

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Progress Report (February 2005)

1. Proposed Community Development Policy
80 frontline workers, supervisors and academia attended the consultation session on a drafted Community Development Policy in early February. The CD service objectives and resource matching, future service development and resource planning were the key concerns expressed. The Council would channel the views to Home Affairs Bureau in the next NGO CD Forum for formulating the Community Development Policy.
2. 4% Budget Cut on Community Development Service in 2005-06
Under facilitation of the Council, a resolution regarding the proposed 4% cut was achieved among SWD, HAB and NGOs by applying 1% across the board budget cut for NGO service operators, returning the saved HK\$1.4M from a terminated NLCDP (which was originally reserved for rolling new service for the ethnic minorities in 2005-2006) and with the rest absorbed by SWD. Meanwhile, HAB had explored new money of HK\$2.8M to launch a community centre for ethnic minorities in Yau Tsim Mong district for the coming two years. Over the past 5 years, 60% of the CD service budget had been cut for rolling other welfare services and achieving efficiency savings of the welfare sector.
3. The 4th Mainland, Hong Kong and Macau Conference on Prevention of Drug Abuse cum The 8th National Drug Dependence Academic Conference
The first announcement and call for papers regarding the captioned Event has been released in early February. It is anticipated that the Conference to be held on October 19-21, 2005 will attract around 200 government and non-governmental delegates from many different Chinese cities. Theme of the Conference is "Multi-facet Approaches for the Prevention and Treatment of Drug Abuse".
4. Head-Start Programme
This programme, characterized with multi-professional collaboration, would be piloted in 4 districts focusing on the need of high risk children aged 0-5 years and their families. Similar programme of 4 different countries were reviewed and focus group meeting was held to collect the sector's views. Apart from maternal & child health centres and hospitals, pre-school service settings should also work as primary platform for early identification. A special team on top of existing services should be formed to cater for the identified service demand. The Council would work out a model with concerned parties and deliberate further with the Government.
5. Supporting Children and Youth in Poverty
EMB has earmarked a recurrent amount of \$75M to provide school-based after school learning and support services for the needy students. Focus group was organized and participating NGOs considered that there should be coordination among all existing and new resources available in the school setting so as to best meet various needs of these students without stigmatization. A meeting with EMB representatives was held in early February for exchange of views. The pilot programme will likely be launched from this summer in Tin Shui Wai, Tung Chung, Shum Shui Po, Tseung Kwan O, Kwun Tong and Kwai Tsing. Apart from this, KCRC also planned to offer volunteers and free ride on its rails for children living in remote areas to travel to city areas for exposure and leisure activities.

6. Jockey Club Youth Enhancement Scheme
The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust would allocate a total of HK\$400M for a multi-year universal positive youth development programme, with an aim to promote the holistic development of secondary 1 to 3 students. The Council was invited to sit on its Advisory Committee. NGOs operating school social work service and concerned schools were expected to submit joint applications for delivering the programme from January 2006. A launching ceremony and briefing sessions for NGOs would be held this April.
7. Conversion of Elderly Hostels and Homes for the Aged
The Policy Address newly announced that Government will put in HK\$180M to gradually convert the self-care hostels and homes for the aged (HFAs) into long-term care places. In view of this development, SWD has given a more affirmative position that they would have sufficient resources to convert all the elderly hostels and HFAs to higher level of care. To address the sector's concerns, SWD has also improved the mode of conversion, allowing all HFAs to convert to care-and-attention homes only, instead of nursing homes.
8. Evaluation of District Elderly Community Centres and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres
In response to the request of the LegCo Welfare Panel, SWD will commission a consultancy study to evaluate the effectiveness and user satisfaction of the re-engineered District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs). Through the Council, the Department is consulting the sector toward the consultancy brief. A meeting would be held at end of February to discuss the details, including evaluation objectives and evaluation design.
9. Upcoming Review of the Rehabilitation Programme Plan
A briefing session was held by the Commissioner for Rehabilitation on February 4 to inform the rehabilitation and disability sector of the commencement of the new Rehabilitation Programme Plan (RPP) review and how it will be conducted under a more broad-based approach in the coming 12 months. A steering group comprising representatives from concerned government departments, the Council, rehabilitation agencies and self-help organizations would be formed to oversee the drafting process. The Council has advised that membership of the steering group should include representatives from all 6 specific disability groups.
10. The 1st Hong Kong Conference for Ex-Mentally Ill Persons
Being the first of its kind in Hong Kong, the Conference will be held on March 12-13, 2005 for the purpose of empowering people with mental illness. The event programmes are designed for the user participants to share their concerns and daily living encounters on issues relating to rehabilitation, family, employment, medical treatment, and public education. So far, more than 300 registrations have been received. A total of 7 pre-conference workshops were organized in late February as an advance programme to warm up those registered and motivate their participation in the Conference.