

**Minutes of the 11th Meeting of
the Committee on Integrated Family Service Centres**

Date : 4 September 2013 (Wednesday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Venue : Conference Room 1, Social Welfare Department Headquarters,
9/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Present

Social Welfare Department (SWD)

Wong Kwok-chun, Alex	Chief Social Work Officer (Family and Child Welfare)1	(Chairman)
Mrs Wong Ho Fung-see	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Central Western, Southern and Islands)1	
Ms Yan Lai-ming, Jenny	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Eastern and Wan Chai)1	
Miss Hau Suk-kwan	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Kwun Tong)2	
Miss Cheung Lai-kuen, Jessica	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung)1	
Heung Wing-keung	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung)2	
Ms Kwan Shuk-yee, Nancy	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Kowloon City and Yau Tsim Mong)1	
Lee Yuen-hung	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Sham Shui Po)1	
Miss Sandra Lim	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Shatin)1	
Ms Woo Mei-hing, Patricia	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tai Po and North)2	
Miss Hui Kwai-fan	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Yuen Long)1	

Ms Leung Po-ling	Acting Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing)1	
Cheung Tat-ming, Gary	Assistant District Social Welfare Officer (Tuen Mun)2	
Tse Shu-to, Sebastian	Senior Social Work Officer (Family)2	
Miss Chow Mei-yee	Social Work Officer (Family)1	(Secretary)

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

Mui Wai-keung, Moses	Chief Officer (Family and Community) Hong Kong Council of Social Service	
Ms Angie Lai	Head of Family Service Caritas – Hong Kong	
Lee Ip-ki, Ricky	Senior Manager (Family Service) Kwun Tong Centre Shun Lee Integrated Family Service Centre [Representing Ms Cindy Leung Head of Service (Family Service) Hong Kong Family Welfare Society]	
Kwok Wai-keung	General Manager (Family and Community Core Business) Hong Kong Christian Service	
Ms Iris Liu	Director of Program International Social Service Hong Kong Branch	
Ms So Wai-yee	Clinical Supervisor Family Energizer (Integrated Family Service) [Representing Ms Sally Pang Programme Director (Family & Community) Christian Family Service Centre]	
Mrs Angela Chiu	Centre Supervisor Hong Kong Catholic Marriage Advisory Council	
Lee Chung-ho, Michael	Centre-in-charge Hung Hom Integrated Family Service Centre [Representing Mrs Ngan Lai Mee-yuk Social Work Supervisor Hong Kong Children and Youth Services]	
Ms Wendy Wong	Senior Manager St James' Settlement	
Ms Wong Fung-yee, Margaret	Assistant Community Services Secretary (Youth & Family) Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	

Chu Muk-wah, Daniel	Division Head (Family Service Division) Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service
Ms Keung Choi-yin	Service Director Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council
Lee Tin-yan	District Service Director The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council

In attendance

Ms Ding Shuk-wah, Alice	Senior Social Work Officer (Family)1 / SWD
Mrs Claren Tam	Social Work Officer (Family)3 / SWD
Chan Ming-chor, Patrick	Assistant Social Work Officer (Family)1 / SWD

Opening remarks

The Chairman welcomed Ms Leung Po-ling from SWD, Lee Ip-ki, Ricky from Hong Kong Family Welfare Society, Ms So Wai-ye from Christian Family Service Centre and Lee Chung-ho, Michael from Hong Kong Children and Youth Services respectively.

Confirmation of minutes of last meeting

2. Minutes of the last meeting were confirmed without amendment.

[Post-meeting notes: The confirmed minutes of the 10th meeting were uploaded onto SWD Homepage on 5 September 2013.]

Matter arising

Training courses (para 3, p.4)

3. Mrs Claren Tam reported the enrolment of training courses conducted between May 2013 and August 2013. She also highlighted those courses tentatively to be organised for the period September 2013 to December 2013 as listed below and encouraged Members to nominate suitable colleagues to attend:

- (a) Training Course on Bereavement Counselling (16, 17 & 23 September 2013);
- (b) Training Course on Helping Couples Separate in Peace (26 September, 3 & 7 October 2013);
- (c) Training Series on Effective Parenting for Children with Special Educational Needs –

Course A: An Overview on Children with Special Care and Educational Needs

(24 September 2013 a.m.);

Course B: Effective Parenting for Children with Autistic Problem

(24 September 2013 p.m.);

Course C: Effective Parenting for Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity

Disorder (27 September 2013 a.m.);

Course D: Effective Parenting for Children with Dyslexia Problem

(27 September 2013 p.m.);

- (d) Training Course on Application of Narrative Practice in Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) Setting (22, 25 & 29 October 2013);
- (e) Induction Course on Services of IFSC (Class 2) (14, 19, 22, 28 a.m. & 29 November 2013);

- (f) Training Course on Working with Ethnic Minorities (28 November 2013 a.m.); and
- (g) Training Course on Application of Group Work Approach for People Suffering from Emotional Problems (Class 1) (17 December 2013).

Review of Multi-disciplinary Case Conference (MDCC) on Suspected Child Abuse Cases (para 9, P.7)

4. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian informed that under the Task Group on Review of MDCC on Suspected Child Abuse Cases, four Working Groups were set up to review (i) overall operation of MDCC; (ii) family participation in MDCC; (iii) tasks to be performed by MDCC; and (iv) legal matters related to MDCC. He also shared that the name of MDCC on Suspected Child Abuse Cases would be renamed as Child Protection Case Conference so as to highlight the focus of the case conference on child protection. Members were invited to continuously contribute their views on the concerned issues to the Domestic Violence Team of the Family and Child Welfare Branch (FCWB).

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

Progress of follow-up on the recommendations of the Review report

5. The Chairman took Members through the updated summary table on the progress of follow-up actions taken in respect of the recommendations of the Review report, which had been sent to Members before the meeting.

Working Group on Review on the Operation of IFSC Services

6. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian reported that the Working Group on Review on the Operation of IFSC Services had completed the review on the Enquiry / Intake cum Screening Form used by IFSCs, details of which would be shared in the next agenda item. He highlighted that the Working Group would proceed to examine issues relating to the interfacing between IFSCs / Integrated Services Centres (ISCs) and other service sectors including Family and Child Protective Services Units (FCPSUs), School Social Work Units, Medical Social Services Units as well as other service units Members considered worthy for deliberation. The 9th meeting of the Working Group would be held in late October 2013 for discussion on collaboration issues between IFSCs / ISCs and FCPSUs. Members were invited to propose issues of concerns to the Secretariat for reference and discussion in the coming Working Group meeting.

Liaison Group / Local Liaison Groups on Issues relating to Housing Assistance Cases

7. Ms Ding Shuk-wah, Alice reported that as agreed in the last meeting of the Committee on IFSCs, FCWB had prepared a summary of discussion on all agreed enhancement measures and major discussion points as covered in the previous five Liaison Group meetings. The summary was sent to Members on 21 August 2013 for reference and sharing with IFSC colleagues. At the same time, the summary was shared with the Housing Department for dissemination to their frontline staff for reference in handling housing assistance cases. Besides, she informed that the 6th meeting of the Liaison Group at headquarters level would be held on 16 September 2013, for which Members were welcome to propose agenda items. She also briefed that the 6th meetings of the Local Liaison Groups were held between March and June 2013 by the respective five clusters with the next meetings to be held in the coming months.

Review on the Enquiry / Intake cum Screening Form currently in use by IFSCs

8. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian reported that the Working Group on Review on the Operation of IFSC Services had thoroughly deliberated the proposed revisions of the Enquiry / Intake cum Screening Form (the Form) currently in use by IFSCs in its 7th and 8th meetings held on 19 December 2012 and 3 May 2013 respectively. He remarked the purposes of the Working Group in revising the Form were to enhance its effectiveness, improve the workflow and facilitate problem assessment of IFSC colleagues.

9. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian further revealed that the Secretariat, after consolidating the suggestions of the Working Group, had invited comments from Members and IFSC colleagues on the proposed revised Form (both English and Chinese versions) in August 2013. He then took Members through the details of the proposed revisions of the Form and the comments collected.

10. Upon deliberations, Members with some refinements endorsed the proposed revisions of the Form. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian then briefed Members that the revised Form would be put into use for all IFSCs after the correspondent enhancement of the Client Information System (CIS) for SWD IFSCs to cater for the revisions. The enhancement was scheduled in the last quarter of 2013-14 while the revised Form was tentatively to be in place in the first quarter of 2014-15.

Any other business

Granting of subsidies for volunteers and purchasing of cash equivalent items for service users

11. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian pointed out that in the operation of IFSCs / ISCs, whether subsidies would be granted to volunteers would take into account several factors including the availability of resources, the natures of programmes, the clientele the volunteers were serving as well as the categories of volunteers involved, etc.. Subsidised items for volunteers were mainly for travelling expenses, beverages, light refreshments or light meals. He shared that District Councils (DCs), for the purpose of processing funding applications for community programmes, had worked out their own lists of maximum recognised expenditures for volunteers. Members were invited to advise IFSC / ISC colleagues to make due reference to the Lists of the respective DCs when considering subsidies to their volunteers. In case the recommended rates of the Lists of the respective DCs were not observed because of other considerations, it was advised to document well the reasons so as for better checking and monitoring purposes.

12. Besides, Tse Shu-to, Sebastian revealed that IFSCs might purchase cash equivalent items, such as supermarket coupons and bookstore coupons, for service users as gifts or prizes, or subsidies to families with financial needs or deprived backgrounds. Members were invited to remind IFSC / ISC colleagues to observe the standing rules and regulations when purchasing such items. However, it was not advisable to purchase Octopus Cards for service users for its nature as electronic money which was not easy for proper checking and monitoring. When considering the purchase of cash equivalent items for service users, IFSC / ISC colleagues were advised to ensure the use of such items would serve the best purposes they intended to.

Collaboration with Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) in implementing Comprehensive Child Development Service (CCDS)

13. The Chairman reported that upon the setting up of Kowloon City MCHC in August 2013, CCDS had been lastly extended to Kowloon City district and completed its full extension to 18 DC districts. To review the implementation progress of CCDS and related collaboration issues, the 5th Inter-departmental Coordinating Committee on CCDS was convened on 10 June 2013 with representatives from Department of Health (DH), Hospital Authority and SWD.

14. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian then highlighted the gist of discussion in the said meeting relating to collaboration of MCHCs with IFSCs / ISCs as follows:

- (a) considering the feasibility of extending the practice of on-site social services provided by social workers of IFSCs / ISCs at MCHCs as proposed by DH so as to engage those unmotivated service users, it was reaffirmed that the arrangements depended on the service needs and the operation of individual IFSCs / ISCs. On-site social services might be in the form of setting up mobile booths for introducing IFSC services, co-organising groups and programmes and meeting those unmotivated service users on-site upon prior appointments between MCHCs and IFSCs / ISCs;
- (b) regarding DH's concern on IFSC social workers' request for urgent psychiatric service at MCHCs for service users with suspected mental illness, it was clarified that instead of requesting psychiatric service at MCHCs, IFSC social workers should refer those cases in need of urgent psychiatric consultation at Accident and

Emergency Department of the regional hospital or enlist the assistance of the concerned psychiatric outreaching team where appropriate.

- (c) responding to the feedback of DH about the low reply rate (around 60%) of 1-month reply made by IFSCs / ISCs upon receiving referrals from MCHCs, it was agreed to adopt the streamlining measure in future. For cases which the full reply could be made within 7 working days, the 1-month reply could be issued direct to replace the 7-day reply. For the covering memo as attached to the standard referral form to IFSCs / ISCs which had been added since the enhancement of the information system of MCHCs, there was an acknowledgement slip incorporating at the bottom of the covering memo for confirming the receipt of referral by IFSCs / ISCs. To facilitate tracking of MCHCs on the case progress, IFSC / ISC colleagues were advised to sign for the acknowledgement slip as far as practicable if the 7-day reply was not issued.

15. In relation to Members' enquiry on the referral mechanism from IFSCs / ISCs to MCHCs, Tse Shu-to, Sebastian supplemented that there was a standard referral form for IFSC / ISC social workers to refer cases to MCHCs for assessment or management of the child's health care problems such as follow up on immunisation or assessment on suspected developmental problems.

[Post-meeting notes: The Secretariat re-circulated among Members the referral form for IFSCs / ISCs to MCHCs as well as the reply slip / form of IFSCs / ISCs on 16 September 2013 for reference and sharing with frontline colleagues.]

Handling of MDCC for Suspected Child Abuse Cases

16. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian shared with Members the recommendations of the Ombudsman on the arrangements of MDCCs for Suspected Child Abuse Cases arising from a complaint case. Members were invited to advise IFSC / ISC colleagues to note the Ombudsman's recommendations as follows:

- (a) supervisors should provide adequate training for frontline social workers and monitor the case progress to ensure that the procedures as stipulated in the "Procedural Guide for Handling Child Abuse Cases" were properly followed, in particular relating to the invitation of parents including the suspected abusers to attend the MDCCs, informing the parents who were not able to attend of their rights to submit written information if deemed required, etc.; and
- (b) responsible social workers should make detailed records for significant information or events in the case documents, including the attitude of the parents towards their attendance in the MDCC, the participation of parents either in attendance or by submitting written information for the MDCC, etc..

Division of work and case transfer among IFSCs / ISCs

17. In response to some enquiries on the division of work among IFSCs / ISCs for child welfare cases as stated in paragraph 2.7.1 of the Guidelines on Division of Work and Case Transfer Among IFSCs / ISCs (Revised in November 2012) that "if the custodial parent is dead / untraceable or consents for the non-custodian parent to take up the

child(ren)'s affairs while the non-custodial parent is willing to do so, the IFSC / ISC with service boundary covering the place of residence of non-custodial parent should take up the case”, Tse Shu-to, Sebastian clarified the interpretations of “custodial parent” for illegitimate child, as deliberated by the Working Group on Review on the Operation of IFSC Services in its 8th meeting held on 3.5.2013, as follows:

- (a) there should not be custody issue for illegitimate child because only the birth mother had the custody over the child who was born illegitimately whereas whether a birth father had any rights on his illegitimate child depended on a number of issues. As such, the division of work for illegitimate child should follow the IFSC / ISC with service boundary covering the place of residence of the birth mother. In case the mother was untraceable or dead, the IFSC / ISC with service boundary covering the place of residence of the eldest child / only child should take up the case; and
- (b) for illegitimate child who was born within wedlock of the mother but out of her relationship with other man, the husband, i.e., legal father would assume the custodial right as well as the mother equally subject to further legal proceedings on the custody arrangements. As such, the division of work would take into consideration the residence of the legal father if the mother was untraceable or dead. Unless the legal father had signed off the child, the IFSC / ISC with service boundary covering the place of residence of the illegitimate child should take up the case.

Handling of referrals from Customs & Excise Department (C&ED)

18. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian revealed that the C&ED might contact IFSCs / ISCs for seeking childcare or welfare assistance to their detainees during their operation. During

the normal operation hours [i.e. 0900 to 1700 hours from Monday to Friday and 0900 to 1200 hours on Saturday (excluding public holidays)], they could contact the IFSCs / ISCs according to the residential address of the detainees or the parents of the child-in-need. For cases in need of welfare assistance outside the normal operation hours, C&ED might contact SWD Departmental Hotline manned by the Hotline and Outreaching Service Team (HOST) operated by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals. Upon receiving calls from C&ED, HOST would assess the case situation and might refer the cases to the respective IFSCs / ISCs operating extended service hours for follow up services according to the service users' residential addresses. In case the respective IFSCs / ISCs were not operating extended service hours, HOST would render immediate intervention as appropriate and refer the cases to the respective IFSCs / ISCs for follow up on the following working day using the standardised referral form.

19. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian supplemented that C&ED would be advised to explore the necessity of urgent intervention for the concerned cases or follow up could be arranged on the following working day, or they might contact HOST for cases warranting immediate assistance beyond the normal operation hours as mentioned above. FCWB would follow up on confirming with C&ED the said arrangements while Members were invited to share with IFSC / ISC colleagues to note the division of work.

[Post-meeting notes: The Chairman issued an email to Members on 30 September 2013 informing that liaison had been made with C&ED for confirming the arrangements. Besides, C&ED had been advised to critically assess the needs of the cases for immediate assistance before referring the cases to IFSCs / ISCs or the HOST.]

Geographical service boundaries of IFSCs

20. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian reported that, as a general practice, the geographical service boundaries of each IFSC were well defined aligning with the constituencies of the concerned DCs within the respective SWD administrative districts. Upon the development of new private tenements or public housing estates, the IFSC falling into the concerned DC constituencies usually would serve the new population as covered. Members were invited to note that adjustment on the catchment areas of IFSCs might be made after reviewing the overall population served and other social factors upon agreement among the IFSCs concerned in the district as coordinated by the respective SWD District Social Welfare Office.

21. In order to facilitate an overall view on the defined geographical service boundaries of the respective IFSCs / ISCs, Tse Shu-to, Sebastian remarked that the Secretariat would incorporate information of the concerned DC constituencies into the List of IFSCs / ISCs currently uploaded in the SWD Homepage. The Secretariat would invite district management to assist in the updating exercise.

Referral mechanism between the police and IFSCs / ISCs

22. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian revealed that the police was considering inviting IFSCs / ISCs to join their electronic referral system for making referrals and receiving replies. While SWD IFSCs could use the CIS to exchange the data with the police electronic system, the police proposed to send referrals to NGO IFSCs / ISCs through a confidential electronic facsimile system. Members were invited to give their preliminary views on the proposed initiative to the Secretariat after the meeting.

Promotion of recruitment programme for foster families

23. Mrs Wong Ho Fung-see, on behalf of the Central Foster Care Unit (CFCU) of SWD, introduced the “寄養家庭招募計劃”. As shared, the recruitment programme started in January 2013 and was implemented in the Hong Kong Island, West Kowloon and East New Territories by three respective NGOs. Members were invited to advise IFSC / ISC colleagues to encourage potential families to register with the CFCU or the concerned NGOs as foster families. Leaflets were distributed for Members’ reference.

Any other business

Admission requirements to Po Leung Kuk New Comers’ Ward

24. Mui Wai-keung, Moses raised enquiry of some IFSC colleagues whether application for Care or Protection (C or P) Order was a prerequisite requirement for cases admitting to Po Leung Kuk New Comers’ Ward (PLKNCW). Tse Shu-to, Sebastian responded that there was no change of the admission procedures that parental consent was required for admission to PLKNCW. For case in need of care or protection under the Protection of Children and Juveniles Ordinance (PCJO), Chapter 213, PLKNCW also served as place of refuge to provide temporary custody and care for the child and application for C or P Order within 48 hours upon admission was required as stipulated by the PCJO.

Provision of welfare services for street sleepers

25. Lee Yuen-hung and Ms Iris Liu shared their experience in providing welfare services for street sleepers in Sham Shui Po district. The importance of collaboration of IFSCs with concerned service units and government departments in service delivery was highlighted.

Staff safety and security measures

26. Kwok Wai-keung and Ms Wong Fung-yee, Margaret shared their concerns on staff safety when handling aggressive service users in view of the increasing complexity of cases handled by IFSCs. In this regard, Ms Angie Lai expressed concerns on the financial support from Lotteries Fund under Block Grant for installation of closed-circuit televisions (CCTV) in existing NGO IFSCs as a staff security measure. Tse Shu-to, Sebastian expressed that FCWB would obtain more information from the Lotteries Fund Projects Section and revert to Members in the next meeting.

Date of next meeting

27. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The next meeting was scheduled to be held on 4 December 2013 (Wednesday) at 2:30 p.m. at Conference Room 1 of SWD Headquarters.