

The Hon. Dr. Fernando Cheung
Chairman
Panel on Welfare Services
Legislative Council
Hong Kong SAR
People's Republic of China

10 November 2005

Dear Dr Cheung,

SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

I am Moyreen Tilbrook and, as a Past President of the Hong Kong Association of Business and Professional Women, I wish to present the views of our Association to the Panel on Welfare Services which meets on 14 November 2005.

HKABPW has learnt with dismay that Rainlily, Hong Kong's only rape crisis centre, may close at the end of 2005 when the Jockey Club's funding comes to an end. We understand that the government is reluctant to fund the Centre and prefers that rape victims should consult the Integrated Family Service Centres.

HKABPW has been closely involved with efforts to improve the treatment of rape victims since its inauguration in 1979 and has helped finance the rape hotline telephone service. We were delighted when Rainlily opened in 2001 and provided a one-stop service to women who were severely traumatised and in crisis.

We understand that a Chinese University study of Rainlily's services between 2001 and 2003 found that the Centre greatly helped women to cope better, that clients were very satisfied with Rainlily's service and that other professionals working in the field rated Rainlily's services very favourably. The study showed that rape victims suffer from severe psychological distress and feelings of guilt and that many victims thought of and even attempted suicide and self mutilation.

Currently Hospital A&E departments, the Police and the Social Service Agencies can refer women to one Centre for immediate crisis intervention, emotional support, forensic examination, and medical follow-up. The victim benefits greatly by receiving help from a one-stop service instead of being passed from agency to agency, having to re-tell her story many times and feeling that she is re-living her ordeal again and again.

HKABPW strongly urges the government to ensure that this Centre is enabled to continue its vitally important work.

Yours sincerely,

MOYREEN TILBROOK
Past President
Hong Kong Association of Business and
Professional Women