

Funding and Service Agreement¹

Hotline and Outreaching Service Team

I Service Definition

Purpose and Objectives

The Hotline and Outreaching Service Team (HOST) aims to provide timely and effective intervention to service users through the provision of phone counselling, immediate outreaching, referrals to appropriate service units for services, etc. to address problems arising from child care problems, marital discord, mental health, emotional problem, adjustment problem and other family and personal problems.

Target Users

2. Target service users are callers transferred from the Social Welfare Department (SWD) Hotline <2343 2255>, 1823 Call Centre and police referral line, including general public, professionals, public officers and other persons, who require service information or assistance regardless of their age, gender and race.

Scope of Services

3. The HOST should adopt a coordinated approach with collaboration among different sectors and professionals concerned to handle service users requiring assistance and to link needy individuals and families to various appropriate services available. Its scope of services should include the following key components -

(a) *Hotline Service*

- (1) To provide immediate professional advice or counselling to service users over phone;
- (2) To handle callers forwarded by 1823 Call Centre requiring social work support;
- (3) To man the police referral line which is set up for police to refer cases in crisis and in need of social work intervention;
- (4) To handle enquiries for service information, including those readily

¹ This Funding and Service Agreement is a sample document for reference only.

available on SWD website, from public or other professionals;

- (5) To make referrals to service units of SWD and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), SWD after-office-hours outreaching teams, other government departments and other concerned parties as appropriate, if follow up intervention is required; and
- (6) To provide communication backup support to SWD after-office-hours outreaching teams as required in order to facilitate their delivery of immediate outreaching and crisis intervention.

(b) *Outreaching Service*

- (1) To perform outreaching duties in the form of, but not limited to, on-site support and assessment, counselling, escort to hospital, delivery of food / warm clothing, etc. during the operating hours for all necessary cases except the followings -
 - (i) Cases involving suspected child abuse;
 - (ii) Cases involving psychiatric emergency;
 - (iii) Suicidal cases;
 - (iv) Sexual violence cases;
 - (v) Elder abuse cases;
 - (vi) Situations calling for specific statutory procedures to be handled only by a public officer, for example, a child requiring care or protection owing to the absence of parents or guardians; and
- (2) To make referrals to other service units if follow up is still required after the outreaching conducted by the HOST.

Operating Hours

4. The Service Operator has to operate the HOST at the time period specified below -

Monday to Friday: From 5:00 pm to 9:00 am of the following working day. The working day means a day from Monday to Saturday, excluding public holiday. (i.e., the HOST has to provide full day service during all public holidays)

Saturday to Sunday: From 12:00 noon of Saturday to 9:00 am of the following Monday or working day, whichever is the later, if Monday is a public holiday.

II Performance Standards

5. The Service Operator is required to achieve the following minimum levels of output and outcome standards -

Output Standards

(a) Hotline Service

<u>Output Standard</u>	<u>Output Indicator</u>	<u>Agreed Level</u>
1	The waiting time for service users to get their calls answered by registered social workers should not exceed 30 seconds in a year ending 31 March.	80% of incoming calls
2	The return time for calls leaving voice mail should not exceed 15 minutes in a year ending 31 March.	80% of calls leaving voice mail
3	Out of the total number of calls in need of referral for follow-up services, the percentage of these calls being referred to appropriate service unit within the next working day of calls handled in a year ending 31 March.	90% of calls requiring referral services

(b) **Outreaching Service**

<u>Output Standard</u>	<u>Output Indicator</u>	<u>Agreed Level</u>
4	The time required for the registered social worker to arrive at the scene for those cases requiring immediate outreaching should not exceed 60 minutes in a year ending 31 March.	80% of the cases
5	Out of the total number of outreaching cases in need of follow-up services, the percentage of these cases being referred to appropriate service unit within the next working day of outreaching in a year ending 31 March.	90% of the cases

Outcome Standards

(a) **Hotline Service**

<u>Outcome Standard</u>	<u>Outcome Indicator</u>	<u>Agreed Level</u>
1	Out of the total number of calls requiring counselling, the percentage of these calls with the service users having perceived improvement in the problem(s) in a year ending 31 March.	80%
2	Out of the total number of calls requiring counselling, the percentage of these calls with the service users indicating satisfaction upon receiving the hotline service in a year ending 31 March.	80%

(b) Outreaching Service

<u>Outcome Standard</u>	<u>Outcome Indicator</u>	<u>Agreed Level</u>
3	Out of the total number of cases with outreaching provided, the percentage of these cases with the service users having perceived improvement in the problem(s) in a year ending 31 March.	70%
4	Out of the total number of cases with outreaching provided, the percentage of these cases with the service users indicating satisfaction upon receiving the outreaching service in a year ending 31 March.	80%

Essential Service Requirements

6. Essential service requirements include the followings -

- (a) The Service Operator should provide an effective and reliable hotline system with the capacity of at least 10 physical lines for in-coming calls, at least two separate physical lines designated for calls forwarded by 1823 Call Centre and at least one separate physical line for police referral line;
- (b) The Service Operator should have an effective disaster recovery plan to recover the hotline system within 12 hours and a contingency plan to maintain the hotline service in case of the shut-down of the hotline system;
- (c) The Service Operator should provide an effective and feasible staff deployment mechanism so as to ensure sufficient staffing to meet fluctuating number of incoming calls as well as outreaching requirements at any point of time;
- (d) Calls requiring counselling service should be handled by registered social workers with a recognised degree or diploma in social work;
- (e) The management of the HOST should be under the supervision and guidance of a registered social worker with a recognised degree in

social work and not less than five years of experience in social work practice;

- (f) All incoming calls should first be picked up by registered social workers with a recognised degree or diploma in social work for effective screening; and
- (g) Outreaching service should be performed by registered social workers with a recognised degree or diploma in social work at any point of time for professional assessment and intervention.

Quality

7. The Service Operator shall meet the requirements of the 16 Service Quality Standards (SQSs).

III. Obligation of SWD to Service Operator

8. SWD will undertake the duties set out in the General Obligation of SWD to the Service Operator as specified in the FSA Generic Section.

IV. Basis of Subvention

9. The basis of subvention is set out in the offer and notification letter issued by SWD to the service operator.

Funding

10. An annual subvention will be allocated on a Lump Sum Grant (LSG) mode for a time-defined period to deliver the service. This lump sum has taken into account Personal Emoluments, including provident fund for employing registered social workers and supporting staff, and other charges (covering all other relevant operating expenses including but not limited to employees' compensation insurance, public liability insurance, enhancement and maintenance of the hotline system) applicable to the operation of the project. Rent and rates in respect of premises recognised by SWD for delivery of the subvented activities will be reimbursed separately on an actual cost basis.

11. In receiving the LSG, the Service Operator is accorded flexibility in the use of the grant but required to observe the guidelines set out in the latest LSG Manual and the LSG Circulars in force on the use of subventions. The LSG will be subject to

adjustments including salary adjustment in line with civil service pay adjustments and other charges in line with government-wide price adjustment factor. The actual subventions allocation will also be adjusted in accordance with the date of commencement of service. The Government will not accept any liabilities or financial implication arising from the project beyond the approved funding.

Payment Arrangement, Internal Control and Financial Report Requirements

12. Upon your acceptance of this Funding and Service Agreement (FSA) and confirmation of commencement of service, payment of the LSG subventions will be made on monthly basis.

13. The Service Operator is responsible for maintaining an effective and sound financial management system, including budget planning, projection, accounting, internal control system and auditing. It should maintain proper books and records and supporting documents on income and expenditure relating to the project and make them available for inspection by the Government representative.

14. The Service Operator is required to submit annual financial report (AFR) and statements reviewed by a certified public accountant registered under the Professional Accountants Ordinance (Cap 50) in accordance with the requirements as stipulated in the latest LSG Manual and LSG Circulars in force. The AFR should be prepared on cash basis and non-cash items like depreciation, staff leave accrual etc. should not be included in the AFR.

Validity Period

15. This FSA is valid for a time-defined period. Should the Service Operator be in breach of any terms of condition of the FSA and fail to remedy the same in such manner and within such time as shall be specified in a written notice from SWD that the same be remedied, SWD may, after expiry of such notice, terminate this FSA by giving 30 days' notice in writing to the Service Operator.

16. Where there is any change to the performance standards within the agreement period, SWD will seek mutual agreement with the Service Operator and the Service Operator will be required to achieve new requirements in accordance with the specified implementation schedule.

17. Continuation of service for the next term will be subject to the relevant

considerations such as the prevailing policy directive, service needs and performance of the Service Operator. SWD reserves the right to reallocate the project.

Other References

18. Apart from this FSA, the Service Operator should also comply with the requirements/commitments set out in the service specification, and the Service Operator's proposal and supplementary information, if any. Where these documents are in conflict, this FSA shall prevail. The Service Operator's compliance to all these documents will be closely monitored by SWD.