Practitioners Affairs

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29 December 2004

Miss Mary So
Clerk to Subcommittee
Legislative Council Building
8 Jackson Road, Central, Hong Kong

Dear Miss So,

Re: Panel on Welfare Services
Subcommittee on strategy and measures to tackle family violence
Meeting on 18 January 2005

Thank you for inviting the Law Society to attend the Subcommittee meeting on 18 January 2005.

The Law Society will be sending as its representative Mr. Dennis Ho, the Chairman of the Family Law Sub committee on Domestic Violence. The Law Society will provide brief comments on the following issues which it considers will assist with the current strategic review to tackle family violence:

1.   **Domestic Violence Ordinance ("DVO")**
        The Law Society's Family Law Committee is conducting a thorough review of the DVO and supports major changes to the legislation in order to improve the protection which can be provided to the victims of domestic violence, e.g extend the validity of injunctions orders, and the scope of the power of arrest order.

2.   **Education Programmes**
        The relevant Bureaux must implement public education programmes in the high risk areas such as Tin Shui Wai in order to educate the victims of their legal rights to apply for injunctive relief and protection from violent spouses.
        There should also be rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence in order to break the cycle of violence.

3.	**Legal assistance**
	Draw up a list of lawyers who are willing to provide legal assistance to victims of domestic violence. This list should be sent to all police stations, police report units and hospitals to help the victims contact lawyers who are willing to provide urgent assistance and legal advice.

The Law Society's Family Law Committee is currently preparing its Report on Domestic Violence and anticipates it will be published shortly.

Yours sincerely,

Joyce Wong
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