

For discussion on

**Subcommittee to Study Issues Relating to the Provision of
boarding Places, Senior Secondary Education and
Employment Opportunities for Children with Special
Educational Needs**

**Provision of post-school rehabilitation services for students
with special educational needs**

BACKGROUND

The objective of our rehabilitation policy is to facilitate people with disabilities to fully develop their potentials and to maximize their abilities to enjoy their lives and being valuable members of society. In line with this objective, we aim to cater to various needs of people with or without disabilities through mainstream services as far as possible. For some people with disabilities who are not able to benefit from mainstream services, and require specialized support, we provide a wide range of programmes to enable them to become more independent and to integrate into the community.

2. For students with special educational needs (SEN), suitable support and accommodation are provided in admission and teaching/learning and examinations to meet their needs. We seek to ensure that they have equal opportunities to obtain gainful and productive employment in the open market like their able-bodied counterparts.

3. Nevertheless, for some students who have disabilities to the extent that they cannot possibly follow the mainstream path, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and the Skills Centres of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) provide them with a comprehensive range of support upon their graduation from secondary schools. These services include vocational assessment, vocational training and rehabilitation, as well as day training services, with the ultimate aim to help qualified users to secure a job in the open market and to become self-reliant. A brief account of these services is set out below.

VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT SERVICE (VAS)

4. The objectives of VAS provided by VTC are to test and assess the physical, psychological and vocational capabilities, potential, interests and limitations of people with disabilities, with a view to helping them formulate individual

career goals, and to arrange for them suitable vocational training and rehabilitation services to enable them to achieve their goals.

5. VAS follows established international vocational assessment procedures in which a multi-disciplinary approach is used involving various rehabilitation professionals. People with disabilities are assessed on internationally recognized test batteries and work samples adapted to meet local requirements by a multi-disciplinary assessment team including a senior medical officer from Hospital Authority, a placement officer from Labour Department, as well as a specialist in education services, an assistant social work officer, an occupational therapist, a registered nurse and work evaluators of VTC.

6. Based on the assessment results, as well as the preferences and interests of the people with disabilities concerned, the latter will be advised on what vocational training and rehabilitation services are suitable for them.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING SERVICE

7. For people with disabilities who are assessed to be suitable for open employment, the three Skills Centres of VTC provide them with a series of vocational training programmes

tailored to changing needs of employment markets. Upon completion of training, vocational counseling and job placement services are also provided to graduates to assist them in job placement. Currently, VTC provides 630 full-time training places in the three Skills Centres for people with disabilities.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND DAY TRAINING SERVICES

8. For people with disabilities who are unable to participate in open employment or vocational training due to health reasons or other limitations upon completion of education, SWD provides them with a series of vocational rehabilitation and day training services. These services aim at improving their work abilities and enhancing their independent living skills.

Sheltered Workshop (SW)

9. SW provides people with disabilities a training environment specially designed to accommodate the limitations arising from their disabilities. The trainees of SW are trained to engage in income-generating work process. They also learn to adjust to normal work requirements, to develop social skills

and relationships and to prepare for potential advancement to supported/open employment where possible.

Supported Employment (SE)

10. SE provides support to people with disabilities in employment. Its services encompass job finding and matching, job coaching, follow-through support and employment-related skills training. The objective of the service is to serve as an avenue for upward mobility of people with disabilities in SWs and a necessary step towards open employment.

Integrated Vocational Rehabilitation Services Centre (IVRSC)

11. SWD has started to implement the new service delivery model of IVRSC since April 2004 through re-engineering SW and SE services. IVRSC provides people with disabilities a series of integrated and seamless vocational rehabilitation services in a training environment specially designed to accommodate the limitations arising from disabilities. The services provided by IVRSC include centre-based training, non-centre-based training, employment-related training, retraining and other support services.

Integrated Vocational Training Centre (IVTC)

12. IVTC provides people with disabilities with comprehensive vocational training and rehabilitation services to equip them for their advancement to open employment, for developing their social and economic potentials and for enabling them to integrate into the community. IVTC provides a series of tailor-made and time-limited training programmes including vocational training, sheltered work, supported employment and retraining, etc. to prepare trainees for open employment after a fixed period of training.

On the Job Training Programme for People with Disabilities (OJT)

13. OJT aims to enhance the employment of people with disabilities through proactive training, market-driven and placement-tied approach, and to encourage employers to offer job opportunities for people with disabilities. OJT includes individual counseling and training, job matching, job attachment, job trial and no-less-than-6-month's post-placement service for no less than six months. During the job attachment period, an allowance of \$1,250 per month for a maximum of 3 months will be paid to the trainees who have achieved no less than 80%

attendance per month, and monthly allowance will be paid to the employers providing job trials at a rate of half of the salary given to the workers or \$3,000, whichever is the lower, for a maximum of three months. OJT started as a 3-year pilot project in 2001 and has been turned into a regular service since October 2004.

Sunnyway – On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities (Sunnyway)

14. Taking account of the huge demand for intensive vocational and employment services of young people with disabilities and the successful experience of OJT, the Sunnyway was piloted with effect from October 2005 on a 3-year basis, benefiting young people aged between 15 and 24 with disabilities or early signs of mental illness. Similar to the service components of OJT as described above, each participant will receive individual counseling, job matching, job attachment, job trial, and post-placement service. In addition, 180 hours of employment training will be provided to each participant.

Day Activity Centre (DAC)

15. DAC provides day care and training to severely mentally handicapped persons aged 15 or above who are unable to benefit from vocational training or SW. The trainees are trained to become more independent in their daily lives and to prepare them for better integration into the community or for transition to other forms of service or care where appropriate. Training programmes provided by a DAC include self-help, motor function, social and interpersonal skills, simple work and so on.

16. A table summarising target participants and current provision of places for the above vocational rehabilitation and day training services provided by SWD as in March 2006 is at *Appendix 1*.

COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

17. Community-based programmes are also available by SWD to those who do not take up day training programmes or

those who would like to enhance their social life and develop their potentials apart from work skills. These services include Home-based Training and Support Service, Specialized Home-based Training and Support Service, Personal Development Programme, Gateway Club and Social and Recreational Centre. Brief description and their target participants and provisions are at *Appendix 2*.

FUTURE SERVICE DIRECTION

Promoting Greater Varieties of Training Activities in SW/IVRSCs

18. In the SWs and IVRSCs, work skills training is no longer confined to low-skilled jobs such as simple packaging, letter-shopping jobs, etc. Service operators are actively expanding the scope and diversifying the varieties of their programmes to include some higher skilled market-driven training such as facial and make-up, retailing, art work, laundry, bakery, etc. Service operators will continuously be encouraged to develop some other new training opportunities for the trainees

with reference to market demands. In addition, with the introduction of the Common Assessment Tool on Work Ability of IVRSC Trainees in January 2006, service operators could monitor the progress of their trainees in a more systematic manner.

Promoting Greater Varieties of Social, Developmental and Recreational Activities in SW/IVRSCs

19. With a view to further developing the social skills, interests and talents of the trainees, enriching their social life and promoting family participation and social inclusion, the SW/IVRSCs will continue to organise a great variety of social and recreational, volunteer, family life and parent education, community and religious activities for their trainees and families. On average, about 14 activities were organized by each service unit per month.

Promoting Social Enterprises

20. Social enterprises are businesses with primarily social objectives to create direct training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The surplus

generated by these enterprises will be reinvested for the furtherance of the employment and training of the people with disabilities. In view of the social enterprises being capable of assisting the people with disabilities to achieve self-reliance, SWD will continue to encourage the setting up of social firms by NGOs through financial support from “Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise” Project and to negotiate with various government departments for business venues and job orders. The Commission of Poverty is also consider how best to support the development of social enterprise.

Promoting Job Attachment in Government Departments

21. A pilot job attachment programme for the trainees of the Sunnyway – On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities at three government departments has been launched by SWD jointly with the Civil Service Bureau since February 2006 so as to enhance the employment and training opportunities for young people with disabilities. As a start, nine trainees have participated in this pilot scheme. Subject to the outcome of the final evaluation, the job attachment scheme may be further extended to other government departments.

Promoting Service Integration

22. SWD will continue to implement service integration in vocational rehabilitation services for achieving higher cost-effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery. It is envisaged that integration of vocational rehabilitation services can address the vocational needs of people with disabilities in a more holistic manner and facilitate more flexible deployment of resources and manpower according to the needs of trainees and economic condition of the territory. All new SW projects will be planned and operated in the mode of IVRSC.

Promoting Community Support

23. In order to provide people with disabilities and their families with more choices of services and to better support people with disabilities living in the community, SWD has since 2001 been strengthening the existing community-based support services and introduced more initiatives to fill service gaps. These services help to better meet ad hoc and immediate needs of people with disabilities and their families. We will continue to strengthen the community support services with particular

emphasis on providing people with disabilities with a better quality of life as well as relieving the pressure of their parents/carers.

CONCLUSION

24. While we already have a comprehensive set of rehabilitation services for people with disabilities after they leave schools, we are not complacent and are constantly seeking to adjust our measures to meet the changing needs of people with disabilities as well as the evolving economic and social environment.

Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

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Appendix 1

Day Training and Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Type of Service	Target Participants	Provision as at March 2006
Day Activity Centres (DAC)	Mentally handicapped persons aged 15 and above who are unable to benefit from vocational training or sheltered employment	72 DACs providing 4,189 places
Sheltered Workshop (SW)	People with disabilities aged 15 and above who possess basic self-care and work ability	36 SWs providing 5,243 places
Supported Employment (SE)	People with disabilities aged 15 and above with moderate disablement with working abilities between SW and open employment levels and are unable to adjust to the competitive labour market in the absence of support	29 NGOs providing 1,655 places
Integrated Vocational Rehabilitation Services Centre (IVRSC)	People with disabilities aged 15 and above with a need for vocational training or in need of support to take up open employment	19 IVRSCs providing 3,146 places
Integrated Vocational Training Centre (IVTC)	People with disabilities aged 15 and above with a need for vocational training and sheltered employment services	2 IVTCs providing 453 places
On the Job Training Programme for	People with disabilities aged 15 and above in need of support and assistance in securing open	14 NGOs providing 432 places

People with Disabilities (OJT)	employment	
Sunnyway – On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities (Sunnyway)	People aged between 15 and 24 with disabilities or early signs of mental illness	16 NGOs providing 311 places
“Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise” Project (3E’s Project)	To finance NGOs to set up small social enterprises for the purpose of creating direct employment opportunities for people with disabilities	A sum of \$19 million was granted to support 20 NGOs to set up 36 businesses which created 489 employment opportunities in which 350 were tailor-made for people with disabilities
Day Care Services for the Severely Disabled	People with severely mentally or physically handicapped persons aged between 15 and 59	6 NGOs providing 35 places

Community-based Social and Developmental Services

Home-based Training and Support Service (HBTS) and Specialized Home-based Training and Support Service (SHBTS)

HBTS and SHBTS teams provide home-based training and established support network for people with disabilities and their families through utilizing and integrating of rehabilitation services and community resources. The objective is to enable people with disabilities to become more independent in their daily living and social functioning through the provision of home-based, centre-based or community-based training and activities. Besides, they also provide occupational therapy service as well as professional advice and assistance for people with disabilities in acquiring rehabilitative equipment, adaptive aids/devices, home modifications and network support service to cater to the various needs of people with disabilities and their families.

Personal Development Programme (PDP)

PDP is a 3-year time-limited project launched in October 2005. The programme aims at providing opportunities for people with disabilities to develop their potential and abilities as well as improving their quality of living through organizing a series of systematic and structured arts and skills training courses for people with disabilities of different disability levels. It also assists to build up their self-confidence and esteem through the process of acquiring specific knowledge and skills. As in March 2006, three NGO operators were funded to provide such territory-wide personal development programmes.

Gateway Club

The Gateway Clubs aim to enhance the social skills and independence ability of the mentally handicapped persons to facilitate their integration into the community by organising a number of cultural and recreational activities for the joint planning and participation of volunteers, parents and mentally handicapped persons. All Gateway Clubs are attached to existing rehabilitation service units.

Social and Recreational Centre (S&RC)

S&RCs are to provide social and recreational facilities conducive

to meeting the goals of full development and participation of people with disabilities in social life, and facilitating their integration into the community. To achieve the objectives, S&RCs, which operate on a territory-wide basis, provide PWDs with opportunities to participate in and to organize a variety of activities. The focus of service provision may vary from centre to centre in order to meet the special needs of different target groups. The services include organised social, recreational and sporting activities provided either within the centre or in the community, such as interest groups, social service groups, committee training and mass/special activities that facilitate integration of PWDs into the community.

Type of Service	Target Participants	Provision as at March 2006
Home-based Training and Support Service (HBTS)	People with disabilities aged 15 and above living in the community	19 HBTS teams and 1 SHBTS team providing a total of 1,502 training places
Specialized Home-based Training and Support Service (SHBTS)	Severely disabled persons aged 15 and above living in the community	
Personal Development Programme (PDP)	People with disabilities aged 6 and above	3 NGO operators
Gateway Club	Mentally handicapped persons aged 15 and above	7 NGOs operating 23 gateway clubs
Social and Recreational Centre (S&RC)	People with disabilities aged 15 and above	17 centres