

**Minutes of the
Social Welfare Advisory Committee (SWAC) Meeting**

**7 June 2022 (Tuesday) at 3:30 p.m.
Conference Room 4, G/F, Central Government Offices**

Present

Mr Lester Garson HUANG (Chairman)
Ms Sylvia CHAN May-kuen
Dr Gary CHENG Faat-ting
Mr CHUGH, Manohar Thakurdas
Mr Andy HO Wing-cheong
Mr Anthony KWAN Wai-ming
Mr Frederick LAI Wing-hoi
Dr LAM James Joseph
Ms Alice LAU Oi-sze
Mr Armstrong LEE Hon-cheung
Dr Wingco LO Kam-wing
Dr Gary NG Ka-wing
Prof Petrus NG Yat-nam
Dr PAN Pey-chyou
Dr Ricky SZETO Wing-fu
Ms Eva WONG Ching-hung
Mr Anthony WONG Kin-wai
Ms Amarantha YIP Yun-wan

In Attendance

Labour and Welfare Bureau

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| Ms Alice LAU | Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare |
| Mr David LEUNG | Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 1 |
| Mr Tony YIP | Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 1 |

Mr Michael LI Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Welfare) 1C
(Secretary to SWAC)

Mr Adams WONG Executive Officer (Welfare) 1A

Ms Jessica LI Executive Officer (Welfare) 1B

Social Welfare Department (SWD)

Mr Gordon LEUNG Director of Social Welfare

Mr KOK Che-leung Deputy Director of Social Welfare
(For discussion item 1 only) (Services)

Ms Wendy CHAU Assistant Director (Family & Child
(For discussion item 1 only) Welfare)

Ms Nancy KWAN Assistant Director (Licensing &
(For discussion item 1 only) Regulation)

Miss Ann CHAN Principal Social Work Officer (Information
(For discussion item 2 only) Systems & Technology)

Ms Winnie TAM Chief Social Work Officer (Rehabilitation
(For discussion item 2 only) & Medical Social Services)³

Efficiency Office

Mrs Judy LI Deputy Commissioner for Efficiency
(For discussion item 2 only)

Miss Karen SHING Assistant Commissioner for Efficiency (3)
(For discussion item 2 only)

Mr Wilson CHAN Chief Management Services Officer
(For discussion item 2 only)

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS)

Mr Peter KWOK General Manager (Innovation and
(For discussion item 2 only) Technology for Ageing) (GM(I&T for
Ageing))

Absent with apologies

Dr BAI Xue

Prof Emily CHAN Ying-yang

Miss CHEUNG Sze-wing

Prof Frances WONG Kam-yuet

Discussion Item 1: Review of the Residential Child Care Services

Members were invited to give comments on the paper. Members raised the following comments –

- (a) While it was important to address the manpower shortage in the residential child care services (RCCS) sector, staff quality should not be compromised. Some members believed that the use of technology might help alleviate manpower shortage in the sector.
- (b) Support from medical and allied health professionals was also crucial in addressing the multifarious needs of service users, such as the special needs of some children.
- (c) It was important to cultivate a “pro-child” and child caring culture in organisations providing RCCS, as well as enhance the job satisfaction and self-image of child care workers. One member suggested providing staff with training on stress management.
- (d) The nature and scope of training provided to staff should be specific to the service needs of users. A member suggested providing training to board members, who also played a key role in monitoring the operator’s performance.
- (e) In addition to performance monitoring and enforcement by the Government, corporate governance of operators also played a vital role in ensuring service quality. In particular, an effective internal audit mechanism could help identify performance deficiencies and trigger early intervention.
- (f) In taking forward the review of RCCS, the Government should take into account the evolving service needs of users, so as to formulate enhancement measures which would keep abreast with the times.

- (g) Operators with unsatisfactory performance should be penalised by reducing the subvention amount provided, or even terminating relevant service agreement. Some members cautioned that the welfare of service users should be duly considered before imposing such penalties.
- (h) The Government might consider setting up an inter-departmental forum to address children's needs on various facets. A platform should be set up to share experience on "near miss" incidents among operators.
- (i) Consideration might be given to inviting independent persons to visit RCCS institutions to help identify scope for service improvement.

2. The Government gave the following response –

- (a) To strengthen monitoring and enhance service quality, SWD had accorded priority to conducting a review of RCCS following the recommendations made in the Review Report on Enhancement of Lump Sum Grant Subvention System on quality enhancement of subvented services.
- (b) In addition to conducting the review, SWD would enhance its manpower in conducting inspections of RCCS institutions. Relevant SWD branches responsible for inspection, subvention monitoring and services would also collaborate more closely to achieve synergy.
- (c) With the increasingly multifarious needs of service users, multi-disciplinary involvement was crucial in providing quality services to users.

3. The Chairman pointed out the need for reviewing RCCS. He stressed the importance of addressing manpower shortage in the RCCS sector, and suggested that efforts in promoting foster care service be stepped up. He also suggested that, instead of solely relying on the service providers, a mechanism should be put in place to ensure that their interest and well-being would be well taken care of. He invited the Government to consider Members' views in taking forward the review of RCCS.

Discussion Item 2: Gerontechnology Platform by the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund

4. Members were invited to give comments on the paper. Members raised the following comments –

- (a) There might be room for collaboration between the Gerontechnology Platform and local universities on innovation/technology development with a view to achieving synergies. Assistance should also be provided to start-ups in dealing with product liability issues in the course of product development.
- (b) To promote the development of gerontechnology, consideration might be given to engaging more young people to get exposed to gerontechnology at an early stage and to understand the needs of the elderly.
- (c) Further efforts could be made to promote the Platform, especially to the elderly services sector, so that more service users would benefit from the Platform.

5. (GM(I&T for Ageing)) of HKCSS gave the following response –

- (a) One of the Platform's functionalities was to provide consultancy service to the supply side, including start-ups, to develop, test, validate, and promote the products/solutions. Expertise on product liability and risk management was available among the collaborative partners of the Platform.
- (b) To promote the Platform, efforts had been made to reach out to stakeholders at both demand and supply sides. As regards the supply side, HKCSS (as the intermediary of the Platform) had approached stakeholders such as universities, start-ups, Consulates-General and trade commissions.

SWAC Secretariat
July 2022