

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

**30 August 2019 (Friday) at 3 p.m.
Conference Room 8, G/F, Central Government Offices**

Present

Mr Lester Garson HUANG (Chairman)
Dr BAI Xue
Dr Gary CHENG Faat-ting
Miss CHEUNG Sze-wing
Mr CHUGH, Manohar Thakurdas
Mr HO Wing-cheong, Andy
Mr IP Wai-ming
Mr KWAN Wai-ming, Anthony
Dr LAM James Joseph
Mr Armstrong LEE Hon-Cheung
Dr LUI Wai-ling, Annissa
Dr NG Ka-wing, Gary
Ms Cindy PUN Siu-fung
Ms WONG Ching-hung, Eva
Dr TSANG Wing-hang, Janice
Dr YAM Yin-chun, Loretta

In Attendance

Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB)

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| Ms CHANG King-yiu | Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare |
| Miss Agnes CHEUNG | Deputy Secretary for Labour & Welfare (Welfare) 1 (Acting) |
| Mr Johann WONG | Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2 |
| Ms Yen PUN | Commissioner for Rehabilitation (Acting) |
| Mr Andrew TSANG | Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 1 |

Mr Daniel FONG
(For discussion item 2
only) Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and
Welfare (Manpower)

Ms Cecilia CHAN
(For discussion item 2
only) Senior Statistician (Manpower)

Ms Rebecca CHEUNG Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Welfare)1C
(Secretary to SWAC)

Mr Adams WONG Executive Officer (Welfare) 1A

Social Welfare Department (SWD)

Ms WONG Yin Yee Assistant Director (Licensing & Regulation)
(For discussion item 3
only)

Census and Statistics Department

Mr Jonathan NG Senior Statistician (Household and Income
(For discussion item 2 Statistics)
only)

Financial Secretary's Office

Mr Eric LEE Principal Economist, Office of the
(For discussion item 2 Government Economist
only)

Absent with apologies

Ms Sylvia CHAN May-kuen
Ms Anthea LO Wing-sze
Mr Daryl NG Win-kong
Professor NGAI Sek-yum, Steven
Mr WONG Kin-wai, Anthony
Ms YIP Yun-wan, Amarantha

Discussion Item 1: 2020-21 Welfare Services Suggestions and Priorities

Members were invited to give comments on the paper on the 2020-21 Welfare Services Suggestions and Priorities. The Chairman and Members raised the following comments –

- (a) The Government could continue providing assistance to non-governmental organisation (NGO) applicants of the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses during the development or planning process with a view to pressing ahead with the early implementation of their project proposals.
- (b) The Government might consider expediting the purchase of premises as far as practicable for the early provision of welfare facilities.
- (c) Consideration might be given to conduct more promotion and public education with a view to consolidating and strengthening the functions of families.
- (d) Measures on enhancing the retention of frontline staff and attracting young persons and women to join the care services would be needed in view of the ongoing welfare needs.
- (e) Consideration might be given to formulate measures to retain more graduates of the Navigation Scheme for Young Persons in Care Services.
- (f) The use of innovative technology in different types of welfare services should be encouraged.
- (g) More efforts could be placed in shortening the waiting time for residential care services for persons with intellectual disabilities.
- (h) Consideration might be given to give accreditation or tax incentives to employers with a view to promoting the employment of persons with disabilities.
- (i) Further resources could be channelled for enhancing counselling and/or clinical psychological service for those with emotional distress, in particular young persons, during the trying time in the society.

- (j) Day child care services should be further enhanced. Besides, there might be a need to review the Child Care Services Ordinance (Cap. 243) so as to meet the changing needs of the community.
- (k) More resources might be allocated to providing support and counselling services for youth and ethnic minorities on different aspects.
- (l) More resources could be allocated to enhancing the support for children of low-income families living in subdivided units and drug-abusing parents/pregnant women.
- (m) Consideration might be given for allowing the provision of different types of services in the same premises during different periods of time in a day (e.g. providing elderly services during day time while using the site/premises for provision of youth services in the evening).
- (n) More resources could be put in the provision of treatment and rehabilitation services for injured employees to facilitate the recovery and return to work of employees injured at work.

2. The Government gave the following response –

- (a) The Government had all along been adopting a multi-pronged approach with long, medium and short-term strategies to identify suitable sites or premises for the provision of more welfare services. As a long-term strategy, the Government had reinstated the population-based planning ratios in the Hong Kong Planning Standards and Guidelines (HKPSG) in respect of elderly facilities, with a view to reserving necessary sites and space for these facilities in the planning process of new and redeveloped areas. Similarly, the Government also planned to incorporate the population-based planning ratio for the provision of specified child care facilities into the HKPSG in 2019-20. In parallel, the Government was in the process of formulating the new Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan for meeting the diverse service needs of persons with disabilities.
- (b) As regards the medium-term strategy, the SWD had been maintaining close contact with relevant departments to identify suitable sites in the development or redevelopment of public

housing estates, urban renewal projects, land sale programmes and the Special Scheme on Privately Owned Sites for Welfare Uses to increase the provision of welfare facilities as appropriate. The Government had also endeavoured to make use of available government accommodation, including vacant school premises, for conversion into welfare facilities.

- (c) In tandem with all other possible means to secure and identify suitable premises, the Government was taking forward the initiative of purchasing premises in the private market, as a short-term measure to help facilitate earlier provision of welfare facilities especially in built-up urban areas. Among the new services proposed to be set up in the premises acquired through the purchase exercise, the Government had included the provision of at least one additional child care centre in each district. Likewise, the Government also included a total of 15 day care centres for the elderly to help meet the service demand for day care services for the elderly.
- (d) The Government was very concerned about the manpower constraints with particular regard to the elderly service sector and had implemented various measures to enhance the supply of frontline care staff and improve their work prospects.
- (e) In response to the demands for special welfare services caused by the recent social incidents, the SWD had maintained continued communication with relevant NGOs and had implemented special measures such as exercising flexibility for youth service units and family service units' attainment of output standard, advancement of the implementation of the "two social workers for each secondary school" measure during the summer holiday for counselling students with emotional distress, extension of a range of youth services to persons aged up to 29, and referral of emotionally distressed youth by youth service units of NGOs to the SWD Clinical Psychology Units for clinical psychological service, etc.
- (f) The provision of treatment and rehabilitation services for injured employees was a labour policy issue. On this, the Labour Department was actively looking into a possible pilot scheme, with a view to providing timely and coordinated treatment and rehabilitation services to injured employees in need as well as speeding up and enhancing the effectiveness of rehabilitation, thus facilitating their early recovery and return to work.

Discussion Item 2: Key Findings of Manpower Projection to 2027

3. Members were invited to give comments on the paper. The Chairman and Members raised the following comments/questions –

- (a) Whether the projected manpower resource balance of Manpower Projection to 2027 (MP2027) had taken into account the fact that some postgraduate students would leave Hong Kong after graduation.
- (b) The issue of job mismatch in the labour market should be taken into account for Hong Kong's future manpower supply.
- (c) With the projection results of the MP2027, the Government might consider formulating long-term policies on education and manpower training with a view to addressing the future manpower needs of the society. The welfare sector could be encouraged to adopt the use of innovative technology in different types of welfare services. Research and development of innovative technology should also be promoted. More resources should be allocated on the training on the application of new technology.
- (d) More measures should be put in place to unleash the potential of women and facilitating them to join the labour market.
- (e) The changing employment patterns of the labour force might have long-term impact on the manpower situation in the society. The Government might need to consider if any relevant labour policies had to be formulated.
- (f) Importation of foreign labour, for example, healthcare workers, might be considered for addressing the shortage of healthcare manpower in the welfare sector.

4. The Government gave the following response –

- (a) According to the definition of Hong Kong Resident Population adopted in the MP2027, postgraduate students who had left Hong Kong after graduation were not part of Hong Kong's population and hence fell outside the coverage of the manpower supply projection.

- (b) Various factors that might affect the outlook for future manpower requirements, such as the industries' development trends, use of automation and artificial intelligence, etc., had been considered in the projection methodology.

Discussion Item 3: Review of Ordinances and Codes of Practice for Residential Care Homes

5. Members were invited to provide comments on the paper on the Study. The Chairman and Members raised the following questions/comments –

- (a) Consideration might be given to the provision of subsidies and accreditation to pioneer service operators on the use of new technology in the delivery of welfare services, with a view to solving the issue of manpower shortage.
- (b) The proposed home manager registration system and health worker registration system were essential in promoting professionalism and upgrading the quality of the residential care homes (RCHs).
- (c) On the implementation of various recommendations put forward by the Working Group, some operators might seek a longer grace period or facilitating measures with a view to ensuring the smooth implementation of the recommendations.
- (d) While the implementation of the relevant recommendations would strengthen the monitoring of RCHs and enhance their service quality, there might still be a need to conduct quality assessment of the RCHs in future. The long-term financial implications on enhancing the service quality of the RCHs should also be considered.
- (e) Whether the Government would provide financial support to home managers and health workers for completing the relevant training courses.

6. The Government gave the following response –

- (a) The Government noted the concerns of service operators on the

implementation of the Working Group's recommendations. To this end, the Government would purchase an additional 5 000 EA1 places under the Enhanced Bought Place Scheme (EBPS) in the next five years, from 2019-20 to 2023-24, to increase the supply of subsidised residential care places for the elderly and enhance the overall service quality of private residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs).

- (b) The amount of subsidy for those EA1 places under the EBPS would be increased from 2019-20 onwards for the participating private RCHEs to strengthen the care and support for the elders, thereby upgrading the service quality.
- (c) The SWD had commissioned a tertiary institution to provide a total of 920 Enrolled Nurse (General)/Enrolled Nurse (Psychiatric) training places for four consecutive years starting from 2017-18, with a view to alleviating the shortage of enrolled nurses in the welfare sector and enhancing the quality of care services.
- (d) SWD had launched a five-year scheme to provide full subsidies for home managers, health workers and care workers of all RCHEs and residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) in the territory to enroll in Qualifications Framework-based training courses to enhance the service quality of the RCHEs and the RCHDs.

SWAC Secretariat
November 2019