a good documentation of experiences and practices. Past Awards winners, Ms Winnie Ying and Ms Crystal Cheng and past adjudicator, Prof Steven Ngai had been invited to share their experience.

Advocacy & response to Current Issues

12. International Day of Disabled Persons 2006 Celebration

Our Council, in collaboration of Health Welfare and Food Bureau and Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong, jointly presented the Opening Ceremony for International Festival of Inclusive Arts and International Day of Disabled Persons (IDDP) at both sides of Victoria Harbour on December 2, 2006. Dr. York Chow, SHWF, officiated the ceremony which was highlighted by the “Beat the Drum for Inclusion” record breaking percussion and the fairy tale “18-Districts Giant Puppet Parade”. Over 11,000 participants with and without disabilities enjoyed the joyful moment with excitements. Other IDDP celebrations also included the day for free ride of public transports cum free admission to museums and sports facilities by people with disabilities on November 26 and the Ocean Park Fun Day on November 25.

13. Discussion on Family Commission

Following the Forum on ‘Focusing on Family’ held in November 2006, 2 focus group meetings were held in January to provide a platform for interested parties to discuss the role and functions of the Family Commission and the conducting of Family Impact Assessment. A submission will be made to the Government in February 2007.