

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (RAC)
held at 3:00 p.m. on 10 December 2003 (Wednesday)
in Room 2005, 20/F., Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong**

Present

Dr Raymond WU Wai-yung	(Chairman)
Ms Susie HO	Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Vice-chairman)
Mr CHONG Chan-yau	
Mrs Doris HO	
Ms Priscilla HO	
Dr IP Yan-ming	
Mrs Julie LEE	
Dr Simon LEUNG	
Mrs Olivia LEUNG	
Mrs Jackie MA	
Dr TSE Tsun-him	
Mr WANG Kai-fung	
Ms WONG Kwai-wan	
Mr YEUNG Ka-sing	
Mr Paul KW TANG	Director of Social Welfare
Miss Ophelia CHAN	Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services) Social Welfare Department
Mrs Betty IP	Principal Assistant Secretary Education and Manpower Bureau
Dr Rita HO	Senior Medical and Health Officer Department of Health
Dr Daisy DAI	Senior Executive Manager Hospital Authority
Mr Stephen PANG	Commissioner for Rehabilitation
Mr Tommy LAI	Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Secretary)

In attendance

Mr David NG
Social Work Officer (Rehabilitation and
Medical Social Services)
Social Welfare Department

Absent with Apologies

Miss Iris CHAN
Dr Margaret CHUNG
Ms Christine FANG
Professor LEUNG Ping-chung
Professor Arthur MAK
Hon Howard YOUNG How-wah

Welcoming Remarks

The Chairman congratulated Ms WONG Kwai-wan on her successful re-election as a member of the Shamshuipo District Council. He also welcomed Mr Paul TANG Kwok-wai, Director of Social Welfare and Ms Susie HO, Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food (Welfare) to the meeting.

Agenda Item I – Confirmation of Minutes

2. The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2003 were confirmed.

Agenda Item II – Matters Arising

Para. 25 of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2003 : Jockey Club Arts for the Disabled Scheme (JCADS)

3. **The Administration** briefed Members on the latest progress of the implementation of the JCADS. He said that the RAC Sub-committee on Arts and Culture had adopted an initial implementation plan for the JCADS at its meeting in early August. After a few months of preparatory work, the Sub-Committee had scrutinized proposals submitted by different agencies. The plan was to roll out the programmes under the JCADS in stages in 2004.

Para. 29 and 30 of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2003 :
Additional Administrative Fees on Disabled Candidates Taking Public
Examinations

4. **The Administration** reported that immediately after the last meeting he raised the matter with the General Secretary of the Hong Kong Examination and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) and reflected Members' concern. Subsequently, HKEAA issued a letter confirming that the proposed additional fees had been dropped.

Agenda Item III – Standardized Needs Assessment Tool for Admission to Residential Homes for People with Disabilities [RAC 4/2003]

5. **The representative of SWD** gave a power-point presentation on the paper.

6. Whilst expressing her appreciation on SWD's continual dialogue with parents' associations over this issue, **a member** said that parents were most concerned about the timetable for implementation of the Assessment Tool and the adequacy of community support services. Parents wanted a safety net for their disabled children in the event that they could no longer take care of their children at home. It was therefore imperative for SWD to help parents understand the objectives and operation of the Assessment Tool and build up their confidence on its application.

7. **A member** said that in view of resource constraints, residential services should be provided to those disabled persons with genuine and immediate needs only. He saw the importance of a safety net for parents with disabled children. For effective promotion of the Assessment Tool, SWD had to make additional effort in communicating with parents and ensuring transparency of the process.

8. **A member** said that to improve fairness and reliability of the Assessment Tool, it was necessary for SWD to include in the pilot study criteria for evaluating effectiveness and validity of individuals' assessment results having regard to possible changes in their conditions over time. Enhancement in the provision of support services in the community was also essential for successful launching of the Assessment Tool. Noting that in the draft Assessment Tool at Annex 2 to RAC Paper 4/2003, information was collected in respect of "major disabilities" and "minor disabilities" of persons subject to

assessment, he felt that it was more appropriate to rephrase “minor disabilities” to “other disabilities”.

9. **A member** commended the good work of the Task Group in drawing up the Assessment Tool which provided a reasonable mechanism for allocating limited residential places. To rally support for the implementation of the Assessment Tool, she suggested the Task Group to consider grandfathering those existing waitlisted applicants for residential services from individual assessment. For those waitlistees who agreed to take the assessment and subsequently became unsuccessful in obtaining residential service, they should be accorded priority in receiving home help and other support services in the community. Sharing her view, **a member** felt that those already on the waitlist should be given a choice in taking the assessment or not.

10. **The Chairman** said that the Assessment Tool would help to match appropriate services with the needs of individuals. To gain the support of users’ parents, SWD could consider providing incentive to those who agreed to undergo assessment, for example, by giving them priority to receive home help service and enhanced community support. He also agreed with some Members that a review of individual assessment results was necessary to ensure changes in conditions and needs of individuals would be appropriately reflected and follow up action taken.

11. In response, **a member** said that SWD in collaboration with relevant Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) would take measures to further strengthen community support services including home help and respite services to people with disabilities and their families. The Task Group responsible for devising the Assessment Tool was considering to draw up a mechanism for reviewing the results of individual assessment.

12. **A member** said that SWD had no definite timetable for implementing the Assessment Tool and that improvements to the Assessment Tool would continually to be made following consultation with stakeholders.

Agenda Item IV – International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities [RAC 5/2003]

13. **The Administration** gave a powerpoint presentation on the paper.

14. **A member** raised the question of how the views of the HKSAR on the subject matter could be conveyed to the United Nations. He also said that whilst the active participation of the HKSAR Government in the preparatory process for an international convention for people with disabilities should be

commended, the Government should explore ways and means to encourage the rehabilitation sector and the public at large in Hong Kong to contribute their views and input to the international convention. In this regard, consideration should be given by the Government to funding activities to promote public awareness of the Convention.

15. In response, **the Administration** said that through our associate membership in the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UN ESCAP), HKSAR could participate in the deliberation under the auspices of UN ESCAP regarding the drafting of the international convention. In addition, there was also a channel for the HKSAR Government to reflect our views through the CPG. As regards promotion of discussion on the international convention, it would be appropriate to launch promotional activities to raise public awareness of the issue when a more concrete proposal of the Convention was available. Possibly, such promotional activities could be funded by the allocation disbursed by the RAC Sub-committee on Public Education.

16. **A member** in his capacity as Chairman of the Sub-committee on Public Education explained that funds were disbursed annually to NGOs and self-help groups to promote integration of PWDs into society in a focused approach. However, in the absence of concrete contents of the international convention, it was doubtful whether public education activities could be carried out meaningfully and effectively.

17. **A member** said that in connection with application for funds for public education, EMB had submitted an application to the Sub-committee on Public Education this year. The purpose was to launch a publicity campaign for promoting integration and equal opportunities in schools. Despite its funding application being unsuccessful, EMB was able to launch the campaign starting December 2003 by means of internal resources.

18. **A member** responded that owing to limited funds available for this year, priority was given to applications from NGOs for running activities for the community at large. He commended the good work of EMB in seeking resources within its bureau to carry out such meaningful promotional activities.

19. Noting that Annex A to the paper regarding recommendations for the international convention by the Expert Group established under UN ESCAP mentioned about protection against discrimination for people with severe and multiple disability, **a member** commented that protection should be extended to include people with various degree of disability. His view was noted.

Agenda Item V – Any Other Business

20. As this was the last meeting of the current term, **the Chairman** expressed his gratitude to all Members for their participation and contribution to the RAC in the past two years.

21. On behalf of Members and the Administration, **the Administration** thanked the Chairman for steering the RAC in the past years.

Rehabilitation Division
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau
Government Secretariat

December 2003