

For Discussion
on 14 November 2005

LEGCO PANEL ON WELFARE SERVICES

Services and Support to Victims of Sexual Violence

INTRODUCTION

This paper outlines the services and support currently provided by the Social Welfare Department (SWD) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to victims of sexual violence.

DETAILS

Services and support provided to victims of sexual violence

2. At present, the Family and Child Protective Services Units of SWD, the Integrated Family Service Centres operated by SWD and NGOs, as well as the social workers of the Medical Social Service Units (MSSU), provide a wide range of treatment and counselling services to victims of sexual violence. These services include crisis intervention, counselling and support, and if necessary, arranging victims to receive other services according to their needs such as medical treatment (including post-coital contraceptive service, screening of sexually-transmitted diseases, medical examination, in-patient medical services, forensic examination for collection of evidence), clinical psychological service, financial assistance, arrangement of accommodation and legal service. SWD and NGOs also provide counselling services to adults who had been victims of sexual violence during their childhood.

3. To reduce the victim's stress and the trauma of repeating unhappy experience throughout the process of revealing the incidence,

the case manager approach is adopted to co-ordinate services provided by different professionals. Under most circumstances, a social worker would take up the role of a case manager. The victims may directly approach SWD or NGOs for assistance or be referred by other professionals, such as police officers and medical practitioners, etc. To enhance multi-disciplinary collaboration in handling sexual violence cases, SWD has also developed in conjunction with the related parties the “Procedural Guidelines for Handling Sexual Violence Cases” (Guidelines). The Guidelines have been adopted by different disciplines since 2002.

Other measures

4. Multi-disciplinary co-ordination and collaboration in providing support services to victims of sexual violence is promoted through the Working Group on Combating Violence, or WGCV, under the chairmanship of the Director of Social Welfare. The main tasks of the working group include, among others, to examine the problem of sexual violence in Hong Kong, to review relevant procedures and guidelines, as well as to make recommendations on improvement measures.

5. SWD has since June 2003 developed a website and a booklet to promote the services available for the victims of spouse battering, child abuse and sexual violence, and to facilitate the access and sharing of information among the related professionals especially frontline workers handling sexual violence cases. SWD has also strengthened publicity and community education to encourage victims of sexual violence to seek help and to offer advice on ways to seek referral and assistance. An Information System on Sexual Violence Cases has also been established since January 2003 to keep track of information and trend of sexual violence cases in a more systematic manner.

The Sexual Violence Crisis Centre (Rainlily)

6. Apart from the mainstream casework units, with funding support from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust (HKJCCT), a Sexual

Violence Crisis Centre (Rainlily) was set up by the Association Concerning Sexual Violence Against Women (the Association) in 2000 to provide one-stop service for female victims of sexual violence. Located in Kwong Wah Hospital, Rainlily provides services to female victims of sexual violence including hotline, 24-hour crisis intervention, arrangement of police interview and forensic examination, medical service support, in-depth/long term counselling, escort, survivors' support group, volunteer training and publicity. In January 2004, additional funding was granted by HKJCCT to Rainlily to continue their service for another two years until the end of 2005 and we understand that the Association is applying for funding to continue its service.

Health, Welfare and Food Bureau and
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