

**Minutes of the 24th Meeting of
the Committee on Integrated Family Service Centres**

Date : 31 May 2017 (Wednesday)
Time : 9:30 a.m.
Venue : Room 918, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East,
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Present

Social Welfare Department (SWD)

Ms Lui Siu-ying, Micy	Chief Social Work Officer (Family and Child Welfare)1	(Chairperson)
Miss Hau Suk-kwan	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western, Southern and Islands)1	
Mr Fung Ching-kwong	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Eastern and Wan Chai)1	
Ms Leung Ho-yau, Bonnie	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Kwun Tong)2	
Ms Lam Bun-gee	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung)1	
Ms Ding Shuk-wah, Alice	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Kowloon City and Yau Tsim Mong)1	
Mr Lai Huen-lam, Stephen	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Sham Shui Po)1	
Mr Chan Ping-ching, Roy	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin)1	
Ms Ho Yuen-ming, Agnes	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tai Po and North)2	
Mr Lam Chi-ming, James	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Yuen Long)1	
Ms Yu Yuen-han, Jenny	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing)1	
Mrs Ng Ng Lai-chun, Quinnie	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tuen Mun)2	
Ms Chan Mei-yi	Senior Social Work Officer (Family)2	

Ms Lam Hiu-ying, Clara Social Work Officer (Family)1
(Secretary)

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

Mr Mui Wai-keung, Moses Chief Officer (Family and Community)
Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Ms Eliza Lam Head of Family Service
Caritas – Hong Kong

Ms Judy Chan Head of Service
Hong Kong Family Welfare Society

Ms Kong Shuk-wah, Florence Chief Supervisor
Family Ties Integrated Family Service Centre
Hong Kong Christian Service
[Representing Mrs Leung Li Chi-mei, Cross, General
Manager (Family and Community Core Business)]

Mr Cham Kwok-wing, Kerin Director of Program
International Social Service Hong Kong Branch

Mr Ng Ka-kui, Charles Programme Director (Family & Community)
Christian Family Service Centre

Ms Wong Hoi-ning Unit Coordinator
Grace and Joyce Integrated Family Service Centre
Hong Kong Catholic Marriage Advisory Council
[Representing Mrs Angela Chiu, Executive Director]

Ms Tsui Shuk-yin, Terry Social Work Supervisor
Hong Kong Children and Youth Services

Ms Wendy Wong Senior Manager
St James' Settlement

Ms Lee Suet-wah, Bubble Assistant Supervisor
Long Love Integrated Family Service Centre
Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
[Representing Dr Wong Fung-ye, Margaret, Assistant
Community Services Secretary (Youth and Family)]

Mr Chu Muk-wah, Daniel Assistant Director (Rehabilitation and Family)
Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service

Ms Keung Choi-yin Service Director
Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited

Ms Yam Pui-wah, Zerlina Islands and Tung Chung District Supervisor
The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council

In attendance

Ms Fung Man-yu, May Designated Assistant District Social Welfare Officer
(Kwun Tong)2

Mr Li Man-kit, Jason Acting Senior Social Work Officer (Family)1

[Remark: For sharing of the A.O.B item of “Proposed new arrangement on admission/
re-admission of the Family Crisis Support Centre”.]

Miss Lau Leung-yuk, Grace Assistant Social Work Officer (Family)1 / SWD

Absent with apologies

Ms Chan Chun-mei Assistant District Social Welfare Officer
(Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung)2

Welcoming remarks

The Chairperson welcomed members who attended the meeting for the first time or in a new capacity, including Ms Tsui Shuk-yin, Terry, of Hong Kong Children and Youth Services upon post transfer of Mr Lee Chung-ho, and colleagues from SWD, namely Miss Hau Suk-kwan, Ms Lam Bun-gee, Ms Yu Yuen-han, Jenny and Mr Lam Chi-ming, James. Welcome was extended to Ms Fung Man-yu, May who would take up the post of Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Kwun Tong)2 in June 2017 upon the retirement of Ms Bonnie Leung. The Chairperson thanked Mr Lee Chung-ho and Ms Bonnie Leung for their contribution to the Committee. She also welcomed colleagues who attended the meeting on behalf of Members, including Ms Wong Hoi-ning of the Hong Kong Catholic Marriage Advisory Council, Ms Kong Shuk-wah, Florence of the Hong Kong Christian Service and Ms Lee Suet-wah, Bubble of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals.

Confirmation of minutes of last meeting

2. Minutes of the 23rd meeting were confirmed with amendment of a typo at line 5 of paragraph 28 which should read, “The compiled feedback...”.

[Post-meeting notes: The confirmed minutes of the 23rd meeting were sent to Members on 2.6.2017 and uploaded onto SWD Homepage on 5.6.2017.]

Matters arising

Sharing on the Development of Parenting Capacity Assessment Framework (PCAF) (para. 3-5, p.3-4)

3. Ms Chan Mei-yi recapitulated that PCAF for the 0-12 months old (social worker version) would be extended to all districts over the territory in July 2017. She invited Members to encourage the related colleagues to join the training seminars and workshops to be held in May and June 2017. She furthered that the Health Care version, after piloted in some Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs), would be rolled out to all MCHCs in July 2017. For facilitating multiple-disciplinary intervention, if service needs were identified, MCHCs would share the assessment information with the related social workers. Besides, she reported that as shared in the last meeting, the Task Group on PCAFs (Task Group) was working on the PCAF for the 13-36 months old (social worker version). While the key domains for this age range would be the same as the version for 0-12 month, Members were invited to share their views on the coming version, if any, to the Secretariat by 26.6.2017.

4. Mrs Quinnie Ng shared that the district colleagues had prepared a draft Chinese version of PCAF for family aide (FA) worker based on the Social Worker version, so as to facilitate the FA worker to help social workers identify the families in need. She would pass the draft to Family Team (FT) after the meeting and would like FT to consider the draft and seek views of Task Group if appropriate. Ms Chan shared that while the Task Group accorded priorities to the development of PCAF for various professionals, it supported the idea of developing reference for non-professional involved in working with young children. She welcomed the effort of the district colleagues and would follow up the matter. The Chairperson thanked the initiative of the district and remarked that further development of PCAF would be shared with Members when available.

Training courses (para. 6-7, p.4)

5. Ms Clara Lam briefly reported on the training courses conducted from February to May 2017. She also highlighted the courses to be organised from June to September 2017 which were tabled for Members' information. She encouraged Members to nominate suitable colleagues to attend the training courses.

Child Welfare Cases (para. 8, p.4)

6. The Chairperson recapped the sharing in the last meeting that if family reunion was the direction of permanency planning for children receiving residential care, regular home leave arrangement was important to maintain connection between the children concerned and their birth families. It also provided a means for on-going evaluation of the home restoration plan. To ensure effective collaboration between referring workers and social workers of residential care service on home leave arrangement, referring workers were reminded to discuss/ inform the social workers of residential care service of the home leave arrangement, in addition to the liaison between the birth families and the care staff/ foster parents.

7. The Chairperson also reported that the Central Referral System for Residential Child Care Services (CRSRC) received enquiries from referring workers from time to time on issues related to choice of service types, case information to be provided in CRSRC referral forms, level of urgency for cases requiring urgent placement, etc. As the issues involved considerations of individual case situations, advice and support from supervisors of the referring workers rather than CRSRC were to be sought. While the referral forms were countersigned by supervisors of referring offices, referring workers were reminded to provide the required information and documents as specified in the forms in consultation with their supervisors. Referral forms with incomplete information would incur the need for clarification / provision of supplementary information and delay the processing of the application in CRSRC.

8. The Chairperson furthered that for enquiries of IFSCs of SWD on submission of CRSRC forms through Customer Information System (CIS), referring workers could seek assistance from ISTB or SWD Helpdesk instead of CRSRC.

Services for Ethnic Minorities (EMs) (para. 16-18, p. 6-7)

9. Ms Chan Mei-yi recapitulated the sharing in the last meeting that district designated persons (DDPs) for providing welfare support to EMs had been arranged by SWD. SWD colleagues were invited to attend to the related details to be announced by Corporate Planning and Co-ordination Section (CPCS). While DDPs would liaise with SWD district colleagues and EM service agencies, CPCS continued serving as the central contact point of SWD with the related NGOs and the contact details of the related officer were shared in the meeting.

Review of Procedural Guide for Handling Child Abuse Cases (para. 20, p. 7)

10. Ms Chan Mei-yi shared with Members that for the consultation on definition of child abuse and approaches in handling child abuse/ suspected child abuse cases, staff of Domestic Violence Team (DVT) had attended 21 consultation sessions organised by district offices of SWD, Education Bureau (EDB) and Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS). DVT had also arranged four sessions to meet with parents (including parents with disabled children), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender groups and children. Besides views collected from the forums, DVT also had received written responses from various stakeholders. Ms Chan also reported that the task group had its meeting on 15 May 2017 to consider the responses from stakeholders and initial recommendations from DVT. A focus group would be formed to discuss relevant issues in details and the first meeting was scheduled in July 2017.

Psycho-educational programme for separated/ divorced parents (para. 22-23, p.8)

11. Ms Clara Lam reported that as shared at the last meeting, DVT had tailor-made a two-session psycho-educational programme for separated/ divorced parents to instil the concept of continual parental responsibility. A Sharing Session on Parental Responsibility and Support Programme to Separated/ Divorced Families was conducted on 4.5.2017 with aims at equipping social workers with the concept on parental responsibility and sharing the

content as well as implementation of the psycho-educational programme. While handout of the Sharing Session was sent to Oics IFSCs/ISCs on 5.5.2017 vide email, Ms Lam shared that programme materials including programme plan and powerpoint were also available to facilitate social workers to run the programme. IFSCs/ISCs were encouraged to conduct the programme within their units or jointly with other IFSCs or FCPSUs.

12. To promote the concept of continual parental responsibility and to enhance public awareness of the importance of co-parenting, Ms Lam furthered that DVT was currently producing a set of roll-up banners so as to facilitate frontline social workers including IFSCs of SWD and NGOs to conduct related public education programme/ activities such as roving exhibition/ promotion activity. Two sets of roll-up banners would be distributed to each district for shared use among IFSCs of SWD as well as other related units, one set to each IFSC/ISC of NGOs and one set for each FCPSU. IFSCs/ISCs were encouraged to organize the programme in their service units. The programme content and powerpoint slides of the psycho-educational programme would be sent to all related casework units by email when the roll-up banners are ready to be distributed in June.

[Post-meeting notes: The related materials and a simple statistical form to collect the statistics on quarterly basis were sent to Members on 9.6.2017 vide email.]

Collaboration issues between IFSCs/ISCs and FCPSUs (para. 28, p. 9)

13. Ms Clara Lam thanked Members for their valuable and committed contribution in enhancing the “Guidelines on Division of Work and Case Transfer between FCPSU and IFSCs/ISCs”, which was sent to related stakeholders vide email on 21.4.2017 and 24.4.2017 by Chief Social Work Officer (Domestic Violence) and Chief Social Work Officer (Family and Child Welfare)¹ respectively. She invited Members to remind the related colleagues to make use of the revised templates as annexed to the updated Guidelines.

Support Service Rendered to New Arrivals (para. 41, p. 12)

14. The Chairperson reported that as shared in the last meeting, the letter regarding support service rendered to new arrivals issued by Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) to the Public Complaints Office of Legislative Council Secretariat in January 2017 was passed to Members on 2.3.2017. She highlighted that as stated in the letter, support service would be rendered by IFSCs/ISCs to the family members who were non-Hong Kong residents living in the same household of Hong Kong residents and playing a care role to the family members in Hong Kong. Social workers might then, according to the specific situation of the case, render appropriate social service support including counselling and short-term food assistance.

Progress of follow-up on the recommendations of the Review on the Implementation of the IFSC Service Mode

Updates on the follow-up actions taken

15. The Chairperson reported that the updated table enclosing progress of the follow up actions had been emailed to Members on 24.5.2017. Members were invited to note the progress.

Progress of work under various working groups

(i) Working Group on Review on the Operation of IFSC Services (WG)

16. Ms Chan Mei-yi shared that the WG had held its 22nd and 23rd meeting on 17.3.2017 and 9.5.2017 respectively for discussion on the collaboration issues, as well as the review on processing of CR cases.

(ii) Liaison Group on Issues Relating to Housing Assistance Cases (LG)

17. Ms Chan Mei-yi shared that summary of 12th LG meeting was issued on 5.5.2017 and the 13th LG meeting would be held in August 2017. The 14th meetings of the five Local LGs of the respective clusters were / would be held from April 2017 to March 2018. Members were welcomed to bring up the related issues for deliberation at the platforms.

Collaboration issues between IFSCs/ISCs and Medical Social Services Units (MSSUs) of SWD

18. Ms Chan Mei-yi recapitulated that views collected from IFSC platforms in relation to item 7 of the “Discussion items relating to the interfacing and division of work between IFSCs/ISCs and MSSUs” were passed to Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services Branch (RMB) in March 2017. RMB had been invited to share with the IFSC platforms when draft revisions on collaboration guidelines were available.

19. Ms Chan reported that, with confirmation from RMB, the “MSS Manual of Procedures” and “Division of Work Between MSSUs and IFSCs/ISCs or FCPSU” did not apply to MSSUs of Hospital Authority (HA). When there were cases not being able to be taken up by MSSUs of HA, reference should be made to the prevailing guidelines of IFSCs and MSSUs in determining the follow up unit. If clarification was needed, the respective Service Branch should provide advice to the concerned service unit accordingly. Besides, RMB would use their current platform to communicate with HA on the collaboration issues. While concerns from IFSC platform were passed to HA, RMB would share any subsequent update/ progress with IFSC platforms as appropriate.

20. Ms Chan also informed Members the pilot initiative of RMB, viz. the Regional Guardianship Office (Hong Kong Island) [RGO(HKI)] had commenced its operation on 27.3.2017. The RGO(HKI) provided statutory and social services to the mentally incapacitated persons having been received into guardianship under the Mental Health Ordinance, Cap 136 and/or their families living within the service boundary in Hong Kong

Region. The pilot would be reviewed in two years. SWD colleagues were invited to make reference to the email issued by RMB in March 2017 on criteria and logistic arrangement of transferring the guardianship cases from service units to RGO(HKI). The applicant or social enquiry report writers could transfer the cases which were not active cases of any service units to RGO(HKI) upon receiving the true copy of the order. To facilitate smooth case transfer, prior case discussion between service units was suggested. She also invited Members of NGO to take note of the new Office, especially those serving in HK Island.

Review on Processing of Compassionate Rehousing (CR) Cases

Announcement

21. The Chairperson shared that upon the endorsement on the “Road Map” and “Scope and Terms” at the last Committee meeting, information of the review on processing of CR cases was uploaded onto the SWD Homepage on 3.3.2017 with attachments of “Road Map” and “Scope and Terms”. The announcement covered the information of the 1st round of focus groups sessions, including a session being set aside for staff unions as well as social workers who would like to join it at personal capacity, and the enrolment form was uploaded. Besides, stakeholders concerned were invited to share views on the review through email, fax or post mail.

Focus Group

22. The Chairperson shared that the five sessions of 1st round of focus group meetings had been conducted in late March 2017. The “Questions to be asked by the focus group facilitators” (Questions) were sent to the participants prior to the sessions, except for the first session, whereby copies of the Questions were provided to the participants at the venue owing to time constraint. For getting feedback to fine-tune the arrangement for the remaining sessions, a brief evaluation meeting was held with facilitators, observers and recorders right after the first session on 20.3.2017. She also shared the overall enrolment and attendance of the focus group sessions and reported that all colleagues enrolled were accepted as the numbers of enrolments were within the pre-set quota.

23. The Chairperson shared that at the focus group session for staff unions and social worker who would like to join it at personal capacity, the Hong Kong Social Workers’ General Union (HKSWGU) requested (i) to have access to the views collected from the focus group sessions which was also raised by some participants of other sessions, and (ii) to include the recommendation of “centralised team” as an agenda item to be discussed in the 2nd round focus group meetings. After deliberation, it was considered that as the review was a professional one targeted at personnel involved in CR case processing and to avoid misinterpretation/inappropriate use of the information therein by persons not involved in CR case processing, the views collected should not be released to the public. It was agreed that views collected could be shared with social workers/ approved persons directly involved in processing CR cases, who were targets to be invited to join the focus group meetings, so as to facilitate further discussion in the 2nd round focus group meetings. The summary of views would be sent through the same channels of invitation for enrolment to focus group meetings for disseminating to the target participants of the focus group meetings. Besides, it was considered that since setting up a centralised team had been one of the suggestions received from participants of the 1st round focus group meetings, the pros

and cons of setting up centralised team(s) to process CR cases would be explored in the 2nd round focus group meetings with details to be further deliberated in the coming meetings of WG and Committee.

24. The Chairperson furthered that summaries of the focus group meetings, with verbatim in Cantonese being adopted to document the raw data as far as possible, were perused by WG. After deliberation, it was considered that the refined summaries, with verbatim and emotional expressions that were purely ventilation of emotions being removed, would be provided to WG and Committee for consideration in the coming meetings before dissemination.

Case Study

25. Ms Chan Mei-yi reported the progress of case study on the recommended cases and shared preliminary observations including commonalities and inconsistencies/irregularities identified. Mr Moses Mui shared that HKCSS had been consolidating the cases collected from the related NGOs and had come up with the following inclusion criteria for case selection:

- (a) Non-recommended Cases: cases formally or informally rejected by SWD or could no longer be proceeded after having experienced a lot of hurdles in collaboration with SWD;
- (b) Difficult Cases: cases having been recommended to HD, but a lot of hurdles had been found during the process; and
- (c) Pair-up Cases: “control” cases with similar background but with different outcomes as compared with those cases already recommended to HD.

26. To facilitate the case study, the Chairperson invited NGOs to provide some details on the contacts between the processing units and the SWD back-up offices concerned. The Family and Child Welfare Branch (FCWB) colleagues would check with concerned SWD and NGO colleagues for related case information when necessary.

Views collected from other means

27. Ms Chan Mei-yi shared that apart from the focus group meetings, SWD had received written views from three parties which were tabled to Members. She shared the summary of the comments received.

28. The Chairperson reported that as initiated by HKSWGU, a meeting with HKSWGU was held on 16.5.2017. The progress of review, including the arrangement and progress of case study, was shared at the meeting. HKSWGU shared that out of eight members attending the meeting and working at NGO IFSCs/ISCs, only one had got the information from her respective NGO that HKCSS was collecting cases for the study. To enhance transparency of the subject amongst frontline staff of NGO IFSCs/ISCs, HKSWGU requested SWD to convey to HKCSS and NGOs concerned their need of being updated on the progress of review, including the case study. The concerns were conveyed to HKCSS and NGOs concerned in this meeting. She continued that HKSWGU suggested including a case reported in the media in the case study and passed the related media report to SWD on 17.5.2017. The case client was identified and the case was included in the study. Regarding the suggestion of having the representative of staff union to join the WG for the review, the Chairperson shared with HKSWGU that the proposal would not be feasible,

taking into account the sizeable number of unions concerned and the balance of representation in WG.

Co-opting Representatives to the WG

29. The Chairperson reported that the current NGO IFSC frontline representative, Ms Yolanda Ho of Hong Kong Children and Youth Service, was promoted to the post of center-in-charge. She invited Mr Moses Mui to liaise with the NGO counterparts to arrange one or two frontline colleague(s) to join the coming WG meetings. As proposed by HKCSS and Members earlier that view of the related stakeholders other than IFSCs/ISCs should be consulted at an early stage, FCWB proposed to co-opt a representative from DVT or FCPSU to the WG. Members agreed to this arrangement.

Arrangement of 2nd Round of Focus Group Meetings

30. The Chairperson invited initial views of Members on the 2nd round focus group meetings to be held in November 2017, including target participants and format. A draft proposed arrangement, incorporating the views of Members, would be prepared for deliberation in the coming WG meetings.

Follow-up of suggestions raised / issues of concern

31. The Chairperson shared that some issues raised by the focus group meetings/ observed from the case study could be followed up promptly while pending the completion of the review. One of the suggestions raised in the focus group meetings was to provide soft copy of the form HD412 to the related colleagues to facilitate case handling. FCWB would prepare the soft copy and disseminate it to frontline colleagues for use upon confirmation of Housing Department (HD). Issues related to collaboration with HD would be brought up for discussion at the coming LG meeting. While concerns related to the processing workflow stipulated in the “Guideline and Procedures for Processing Applications for CR and other Housing Assistance” would be looked into in the coming WG meetings, Members were invited to advise the related colleagues to process CR cases pursuant to the prevailing guideline.

[Post meeting note: The template of the form HD412 was sent to district managers and service coordinators of the approved NGOs vide email on 25.7.2017.]

32. The Chairperson thanked Members for their contribution and invited them to provide views on the related issues of this item, if any, by 9.6.2017.

Any other business

[Remarks: Mr Jason Li joined the meeting at this juncture.]

(i) Proposed new arrangement on admission/ re-admission of the Family Crisis Support Centre (FCSC) to take effect from 1.7.2017 tentatively

33. Mr Jason Li recapped that the Guidelines on Collaboration between FCSC and IFSCs/ISCs (Guidelines) set out the general principles and procedures governing the

collaboration between FCSC and IFSCs/ISCs on case handling with a view to providing timely intervention for individuals/ families in crisis and it was last revised in July 2015.

34. Mr Li briefed Members the proposed new arrangement on admission re-admission of FCSC was in line with the Guidelines. Live-in users would normally receive short-term accommodation service up to 2 weeks. For addressing the special circumstance of needy cases, one-off extension of stay up to 7 days in maximum might be considered, which was subject to FCSC's approval on case-by-case basis. For exceptional needy cases that were in need of further placement after having received the service up to 3 weeks accumulatively, the referring social workers had to submit a fresh application with full justifications to FCSC, at least 3 working days before the scheduled discharge date, for consideration of re-admission. Subject to availability of placement, re-admission application would be considered and the final decision for granting extension was subject to discretion of FCSC.

35. Mr Li furthered that FCSC would engage the referring social workers to closely monitor the discharge plan for the admitted cases through case conference. If re-admission was approved, FCSC might re-allocate a different room/ bed for the re-admitted cases if and when necessary. If the re-admission application was rejected by FCSC, the clients had to leave FCSC according to the scheduled discharge date. FCSC might invite the referring social workers to provide on-site logistic support to the clients upon placement termination, if necessary.

36. While the Members had no comment on the proposed arrangement, they were appealed to disseminate the related information on FCSC to the frontline colleagues and advise them to monitor the discharge plan of their cases closely.

[Remarks: Mr Jason Li left the meeting at this juncture.]

(ii) New arrangement on submission of NGOs' complete Data Collection Form for Street Sleepers Registry

37. The Chairperson shared the new arrangement to be effective from 1.6.2017 on submission of Data Collection Form (SWD 386) for the Street Sleepers Registry that in order to streamline the submission process, the NGO units could submit the completed SWD 386 to FCWB direct with effect from 1.6.2017.

(iii) Free Legal Advice Scheme

38. Ms Clara Lam shared the Free Legal Advice Scheme provided preliminary legal advice to members of the public as to their legal position in genuine cases. The objective of the Scheme was to enable members of the public having genuine legal problems to have preliminary advice as to their legal position. The Scheme would not offer any follow up service nor representation to the applicants. There was no means test and the service was absolutely free of charge. A person wishing to seek free legal advice from the Scheme had to attend one of the referral agencies to make an appointment to meet the volunteer lawyer at a Center of his/her choice. At the time of making the appointment, an appointment card

containing details of the date & time of the appointment and address of the Advice Centre would be given to him/her.

39. Ms Lam furthered that the referral agencies (with 153 branches) of the Free Legal Advice Scheme including most of the IFSCs/ISCs over the districts. Details can be found at the link: <http://www.dutylawyer.org.hk/en/free/free.asp>. In this connection, Members were invited to remind frontline social worker to use the updated version of the form for making referrals and note the time slots of appointment.

(iv) Handling of Suspected Child Abuse Cases

Collaboration with police

40. Ms Chan Mei-yi shared concerns from some frontline workers on whether there was a need to report the case to police when a new born baby was found to be positive in toxicology urine test. As informed by Family Conflict and Sexual Violence Policy Unit (FCSV) of Hong Kong Police Force, who had sought legal advice on this area, there was no specific legislation on maternal prenatal drug abuse. Even if a new born baby was found to be born with trace of dangerous drugs as a result of the addicted mother's drug abuse during pregnancy, there would be insufficient basis to initiate prosecution against the addicted mother for her prenatal drug-taking, unless there was evidence to prove that she had contravened any offences under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134) (e.g. Inhaling Dangerous Drug) or the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138) (e.g. Possession of Part I Poison). However, exposing a baby or child (already born and alive) to a drug-infused environment may, subject to sufficiency of evidence, constitute an offence of "Ill-treatment by those in charge of child" under section 27(1) of Cap. 212.

41. In this connection, frontline social workers might refer a case to police through Child Abuse Investigation Units (CAIU) for investigation. The referral should be sent to CAIU or FCPSU earlier during office hours so that CAIU member could make due management with other police teams or have strategy planning with FCPSU as appropriate. Frontline social workers, as the referrers, were also advised to give a valid contact means on the referral form for urgent communication even after office hours.

42. For known case of IFSC, while FCPSU worker would usually be involved in the conduction of VRI together with police, the IFSC investigating social workers were advised to closely liaise with the police and attend video-recorded interview (VRI) as far as possible so as to know the details of the incident, give emotional support to the non-offending parent witnessing the VRI and discuss the immediate protection actions after the VRI. FCWB would also remind police to inform the caseworkers of the scheduled date of VRI during relevant training programmes.

43. In view that the reports and notes of MDCC for suspected child abuse cases would possibly be classified as "unused materials" in a criminal case, which can be accessed to by the defence counsel in a trial, FCSV had advised the frontline police teams through CAIU that the police officer attending the Multi-disciplinary Case Conference on Protection of Child with Suspected Abuse (MDCC) not to take away the reports. In case the police officer did not have such knowledge or request to have the reports, the chairperson may remind them of such advice from FCSV and take back the reports after the MDCC. For

notes of MDCC, usually there was limited case information but only decisions made at the MDCC, the police would still keep the notes of MDCC. For cases where MDCC was not conducted, investigating social workers are required to prepare social enquiry reports for reference of professionals involved and for record. The reports were usually exchanged among professionals by fax or email. FCSV advised that professionals do not send written reports to police but only the conclusion made after discussion among professionals.

44. When handling child sexual abuse cases with perpetrators being of small or young age and not family members of the victim, social worker was advised to assess whether the suspected abuser was also a victim of sexual abuse or has service needs. Social worker might advise the police to refer the suspected abuser to casework unit for follow up service. If consent from the parents of the suspected abuser was not available, social worker might ask the police to leave the contact means of the relevant casework unit for the parents/young person's future consideration.

Collaboration with Hospital Authority (HA)

45. Ms Chan Mei-yi reported that DVT had a discussion with HA recently on the possible way for social worker to make an enquiry on whether a person had received treatment in hospital/clinic of HA, e.g. whether a parent was receiving treatment in a psychiatric out-patient clinic, if no consent from that person was available, so that the social worker can contact the medical officer for more information and/or invite the medical officer to attend the MDCC to discuss the welfare plan of the child. It had been agreed that the sample letter in the existing Procedural Guide for Handling Child Abuse Cases (Revised 2015) (i.e. Annex V to Chapter 4) could be used for such purpose. IFSCs/ISCs could send the letter to the Record Management Officer of the hospital that the child concerned had been admitted with a copy to the Medical Coordinator of Child Abuse of that hospital so that the latter could assist in the liaison work as required.

46. Mr Daniel Chu raised concern on whether fee charging would be applied if it was raised by IFSCs run by NGOs. He would like to confirm if the charge would be waived when they requested for information to handle suspected child abuse cases. Ms Chan noted the concern and would convey it to DVT for clarification.

Revision in existing Procedural Guide for Handling Child Abuse Cases (the Procedural Guide)

47. Ms Chan Mei-yi reported that in the sample notes of MDCC (Annex VI to Chapter 11), there was a remark at the top that "(Organisation) controls the use of data in this document". However, there was usually a paragraph in the content stating that certain organisations would control the use of data contained in the notes of the case conference and prohibited other parties from complying with the data access request on their behalf. DVT would like to clarify that once there was a clear description in the content of the notes, there was no need to add a remark at the top, which would cause confusion when processing a data access request. Hence, the remark at the top of the sample note of MDCC was removed.

(v) Educational Programme on Stopping Domestic Violence (EPSDV)

48. Ms Clara Lam introduced that the EPSDV was a brief educational programme tailored for batterers and those people in high conflicts with their intimate partners. The programme provided timely and flexible intervention to help them stop using violence, cope with the crisis arising from their violent behaviours and improve their intimate relationship with the following themes:

- (a) Understanding the nature and consequences of domestic violence;
- (b) Emotional management (including anger management);
- (c) Communication skills (including conflict resolution); and
- (d) Introduction of other services for batterers to help them further develop alternative behaviour and skill to abstain from battering.

The programme leaflets were tabled for Members' reference and their assistance was solicited to encourage IFSC/ISC workers to refer suitable clients to the operators.

Date of next meeting

49. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m. The date and time of the next meeting was scheduled on 29.8.2017 (Tuesday) at 9:30 a.m. The venue of the next meeting would be confirmed later.

[Post-meeting note: The next meeting would be held at Committee Room I - III, 1/F, Queen Elizabeth Stadium, 18 Oi Kwan Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.]