

Submission on "**Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS**" for meeting of the Panel on Health Services of the Legislative Council by the Community Health Organisation for Intervention, Care and Empowerment Limited

The Community Health Organisation for Intervention, Care and Empowerment (CHOICE) was formally established in 2002 as a charitable non-governmental, volunteer based organisation.

Our mission is to control the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection by improving disease prevention knowledge and empowerment. We are dedicated to build networks among different vulnerable communities and to implement interventions to reduce at-risk behaviors or its harm on individuals.

These issues are of our highly concern.

1. A total of 373 new infections were found in 2006 (19% increase when comparing in the preceding year). It is necessary to expand resources to different NGOs to ensure access to prevention and care among different vulnerable communities.
2. The AIDS Trust Fund hamper the development of effective HIV prevention program. The principles for approving the applications and guidelines for approving the resources have not been define and presented clearly.
3. The capacity of most staff of the NGOs are rather limited. Some of them are new graduates who lack experience or knowledge. And also with the changing situation, we should improve the work and the sustainability of NGOs, training and capacity building are needed for our workers.
4. It is clear that some Sexually Transmitted Infections increase risks for HIV transmission. The charges by both the Social Hygiene Clinics (HK\$ 700 per visit) and private medical sectors for STI treatments or examinations would be unaffordable to non-Hong Kong residents.
5. Some studies have shown that increasing cross-border risk is seen across most at risk populations. The HIV prevention activities is considered inadequate in those districts in China frequented Hong Kong residents. Collaboration with mainland organizations is inadequate and there has been minimal resource support from local source on HIV prevention projects in China.