

Family Council

Minutes of 23rd Meeting held on 21 August 2014

Date: 21 August 2014 (Thursday)
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Venue: Room 2, G/F, Central Government Offices,
2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong

Attendance

Chairman

Prof SHEK Tan-lei, Daniel

Official Members

Mrs Betty FUNG, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs (*attended on behalf of Secretary for Home Affairs*)

Miss Annie TAM, Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (*attended on behalf of Secretary for Labour and Welfare*)

Mr Tony TANG, Deputy Secretary for Education (4) (Acting)
(*attended on behalf of Secretary for Education*)

Prof WONG Chack-kie, Member (2)/Central Policy Unit (CPU)
(*attended on behalf of Head/CPU*)

Ex officio Member

Prof CHAN Cheung-ming, Alfred, Chairperson of the Elderly Commission

Mrs LAU KUN Lai-kuen, Stella, Chairperson of the Women's Commission

Non-official Members

Mrs CHU YEUNG Pak-yu, Patricia

Ms LAW Suk-kwan, Lilian

Mr LEE Luen-fai
Miss TANG Pui-yee, Phoebe
Dr TSUI Luen-on, Gordon
Miss WONG Siu-ling, Gabriella
Ms YAU Oi-yuen, Irene

Secretary

Ms Jessica CHENG, Principal Assistant Secretary for Home Affairs
(Civic Affairs) 2 (Acting)

In attendance

Ms Gracie FOO, Deputy Secretary for Home Affairs (1)

Absent with apologies

Dr CHAN Chun-bun, Bunny, Chairperson of the Commission on Youth
Prof AU Kit-fong, Terry
Dr KOONG May-kay, Maggie
Prof LAM Tai-hing
Dr LI Sau-hung, Eddy
Ms LOO Shirley Marie Therese
Ms WONG Pik-kiu, Peggy
Mr YIU Tze-leung, Ivan

For agenda item 2

Mr FUNG Man-chung, Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare),
Social Welfare Department
Dr Rita HO, Principal Medical and Health Officer (Family Health
Service), Department of Health
Dr Aster LAU, Senior Medical and Health Officer (Family Health
Service), Department of Health
Dr Dorothy CHAN, Associate Consultant (Paediatrics), Prince of Wales
Hospital, Hospital Authority

For agenda item 5

Ms Jane LEE, Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty), Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr Jeremy POON, Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty), Labour and Welfare Bureau

Welcome Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the 23rd meeting of the Family Council (the Council), particularly Mrs Betty FUNG, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, who joined the meeting for the first time.

Item 1 – Confirmation of Minutes of the 22nd meeting of the Family Council

2. The minutes of the 22nd meeting were confirmed without amendments.

Item 2 – Comprehensive Child Development Service

3. In view of a recent domestic violence incident involving a mother alleged of suffering from postpartum depression, representatives of Department of Health (DH), Social Welfare Department (SWD) and Hospital Authority (HA) were invited to brief the Family Council (the Council) on services relating to family support, particularly on Comprehensive Child Development Service (CCDS).

4. Upon invitation of the Chairman, Mr FUNG Man-chung, Assistant Director (Family and Child Welfare) of SWD and Dr Rita HO, Principal Medical and Health Officer (Family Health Service) of DH, took Members through the powerpoint presentation on CCDS. In gist, the presentation covered the following salient points –

- (a) service targets of CCDS – identifying and meeting the varied health and social needs of children aged between 0 and 5 and those of their families at an early stage through Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) and other services units including hospitals under HA, Integrated Family Service Centres (IFSCs)/Integrated Services Centres (ISCs) and pre-primary institutions;
- (b) services provided under CCDS – identification and management of at-risk pregnant women, mothers with postnatal depression, families with psychosocial needs and pre-primary children with physical, developmental and/or behavioural problems;
- (c) related service statistics of CCDS in the past three years; and
- (d) the way forward – strengthening inter-sectoral and inter-disciplinary collaboration as well as continuing the integrated community-based child and family service model to achieve early identification, on-going monitoring and timely intervention for needy children and families.

5. Following the presentation, Members were invited to give comments. Deliberations of the meeting were summarized as follows –

- (a) Members showed concerns on the marked increase in the total number of mothers with probable antenatal/postnatal depression identified at MCHCs from 3,707 in 2011-12 to 7,262 in 2013-14. In response, it was explained that CCDS was only fully implemented in the territory starting from 2013-14 onwards. It was also worth noting that the rate of postnatal depression in Hong Kong was not particular high when compared with overseas figures;

- (b) with a view to assisting at-risk families, it was important to identify risk factors. On a related note, many of these families were observed to be in lack of proper support network. Hence, the Government should attempt to explore more support network for them. Other than MCHCs and IFSCs/ISCs, Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness and Integrated Child and Youth Service Centres were considered;
- (c) noting that the proportion of at-risk women identified as having mental illness was quite high and that different mental illness might have different impact on the upbringing of children, the Government should consider formulating strategic plans in addressing the issue, particularly on the provision of child rearing support services;
- (d) in identifying and providing assistance to at-risk families through Obstetrics, Paediatrics and Psychiatric Services of HA, collaboration with district-based non-governmental organisations was considered essential as many of these families required the assistance of social workers, in addition to medical assistance. The Government should also consider adopting a holistic approach by further strengthening collaboration between different departments in providing relevant services to them as many of these families were encountering different problems, including housing and education, etc.;
- (e) Members were informed that family education was in place for parents at various MCHCs. Meanwhile, over 90% of children born to Hong Kong women had registered with child health service of MCHCs. Most of the children who did not use MCHCs' immunisation service had resorted to using private hospitals or clinics for such services;

- (f) efforts of the Government in fostering collaboration between different departments in implementing territory-wide CCDS were noteworthy. To ensure that at-risk families could be identified from different channels in an efficient and effective manner, role of the Education Bureau should not be overlooked, particularly its role in making referrals for children/families identified to be in need of services at pre-primary institutions. To ensure early identification, the Government should further strengthen inter-departmental collaboration and examine if there were gaps in the identification process; and
- (g) it was essential that positive messages in strengthening support network at the community level should be brought out through different channels, so that the community would have a proper mindset in rendering assistance to at-risk families as and when necessary.

6. The Chairman thanked DH, SWD and HA for their presentations and Members for their comments. To further enhance the services to at-risk families, the Chairman concluded that the Sub-committee on Family Support (FS Sub-committee) would further deliberate the related issues, especially on the present position of high-risk families. DH, SWD and HA would be invited to propose implementable measures to strengthen CCDS and report to the FS Sub-committee in due course.

(Action: DH, SWD and HA)

Item 3 – Review of the Mandatory Family Implications Assessment for Government Policies (Paper FC 24/2014)

7. Following the introduction of a mandatory assessment of family implications for all policies as from 1 April 2013, the Chairman briefed Members that the family implications assessment (FIA) had

become an integral part of the decision-making process in a more holistic manner. Based on the experience so far, two areas of follow-up actions, including (a) organizing training/experience sharing sessions for civil servants, particularly the senior echelons; and (b) developing a more comprehensive and elaborated checklist for FIA. The Chairman informed Members that the Central Policy Unit (CPU) would commission a consultancy study to take forward the proposed follow-up actions. Given CPU had commissioned the University of Hong Kong (HKU) to conduct a study on “Family Impact Analysis” in 2008, it would be desirable for CPU to invite HKU, among other tertiary institutions, to conduct the study.

(Action: CPU)

Item 5 – Briefing on the Low-income Working Family Allowance (Paper FC 26/2014)

8. The Chairman proposed and the meeting agreed to advance the discussion of the agenda item on “Briefing on the Low-income Working Family Allowance” before “Progress of Work of the Sub-committees”.

9. The Chairman invited the Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare (PSLW), Miss Annie TAM, to take Members through a powerpoint presentation on the Low-income Working Family Allowance (LIFA). In gist, the presentation covered the Government’s proposal regarding the basic principles, key parameters as well as implementation framework of the LIFA. The salient points were covered in the paper FC 26/2014.

10. The Chairman thanked PSLW for her presentation. Noting that the overall policy review of the LIFA Scheme would be conducted one year after its implementation, the Chairman remarked that the Council would give its views on the LIFA Scheme as and when appropriate.

Item 4 – Progress of Work of the Sub-committees (Paper FC 25/2014)

11. The Chairman invited the Convenor of the FS Sub-committee and Deputy Convenor of the Sub-committee on Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education to report work progress.

12. On the FS Sub-committee, Mrs Patricia CHU reported that the FS Sub-committee had given its advice on “Review of Family Procedure Rules” and “Judgement Summons Proceeding for the Enforcement of Maintenance Orders”. The FS Sub-committee also endorsed the final report of “Family Survey 2013” and the recommendation to extend the Pilot Scheme on Family Mediation Service by 18 months.

13. Regarding the work progress on the promotion of family core values and family education, Mr LEE Luen-fai reported that the Sub-committee on the Promotion of Family Core Values and Family Education (PR&FE Sub-committee) had considered the review of the “2013/14 Family-Friendly Employers Award Scheme” and was pleased with the efforts of the Council Secretariat in making the Award Scheme a success. To sustain the momentum, the PR&FE Sub-committee agreed that the Award Scheme should continue to be organised biennially and good practices of winning companies/organisations should be widely promulgated in a sustainable manner. On the family education package for families with newborn babies (the package), the PR&FE Sub-committee was in general content with the presentation. Subject to further refinement, the package would be available for release in late 2014/early 2015.

14. The meeting noted the progress reports made by the Convenors of the two Sub-committees.

Item 6 – Any Other Business

15. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m. Members would be notified on the date of next meeting.

**Family Council Secretariat
December 2014**