

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

Ref : CB4/HS/1/16

LC Paper No. CB(4)853/16-17  
(These minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

**Subcommittee on Children's Rights**

**Minutes of the second meeting  
on Thursday, 22 December 2016, at 10:45 am  
in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

- Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)  
Hon SHIU Ka-chun (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan  
Hon Andrew WAN Siu-kin  
Hon CHU Hoi-dick  
Dr Hon CHENG Chung-tai  
Hon Nathan LAW Kwun-chung  
Dr Hon LAU Siu-lai
- Members absent** : Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon KWOK Wai-keung  
Hon IP Kin-yuen  
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP  
Hon Alvin YEUNG  
Hon HUI Chi-fung
- Public Officers attending** : Item I  
  
Mr Stephen SUI, JP  
Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare  
  
Mr Kenneth CHENG  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare  
(Welfare) 1  
Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr Jack CHAN  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Security (Narcotics) 2  
(Acting)  
Security Bureau

Mr FUNG Man-chung  
Assistant Director (Family & Child Welfare)  
Social Welfare Department

Miss Elvie WONG  
Senior Social Work Officer (Youth)2  
Social Welfare Department

Dr Karen TSO  
Senior Medical Health Officer (Family Health Service)  
Department of Health

Mr Fred CHAN  
Senior Manager (Patient Safety & Risk Management)  
Hospital Authority

Ms Kitty HO  
Principal Inspector (Guidance & Discipline)  
Education Bureau

**Attendance by  
invitation**

: Item I

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Ms LAW Lam  
Officer (Family & Community Service)

Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and  
Progress of Hong Kong

Miss CHEUNG Sze-wing  
Deputy Spokesperson on Policy

The Civic Party

Mr Sumly CHAN Yuen-sum  
Representative

Hong Kong Society For the Protection of Children

Mr MAK Kang-ying  
Service Director

Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights

Mrs Priscilla LUI  
Chairperson

Against Child Abuse

Miss LEE Yu-po  
Service Manager

PathFinders

Ms Jessica CHOW Chui-shan  
Senior Case Manager

The Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers

---

Mr LEE King-fai  
Superintendent of Methadone Treatment  
Counselling Programme

Miss YAU Chui-wah

Speaker A

Speaker B

Ms Billy WONG

Mr Azan MARWAH

Hong Kong Christian Service - PS33 Counselling  
Service for Psychotropic Substance Abusers

---

Ms HON Siu-wan  
Chief Supervisor

Community Drug Advisory Council

Mr MOK Wai-ho  
Registered Social Worker

Dr Patricia IP Lai-sheung

Rainbow Lutheran Centre

Ms WAN Kit-ying  
Office in charge

Ms TAM Kam-ye

Family and Community Core Business,  
Hong Kong Christian Service

Ms Ida YIP Wing-sze  
Chief Supervisor, Small Group Home Service

Ms CHEUNG Lai-yin

**Clerk in  
attendance** : Ms Angel WONG  
Chief Council Secretary (4)4

**Staff in  
attendance** : Mr KWONG Kam-fai  
Senior Council Secretary (4)4

Miss Mandy NG  
Council Secretary (4)4

Ms Sandy HAU  
Legislative Assistant (4)4

---

Action

**I. Support measures for children from drug abusing families**

Paper provided by the Administration

(LC Paper No. CB(4)344/16-17(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration)

Other paper

Written submission from deputations/individuals not attending the meeting

(LC Paper No. CB(4)344/16-17(08) -- Submission from Mother's Choice (*English version only*) (*Restricted to members only*))

Meeting with deputations/individuals and the Administration

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

2. A total of 20 deputations/individuals gave views at the meeting. The Subcommittee also received one written submission from an organization which had not attended the meeting. The major views and concerns expressed by deputations/individuals were summarized as below:

*Children's rights*

- (a) an independent commission on children responsible for policies and initiatives relating to children's rights should be established expeditiously;

*Information system*

- (b) the Central Registry of Drug Abuse ("CRDA") should be made a mandatory reporting system to capture the actual number of the pregnant drug abusers for early identification and intervention;
- (c) CRDA should collect more comprehensive data, such as the number of children of drug abusers, for better understanding of

Action

the situation of parents with drug problems and formulating suitable policies and measures;

*Support for drug abusing families*

- (d) as the subject of supporting children from drug abusing families straddled various policy areas, there should be cross Bureaux/Departments coordination to steer the overall development and implementation of support measures for these children;
- (e) cross-sector collaboration among different departments, professionals and non-governmental organizations ("NGOs") should be enhanced to provide appropriate support to children from drug abusing families;
- (f) the Comprehensive Child Development Service ("CCDS") should extend to cover children aged over five and their families to enhance the support for needy children and their families;
- (g) in view that some parents with drug problems were eager to take up the responsibilities of parenthood, the Administration should develop sets of assessment framework on parenting capacity to assess the child care capacity of parents with drug problems on an objective basis;
- (h) home care services should be provided to drug abusing families by forming community multi-disciplinary outreach teams and providing systematic training to ex-drug abusers as peer counselors;
- (i) the Beat Drugs Fund, currently funded NGOs to help pregnant drug abusers and their families by project basis, should provide recurrent funding to NGOs for long-term development of support measures for these families;
- (j) resources should be deployed to assist imprisoned and rehabilitated parents with drug problems and their families;

*Residential child care services*

- (k) in view of the serious shortage in residential child care services ("RCCS"), particularly emergency placements for children

Action

aged under four, the Administration should make greater efforts to increase the provision of RCCS and to shorten the waiting time for placements;

- (l) insufficient RCCS had resulted in unnecessary hospitalization of children in need of RCCS, and some of them had been physically restrained due to manpower shortage in hospitals. The Administration should look into the matter seriously;
- (m) for emergency residential care, the Administration should increase provision of foster care services by recruiting more foster parents. Foster care allowances should also be reviewed to attract and retain foster parents;
- (n) it was not desirable for caseworkers to approach the service providers of emergency residential care direct for enquiries and referrals. The mechanism of central waiting list should apply to emergency residential care services for better coordination and efficient allocation of placement;
- (o) given the occupancy rate of RCCS and emergency placements had reached 86% and 92% respectively and the increasing number of children with special needs receiving RCCS, the Administration should increase the manpower and resources of RCCS to improve service quality. A comprehensive review on RCCS should be conducted in the long run;

*Handling of suspected child abuse cases from drug abusing families*

- (p) the Administration should expedite the review of the Procedural Guide for Handling Child Abuse Cases ("the Procedural Guide"), which was commenced in May 2016, and put in place monitoring mechanism of the implementation progress of welfare plans formulated by the Multi-disciplinary Case Conference ("MDCC"). Case review meetings should be convened on a regular basis to adjust the children's welfare plans, with a view to facilitating reunion of the children with their families;

*Drug treatment and rehabilitation services*

- (q) the Administration should consider providing family rooms for parents with drug problems and their children in residential drug treatment and rehabilitation centres ("RDTRC");

Action

- (r) additional resources should be allocated to enhance the capacity and support services of the 11 Counselling Centres for Psychotropic Substance Abusers;

*Training for frontline personnel*

- (s) training for frontline staff should be enhanced to strengthen their sensitivity and skills in identifying and handling parents with drug problems and their children, and competency in conducting accurate assessment on the ability of parents with drug problems in taking care of the child; and

*Public education*

- (t) the Administration should allocate more resources to enhance the community awareness to enable people to detect signs of drug abuse for early intervention; to raise the awareness of pregnant drug abusers on the availability of support services and the importance of seeking help early; and to educate the public not to discriminate drug abusers and their families.

3. Members shared the concerns raised by the deputations attending the meeting, particularly over the absence of information on the numbers of pregnant drug abusers and children from drug abusing families, insufficient supply of RCCS, and the unnecessary hospitalization of children. They also called on the Administration to take concrete measures to address the problems.

4. On the views and concerns raised by members and deputations at the meeting, the Administration made the following responses :

*Information system*

- (a) CRDA was a voluntary reporting system recording information on drug abusers who had come into contact with and had been reported by reporting agencies. It reflected the trends of drug abuse, but by its nature could not measure the exact size of the drug abusing population and could not be used for referrals of welfare services. If CRDA was made a mandatory reporting system, drug abusers might possibly be reluctant to disclose details of their drug abusing situation, and this might lower their motivation to seek help. The mandatory requirement might also increase the workload of reporting agencies;



Action

- (b) the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") had reviewed the Child Protection Registry with a view to enhancing its data collection process on child abuse cases. Subject to funding approval, the relevant enhancement measures would be in place in 2018 to collect and compile more statistical information about child abuse cases;

*Support for drug abusing families*

- (c) under CCDS, the Maternal and Child Health Centres ("MCHC") of the Department of Health ("DH") would notify the Hospital Authority ("HA") once at-risk pregnant women were identified. MCHC would closely monitor the progress of children from drug abusing families throughout the child health and vaccination visits and, if necessary, increase the frequency of their follow-up consultations. In case the children had defaulted the scheduled visit, the families would be traced. MCHC would seek assistance from social workers or other working partners in case there was difficulty in contacting the parents;
- (d) DH offered parenting programmes, in collaboration with relevant social service providers, to parents from high-risk families to equip them with necessary skills and knowledge in caring for children. DH would also provide more training on parenting for its staff to enhance their capabilities in this aspect;

*RCCS*

- (e) the Administration shared the views of members and deputations that RCCS should be enhanced. Since 2012-2013, the Administration had provided 130 additional places in phases, in which 91 places were made available through in-situ expansion. Resources for 30 additional places were provided in 2015-2016. Currently, there were 3 427 places of RCCS (including both institutional and non-institutional care services) and 249 places of emergency RCCS. Starting from 2017-2018, 153 additional RCCS places and five additional emergency RCCS places would be available. Besides, the Administration had increased its recurrent subvention since 2013-2014 to strengthen professional staff support for residential child care service units. The Administration had been closely monitoring the changing demands of RCCS and would continue its efforts

Action

to bid for more resources to enhance RCCS. Relevant initiatives would be announced after the 2017 Policy Address;

- (f) the Administration considered it necessary to conduct a review on foster care services, including the foster care allowances, with a view to increasing the provision of non-institutional care services;
- (g) the current mechanism for caseworkers to approach the service providers of emergency residential care direct for enquiries and referrals were agreed by stakeholders in the past. SWD took note of deputations/members' concerns for consideration;

*Handling of suspected child abuse cases from drug abusing families*

- (h) although it would take three years to complete the review on the Procedural Guide, enhancement measures would be implemented anytime as deemed necessary instead of waiting for the completion of the review;
- (i) according to the existing mechanism, the casework unit responsible for social investigation would convene MDCC to formulate a welfare plan for the child suspected to have been abused. For children receiving RCCS, the Assistant District Social Welfare Officer of SWD would review the welfare case around every three to six months and the welfare plan would be formulated and adjusted as needed in the children's best interests. The revised Procedural Guide had stipulated that the need for review conference and report on implementation of welfare plan should be included in the agenda of MDCC. SWD would provide more training for its frontline professionals to strengthen their capabilities in implementing welfare plans;

*Drug treatment and rehabilitation services*

- (j) the collective and disciplined living mode in RDTRC might not be suitable for parenting children, as the welfare and developmental needs of children should also be attended to while living in RDTRC;

Action

*Situation of unnecessary hospitalization of children*

- (k) as at late June 2016, around 60 children medically fit for discharge overstayed in hospitals due to various reasons. Not all of the 60 children were from drug abusing families. The average length of overstay for the 60 children was 42 days and the longest was over 100 days. Children from drug abusing families had overstayed in hospitals for seven to nine days on average;
- (l) if health conditions permitted, children who were six years old or above in hospitals could attend Hong Kong Red Cross Hospital Schools; and
- (m) HA had issued a central guideline governing the use of restraints in hospitals. If possible, children staying in hospitals could be accompanied by their parents, relatives, or guardians.

Follow-up actions by the Administration

5. Regarding the situation of unnecessary hospitalization of some 60 children, the Administration was requested to provide:

- (a) the profile of these children, such as age, family background, cause and length of overstay in hospital;
- (b) the schooling arrangement of these children provided by Hong Kong Red Cross Hospital Schools and whether all of these children received schooling on a regular basis; if not, the reasons for that; and
- (c) the number of incidents of these children being physically restrained, the duration and the reasons for that; and the central guideline of HA for using restraints in hospitals.

*(Post-meeting note: The Administration's written information was issued to members vide LC Paper CB(4)427/16-17 on 16 January 2017.)*

Action

**II. Any other business**

6. The Chairman advised that the subject on unnecessary hospitalization would be revisited by the Subcommittee at its forthcoming meeting(s).

*(Post-meeting note: The Subcommittee had followed up on issues relating to children medically fit for discharge however overstaying in hospitals and their conditions of being restrained at its meeting held on 17 January 2017.)*

7. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 1:15 pm.

Council Business Division 4  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
18 April 2017

## Subcommittee on Children's Rights

### Proceedings of the second meeting on Thursday, 22 December 2016, at 10:45 am in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action required
<i>Agenda Item I - Support measures for children from drug abusing families</i>			
000416 - 000953	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000954 - 001254	Chairman The Hong Kong Council of Social Service	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)344/16-17(02)]	
001255 - 001554	Chairman Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong	Presentation of views	
001555 - 001903	Chairman The Civic Party	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)361/16-17(04)]	
001904 - 002158	Chairman Hong Kong Society For the Protection of Children	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)361/16-17(05)] and [LC Paper No. CB(4)361/16-17(06)]	
002159 - 002521	Chairman Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)344/16-17(03)]	
002522 - 002829	Chairman Against Child Abuse	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)344/16-17(04)]	
002830 - 003211	Chairman PathFinders	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)344/16-17(05)]	
003212 - 003520	Chairman The Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers	Presentation of views	
003521 - 003835	Chairman Miss YAU Chui-wah	Presentation of views	
003836 - 004117	Chairman Speaker A	Presentation of views	
004118 - 004350	Chairman Speaker B	Presentation of views	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
004351 - 004737	Chairman Ms Billy WONG	Presentation of views	
004738 - 005128	Chairman Mr Azan MARWAH	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. (4)344/16-17(06)]	
005129 - 005515	Chairman Hong Kong Christian Service - PS33 Counselling Service for Psychotropic Substance Abusers	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)361/16-17(07)]	
005516 - 005829	Chairman Community Drug Advisory Council	Presentation of views	
005830 - 010155	Chairman Dr Patricia IP Lai-sheung	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)344/16-17(07)]	
010156 - 010514	Chairman Rainbow Lutheran Centre	Presentation of views	
010515 - 010804	Chairman Ms TAM Kam-yee	Presentation of views	
010805 - 011129	Chairman Family and Community Core Business, Hong Kong Christian Service	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)361/16-17(08)]	
011130 - 011434	Chairman Ms CHEUNG Lai-yin	Presentation of views	
011435 - 014059	Chairman Labour and Welfare Bureau ("LWB") Social Welfare Department ("SWD") Security Bureau ("SB") Hospital Authority ("HA") Department of Health	The Chairman's remarks and the Administration's initial responses to the views expressed by the deputations	
014100 - 014614	Chairman Dr Helena WONG LWB	Dr WONG's views on increasing the provision of residential child care services and enhancing the measures to collect data about pregnant women/mothers with drug abusing habit and their children	
014615 - 015144	Chairman Dr CHENG Chung-tai	Dr CHENG's views on establishing a children commission, enhancing the data collection functions of the Central Registry of Drug Abuse ("CRDA"), and providing more support measures to pregnant women/mothers with drug abusing habit and their children	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action required</b>
015145 - 015859	Chairman Deputy Chairman SB SWD	The Deputy Chairman's suggestions on enhancing CRDA, having family rooms in drug treatment centres, and devising a central waiting list for emergency residential care services	
015900 - 020419	Chairman Mr WAN Siu-kin HA SWD	Mr WAN's concerns on the inadequacy of appropriate assistance to pregnant women/mothers with drug abusing habit and their children	
020420 - 021014	Chairman Mr CHU Hoi-dick LWB	Mr CHU's concern on the absence of information and data about pregnant women/mothers with drug abusing habit and children from drug abusing families	
021015 - 021820	Chairman Dr LAU Siu-lai SWD HA	Dr LAU's suggestions on providing home care services to pregnant women/mothers with drug abusing habit and their families	
021821 - 021925	Chairman Hong Kong Society For the Protection of Children	Presentation of views	
021926 - 022039	Chairman Ms Billy WONG	Presentation of views	
022040 - 022140	Chairman Mr Azan MARWAH	Presentation of views	
022141 - 022241	Chairman Rainbow Lutheran Centre	Presentation of views	
022242 - 022332	Chairman Family and Community Core Business, Hong Kong Christian Service	Presentation of views	
022333 - 023107	Chairman LWB	The Chairman's remarks and the Administration's responses on the views further expressed by the deputations	
<i>Agenda Item II – Any other business</i>			
023108 - 023145	Chairman	Closing remarks	