

**Minutes of the meeting of  
Rehabilitation Advisory Committee  
held on 30 May 2007 at 3:00 pm  
at Phoenix Clubhouse  
6/F, David Trench Rehabilitation Center 9B,  
Bonham Road, Hong Kong**

**Present**

Dr Joseph KWOK (Chairman)

Mr Raymond LEE (Vice-Chairman)

Prof Chetwyn CHAN

Mr CHEUNG Tak-hai

Dr Margaret CHUNG

Mr Herman HUI

Dr Ernest LEE

Mr Hansen LEE

Mrs Olivia LEUNG

Mr Kim MOK

Mrs Connie LO

Ms SO Lai-chun

Prof TANG Siu-wa

Ms Jane TSUEI

Mr Anthony YEUNG

Dr Daisy DAI

Senior Executive Manager  
Hospital Authority

Ms Nancy LAW

Director of Social Welfare (Acting)

Mr SIT Tung

Assistant Director  
Social Welfare Department

Mrs Fanny LAM	Principal Assistant Secretary (School Administration & Support) Education and Manpower Bureau
Dr Catherine LAM	Consultant Pediatrician (Child Assessment Service) Department of Health
Miss Eliza LEE	Deputy Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food
Mrs Mary MA	Commissioner for Rehabilitation
Ms Elia WONG (Secretary)	Assistant Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food

**Absent with Apologies**

Mr IP Kwok-chung  
 Dr James Joseph LAM  
 Mr Lawrence LEE  
 Mrs Jackie MA  
 Mr David TSE

Prior to the meeting, thanks to a member's recommendation, a visit to the Phoenix Clubhouse was arranged for Members of the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee to see and to be briefed on a new mode of service to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-mental patients into the community. Ms Eva YAU, In-charge of Phoenix Clubhouse, also conducted a presentation on the background, philosophy and objectives, functions and operation, as well as development of and challenges faced by the Phoenix Clubhouse.

**I. Confirmation of minutes of the last meeting**

2. **Members** had no further comments on the revised minutes, which were declared by the **Chairman** as confirmed.

**II. Matters arising**

International Festival of Inclusive Arts (IFIA)

3. **Secretary** reported that the IFIA was successfully held from 2 to 10 December 2007. Over 40,000 people participated in the wide range of programmes throughout the week. These programmes included the “Beat the Drum for Inclusion” mass percussion performance, a series of art performances, three exhibitions, a carnival and a range of seminars and workshops. The opening ceremony featured in a special television programme with the message of inclusiveness reached out to over 800,000 viewers.

4. The Festival incurred about \$7 million of expenditure, with less than half covered by the Government. The rest was contributed by charitable organisations and business corporations. There was also a very substantial amount of in-kind donation and volunteer support from the community. The Festival testified the successful tripartite partnership among NGOs, business sector and the government in promoting integration of persons with disabilities.

5. The Festival brought home the message of inclusiveness to the general public. Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) would continue to collaborate with various sectors to sustain the momentum of the Festival and let inclusive culture take root in the community.

## Concessionary public transport fare

6. **The Administration** updated Members on the progress of a survey on travelling characteristics of persons with disabilities and financial impacts on public transport operators' offering of fare concession to persons with disabilities by the University of Hong Kong was completed in December 2006. Findings of the survey were released in January 2007, which indicated that fare concession would incentivize persons with disabilities to go out more, hence their better social integration.

7. Upon release of the survey findings, Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food and Secretary for Environment, Transport and Works jointly wrote to the public transport operators to appeal to them to offer fare concession to persons with disabilities. The Administration would continue to persuade the public transport operators in this regard, and where necessary follow up the amendments to the Disability Discrimination Ordinance.

## Survey on Persons with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases

8. **Secretary** reported that the Census and Statistics Department(C&SD) had already completed Part I of the survey with regard to persons with chronic diseases which took place in November and December 2006. Part II of the survey on persons with disabilities were being conducted from January to December 2007. In parallel, a survey on institutional residents with disabilities and chronic diseases would be conducted from July to August 2007 to supplement the information collected from domestic households. C&SD planned to release the findings of the survey in around mid-2008.

## United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

9. **Secretary** updated Members that the Administration was studying the possible implications of the Convention in detail, should it be ratified by the Central People's Government (CPG) of China and extended to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

10. In response to Members' enquiry, **the Administration** said that once the Convention was extended to Hong Kong, the first report would have to be submitted to the United Nations Committee, via the CPG, within two years upon ratification of the Convention in China. She added, the whole rehabilitation sector would be mobilized to participate in publicizing and promoting the Convention.

### **III. Rehabilitation Programme Plan (RPP) – Final draft**

11. **Chairman** gave a brief introduction on the background of the RPP. He said that thankful to the support of the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food and the active participation of members of the RPP Review Working Group, the new RPP was finally completed. He added that the review process was very transparent. The RPP Review Working Group conducted 20 meetings, held one briefing session and four discussion forums, and considered over 100 written submissions. A total of over 2000 man-hours were spent in the course of the review.

12. **Secretary** briefly introduced Paper 5/2007 on the subject and highlighted that the new RPP set out strategic directions of the rehabilitation programme for all sectors, including NGOs as well as the private and public sectors, to work together to promote full integration of

persons with disabilities through tripartite partnership.

13. The new RPP finalised by the RPP Review Working Group was circulated to all Members for consideration before the meeting. **Chairman** invited Members to comment on and endorse the RPP.

14. **A member** said that he supported the new approach taken by the new RPP, which was to set out strategic directions for all sectors to follow, instead of focusing on working out unrealistic demand and supply projections. Compared with our North American counterparts, the rehabilitation services in Hong Kong were considered more efficient and very comprehensive. He considered that the area that required further work in Hong Kong should be changing people's mindset. The new RPP served this purpose well.

15. **A member** said that he supported the overall objectives. However, the large number of recommended measures and the addition of two big groups of service users would have very serious resource implications. He considered that a cost impact study was needed for assessing whether the society could bear the burden.

16. **A member** agreed with the cost-impact study. She considered social inclusion very important for sustainable development of a society. Democracy could be costly, but the participation of the whole sector was worthwhile, and this practice could be applied to other areas outside rehabilitation. She supported the inclusion of the Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), and was concerned about public education. On tripartite partnership, she considered that further discussion on the involvement of the business sector was needed.

17. **A member** considered that for persons with SpLD and AD/HD, more resources would be required in the areas of early identification and intervention, as well as teacher training.

18. **A member** endorsed the new RPP. He raised two areas for further discussion. One was the follow-up mechanism and the other was the availability of funding of social science evidence-based researches.

19. **A member** considered the new RPP as moving towards the right direction. It covered a wide spectrum of programme areas under different departments and legislation. He particularly supported the section on barrier-free access and transportation. He opined that improving the software and changing people's mindset through effective education and promotion was the most important. This would further improve the cost-effectiveness of rehabilitation programmes. In addition, he considered the broad implementation timeframe set out in the new RPP worth supporting.

20. **A member** considered effective public education through the collaboration of different players in the community very important. She shared her experience in organising community members (students and parents) to volunteer at a special school. Through the project, both the volunteers and the service users benefited tremendously.

21. **A member** commended the inclusion of a chapter dedicated to information and communication technology (ICT). He considered that supporting the development of ICT very important, as ICT application could effectively enable persons with disabilities to integrate into community. He hoped that the Administration and the RAC could

consider further measures in this regard.

22. **A member** supported the RPP's recommendation on the development of self-help groups, who were the users, and he considered continuous financial support very important in this regard.

23. **The Administration** expressed her gratitude for Members' valuable advice. She agreed that effective public education could promote the involvement of the business sector. The RAC could serve as the follow-up mechanism of the RPP. As for resource implication, it would inevitably be tremendous, and could not possibly be born by the Government alone. Therefore, tripartite partnership, an important underlying principle of the RPP, was crucial in delivering the programme. On monitoring of the RPP implementation, the RAC would keep a watching brief over the progress of the implementation of the RPP on regular basis. Subject to further developments and changing aspirations of the comments, the RAC might even propose updates to the RPP. RAC Sub-committees could study the implementation strategies of specific recommended measures making use of available resources. On the way forward, upon the endorsement of the new RPP by the RAC, the Working Group would conduct a briefing on the RPP for the rehabilitation sector, and then report to the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services before publishing the RPP. [Post-meeting note: The Working Group subsequently held another briefing session on 1 June 2007 to brief the rehabilitation sector on the finalized RPP endorsed by the RAC.]

24. **Chairman** confirmed that the RAC endorsed the new RPP and accepted that the RAC would assume the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the RPP.



25. On strategies to promote the RPP to the various sectors, in particular, the business sector that might not be familiar with rehabilitation programmes, **a member** suggested preparing an executive summary of the RPP to facilitate the business and other sectors to grasp the content of it. **Another member** suggested involving the mass media to arouse discussion in the community. **A member** said that the Sub-committee on Public Education would discuss the strategies in this regard.

26. **A member** said that people in the business sector make decisions very speedily. If the proposal could be packaged in a very user-friendly manner, with suggestions and benefits clearly set out, a lot of business corporations would be ready to render support financially or in kind, in return for good corporate image. **A member** agreed. The business sector would not have time to get involved in service planning. Well packaged user-friendly proposals should be made available to facilitate them to make decisions and participate conveniently.

27. **The Administration** suggested joining efforts with the Caring Company programme organised by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) funded by Social Welfare Department. **A member** supported this suggestion as the over 1000 Caring Companies indeed constituted an invaluable network. RAC and HKCSS' joining hands in promoting tripartite partnership should be able to achieve greater synergy. She would follow up with **A member** on the way forward.

28. **A member** said that apart from the business sector, it would also be worthwhile considering partnership with the research and academic sectors. **Another member** considered it useful to stage a platform to facilitate NGOs to meet with the business sector, for example, the information communication technology sector.

29. **Chairman** concluded that Members generally agreed with compiling an executive summary for the RPP and that strategies needed to be further considered in taking forward the recommendations set out in the RPP through tripartite partnership.

#### IV. **Study Visit to North America**

30. **Chairman** said that the discussion paper already gave a brief introduction on the study visit, and invited Members who participated in the visit to share their views and experience.

31. Members were generally of the view that the standard of rehabilitation services and facilities in Hong Kong were on a par with those in North America. They were, however, impressed by the very active role taken by persons with disabilities and volunteers there, in promoting the well-being of persons with disabilities. On reflection, Members considered further strategies and more efforts should be made with regard to empowering persons with disabilities, changing people's perception about "disability" and promoting volunteering in Hong Kong.

32. **A member** said that the welfare benefits given to person with disabilities by the governments in North America, in particular, the United States, were very limited. **Another member** noted that the average caseload for each social worker in San Francisco was as many as 400. **Another member** added that she was proud that Hong Kong, being a place with limited resources, was capable of providing so many benefits for persons in need. She also observed that carers had a crucial role in facilitating independent living of persons with disabilities. **Another member** opined that while wealthy families could take care of their family

member with disabilities by themselves and the poorer ones within the safety net could receive CSSA and related benefits from the government, those fell between these two groups needed support. To provide more support to the latter, he suggested creatively exploring new community resources, rather than public funds, to cater to their various needs.

33. On accessibility, **a member** commented that the accessibility in North America was better than that in Europe, and therefore was a good model for Hong Kong. **Another member** noted that there were no tactile guided path or beeping traffic light for pedestrians in the streets of San Francisco. **Another member** agreed and added that even in the neighbourhood of the LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired in San Francisco, there was only a line of yellow bricks laid elegantly at the entrance.

34. In addition, **a member** was impressed by British Columbia's initiatives in promoting employment and inclusive community for persons with disabilities, particularly the "10 by 10 Challenge" targeting an increase of employment for persons with disabilities by 10 percent by the year 2010. **Another member** was also impressed by the "Measuring Up" guide on communities with accessibility and inclusiveness. He was of the view that the (Hong Kong) Government had put in more efforts to promote employment for persons with disabilities in recent years. Unfortunately, the harmony in society concerning rehabilitation issues was deteriorating. **Another member** also supported the importance of social harmony.

35. **A member** said that the model of PLAN Institute which provided services and support with regard to legal, financial and personal future planning for persons with disabilities could serve as good reference for NGOs in Hong Kong. **The Administration** added that a RAC member,

who was not able to attend the meeting had expressed keen interest in considering the feasibility of applying the PLAN model in Hong Kong.

36. **Chairman** concluded that the study visit had provided an opportunity for Members to acquire in-depth understanding of the policies and measures concerning persons with disabilities in the province/cities visited, as well as to exchange experience with their North American counterparts. He agreed that the concept of PLAN could be further followed up.

**V. Any Other Business**

37. **A member** presented the recently published “Kwun Tong: Barrier-free Community Study Report” spearheaded by the Kwun Tong International Day for Disabled Persons Working Group chaired by her.

38. **Chairman** said that Secretary would get in touch with Members on the schedule of the next meeting.

Secretariat  
Rehabilitation Advisory Committee

August 2007