

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Standing Committee on Service Development & Liaison

Progress Report (June 2005)

1. SWD's consultation on District Welfare Planning Protocol and Social Indicators on District Welfare Needs

The Council's working group on district welfare planning has organized a series of discussion on the captioned subject and a position paper is drafted to collect member agencies' views. A meeting with SWD was held on 20 May, to exchange initial views. A sharing meeting was held on 3 June with 75 participants from 13 districts. The sector welcomes the strengthening of district planning and advocates for a more participative and transparent process, as well as the positioning of district planning as an integral part of a central planning mechanism, which is lacking at the present moment.

2. HWFb's Consultation on Welfare Priorities Setting

The Bureau organized a consultation session on welfare priorities setting for 2006-07 on 20 June, 2005. The various service specialized committees have mobilized discussion within the sector prior to the consultation session and the key areas of concern were deliberated. The Council will consolidate the sector's views and submit a position paper to the Bureau for consideration.

3. Concerns on Improving Central Coordination Mechanisms on Domestic Violence

The Council shared views and suggestions regarding roles, functions and operation of central coordination mechanism over domestic violence, including child abuse, spousal abuse, sexual violence and elder abuse, at the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare. A paper consolidating the participating NGOs' views was submitted.

4. Formulation of the 4th Three Year Plan in Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2006-08) with the Narcotics Division

A Council representative was invited to join the Working Group on the 4th Three Year Plan in Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2006-2008). A consultation session for the sector to share service and policy concerns with the Narcotics Division on the Three Year Plan was held on 21 June 2005. Members of key service providers participated actively in the preparation process.

5. Service Support for the Poor and Low Income Working Group

5.1 Sharing Session on Service Support to the Low Income Working Poor Families

A focus group discussion was convened on 10 June 2005, to follow up the service concerns raised in the sharing session on service support to the low income working poor families.

5.2 Community Networking Team in economically deprived areas

An ad-hoc group among CD service operators was formed to propose community development approach in tackling poverty at economically deprived areas.

6. Collaboration with NGOs and the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS) in helping the elderly to use the Building Management and Maintenance Scheme (BMMS)
The Council has mobilized members to discuss with the HKHS, and formulated a case management service proposal on NGOs' collaboration with the HKHS to assist the elderly to use the BMMS. The HKHS will provide nominal honorarium per successful elderly case, to honour participating NGOs efforts to make the BMMS practically usable by the elderly.
7. Review of the Rehabilitation Programme Plan
The HWFB-led Working Group on RPP Review met in May and June respectively to discuss over the issues relating to definition of disability, legislation, services for pre-school disabled children and support to self-help groups. To mobilize active involvement of member agencies, internal sessions within the Council were held before the review group meetings to consolidate our shared views and formulate submissions of the sector for the working group to consider further. It was also proposed to the Bureau that creating "an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society" is a vision commonly adopted by the international community and should serve as the guiding principle throughout this policy review.
8. Seminar on Empowerment and Clubhouse Model
The captioned seminar was organized in mid June by our Network on Services for Persons with Mental Illness with an enthusiastic attendance of over 100 frontline workers, operators and service users. Clubhouse model was first introduced in USA more than 50 years ago, emphasizing on the empowerment of persons with mental illness and their equal participation in the process of operating a clubhouse. Representatives of 2 NGOs adopting the clubhouse model in their day service shared at the seminar the experiences and challenges they encountered, followed by a hot debate among the participants.
9. Symposium on Long-Term Care (LTC) Financing
A LTC Financing Symposium had been held on June 10, 2005. An expert team from Taiwan National Chengchi University shared their experiences and knowledge on the various LTC financing systems in the world. Dr CHAN Wai-sum of HKU Department of Statistics & Actuarial Science shared his views on demand of LTC in Hong Kong. A total of 150 participants from 40 agencies joined the Symposium. Over 90% participants agreed the symposium enhanced their knowledge on LTC Financing.
10. Conversion of Elderly Hostels and Homes for the Aged (HFAs)
A briefing on this issue was held by SWD on June 17 and the A Guide was set out to invite applications. NGOs shared the feedback on briefing session and urged SWD to speed up the conversion exercise. The operators hoped that the exercise could be completed within two phases and lower the trigger point from 15 vacancies to around 10 vacancies in second phase to make sure most of the homes can be qualified to start their conversion. They were also worried about the continuous income deficit in many homes as their fee income was reduced as some of the places were left vacant for a long period of time. The Council would sum up the sector's concerns and further follow up with the Department.

11. Child Care Service (Amendment) Bill 2005

The government in its first draft of the amendment bill proposed to change the manning ratio from 1 child care worker to 14 children to 15 children of aged 0-3. Operators had great reservation and expressed strong views at the LegCo's hearing. Through further discussion amongst SWD, childcare service sector and the KG sector, the Department finally agreed to withdraw this amendment proposal. The concerned bill committee will then resume 2nd and 3rd readings on 29 June. LegCo members were also concerned about the impact of the new subsidy scheme on the low-income families. Projection of the impact was made and sent to concerned LegCo members for follow up.

12. Sharing Meeting on Youth Outreaching Service

In order to strengthen the sharing of experience amongst YOT workers, a meeting was held on June 22. About 100 participants attended the event. A number of future work foci were identified including the organization of training workshops and setting up KM platform.

13. KCRC Destination Care

With the support and liaison of the Council, KCRC has launched the captioned project on June 18. NGOs in the NT West districts can obtain free train tickets and organize programme for deprived children to travel to Tsim Sha Tsui to visit museums. The response was positive and we would discuss with KCRC in future to see if there is any other provision to support those needy children and youth.