

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Standing Committee on Service Development & Liaison

Progress Report (September – October 2008)

1. Survey on Primary School Comprehensive Student Guidance Service

In order to better understand the workload and stress of the frontline Primary School Social Workers, a working group was formed and the survey would be launched at the end of this September. Data collected would be analysed and used for fighting resources and foreseeing the service needs and trends among Primary Students.

2. Overseas Visit to Boston and Cambridge on Multiple Intelligence and Creativity Development of Children and Youth

An Overseas Visit to Boston and Cambridge on Multiple Intelligence and Creativity Development of Children and Youth would be held on 14-17 October. 6 delegates from family and school social work fields will go together. They would visit organizations, social services agencies and schools that have application of Multiple Intelligence and Creativity development on their mentoring projects, learning activities and curriculum designs.

3. Seminar and Workshop on Youth Mental Health

The Seminar and Workshop on Youth Mental Health jointly organized by the Council, the Hong Kong College of Technology and the Northumbria University of UK was held on 8 to 10 September 2008. Professor Roystons Stephens and Professor Gregory O'Brien from Northumbria University and the local experts on mental health included Dr. Hung Se-Fong, Dr. Yue Xiaodong and NGOs, addressed the current trends in mental health and exchanged their experiences on the evidence-based practice of cross-disciplinary collaboration for young people. The feedback was positive and 86% of the participants satisfied with the seminar.

4. Strategies on Increasing the Foster Care Home Pool

Concerning the stress on the foster care home and the increasing demand of foster care service, the foster care operators proposed the strategies on increasing the Foster Care allowances including the Incentive Payment and the Maintenance Grant as one of the ways to attract more people to play the foster parents role. A letter with their collective ideas was submitted to SWD for further consideration.

5. Collaboration Network in Supporting Substance Abusers in Tai Po District

A joint project with HKMA Tai Po Network, Alice Ho Mui Ling Nethersole Hospital (AHMLNS) and 6 NGOs would be launched to support substance abuse persons in Tai Po. The programme would facilitate better information sharing and transferral within the district. District GPs would be encouraged to place anti-drug information at their clinics. And in collaboration with NGOs, some GPs would also provide preliminary advice and follow up consultation to substance abusers so as to mobilize them to quit taking drug. The cases would also be referral to AHMLNH for intensive medical support. First training for the GPs would be held on October 28.

6. Staff Development Programmes on Substance Abuse

In order to strengthen the skill and capacity of staff working with substance abusers, a series of training and visitation programmes would be launched in coming months. The first visitation to 3 local treatment and rehabilitation units was scheduled for October 17. One more local visit and one to Guangdong would also be held in November.

7. Meeting with HAB on Community Development Related Issues

After sending couples of letters requesting HAB to re-convene the CD Forum in vain, NGOs called up a meeting themselves on September 25. Representative of HAB attended the meeting. NGOs reiterated the importance of the CD Forum in guiding the development of the service and highlighted some critical issues of CD service for follow up action. Representative of HAB agreed to relate our requested to the Bureau for consideration.

8. Task Group to Develop the Framework on Providing Interpretation Service for EMs

Further to the enactment of Race Discrimination Ordinance, NGOs met with EOC on September 5 to share views on related issues including the drafting of Code of Practice and promotion of the Ordinance. Besides, concerned NGOs formed a task group to deliberate the development of interpretation service for EMs in HK. Comment would be forwarded to CMAB for consideration.

9. Seminar on Family-oriented Social Work Practice

It was held on Sept 25, 2008 with 80 participants at 100% satisfaction rate. Speakers included academia, service providers of children and youth service, rehabilitation service and management levels. Their presentations were insightful and illustrated how to put the concept into practice.

10. Survey on Cross-border living families and migration plan

1687 questionnaires were distributed through 23 schools in Northern District. 815 valid samples were returned. The findings and recommendations were released on Sept 15, 2009. There were 23 media attended the press conference and reported on the survey.

11. Home Improvement Environment Scheme for the Elderly

The scheme started in June 2008 to provide assistance to those elderly who want to improve their living conditions. People aged 60 or above who are financially eligible and self-declared could apply for minor home maintenance and the purchase of household items through 41 district community centres for the Elderly, up to a maximum of HK\$5,000. In the past 5 months, members encountered a lot of difficulties in handling the application with various reasons, such as insufficient guideline, lacking of technical knowledge on renovation, diverse expectations of the elderly/referrers and the insurance liability. These issues had been brought to public by some pressure groups and concerned people. In respond to the recent news reports on the captioned scheme, a special meeting with service representatives and operators was arranged. Sector' recommendations would be directed to concerned LegCo members and the SWD for follow up.

12. Elderly Policy Alliance

The Council and the Alliance had jointly organized a consultation forum on "OAA-Income protection for the Elderly?". All together, 115 participants registered. The forum was able to enable the elderly mutual understanding on goal and function of OAA. The elderly also shared their expectations on the OAA review and feedback on income protection and security for the elders.

13. 2008 Legislative Council Election – Appeal for Concerns Towards People with Disabilities

In order to raise the concern of the Legislative Council election candidates on the welfare of people with disabilities, the Council sent out letters in mid August to appeal for their supports over areas on employment, transport, education and rights of people with disabilities. 28 out of 53 political parties replied and supported the proposed agenda. A press conference was held on September 4 to release the result of their returns and to demonstrate the difficulties of people with disabilities in voting process. Wide media coverage on the press conference was received.

14. Liaison Meeting with the Director of Social Welfare

The Council and the concerned NGOs met with the Director of Social Welfare in early September to discuss the development of services for pre-school disabled children. Highlighted issues included long-term planning on the provisions of para-medical staff and social work professionals, arrangement of maintenance and updating of IT equipment, high turnover rate of special child care workers, etc.