

Message

Family and Child Welfare

We believe that the integrity of the family is the key to the well-being of the community. As such, we are firmly committed to supporting families, particularly those with problems. In response to increased pressure on individuals and their families brought about by recent changes in the economic environment, we will further strengthen our family casework service to help those in need, including single parents and new arrivals. Additional family case workers will be provided to improve the provision of counselling services and give practical assistance to those in need. We will also endeavour to protect our children from abuse by increasing the number of child protection workers and stepping up publicity to enhance awareness of the problem.

Services for Young People

Young people are the future and we remain committed to helping them develop into mature and contributing members of society. To this end, we will direct our resources to help in particular young people who are at risk or in disadvantaged circumstances. We will also encourage better interfacing between school-based services and those provided through other youth services in the community in order to achieve better use of limited resources. It is important for us to build on the strong foundation of inter-disciplinary co-operation and to target our resources to meet the needs of the young.

Meeting the Needs of People with Disabilities

We are also fully committed to ensuring that people with disabilities are provided with the necessary care and support to facilitate their integration and full participation in the community. As such, we will continue to implement the policies set out in the 1995 White Paper on Rehabilitation.

Apart from providing additional residential and day places, we will also continue with our public education efforts to enhance the image of disabled persons and their acceptance by other members of the community. Of significance this year, will be the introduction of a new guardianship system for mentally incapacitated persons.

The current major review on our rehabilitation programme will be completed in 1999 and the findings will help us to plan further improvements to the quality of life for people with disabilities.

Involving the Community

We should not, however, look only to receive, but also to give. The Volunteer Movement, which derives support from various sectors of the community, provides ample scope for individuals to contribute directly benefiting those in need. In the coming year, we will encourage more to volunteer thereby helping to build a more caring community.

Social Security

We will continue to provide assistance under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme to those who suffer financial hardship. We will continue to encourage and help unemployed CSSA recipients to try to rejoin the workforce. And, to ensure that CSSA payments only go to those with genuine need, we will ensure that there is an effective fraud prevention mechanism in place.



(Mrs Katherine Fok)
Secretary for Health and Welfare

Welfare Services

Our Policy Objective is to develop and provide effective and quality welfare services for those in need.

Our targets in pursuing this Policy Objective are –

- to regularly review and improve welfare services to ensure they meet the changing needs and aspirations of the community
- to monitor the delivery of welfare services and to identify ways to enhance the effectiveness of the services
- to provide financial assistance to those with genuine needs

Key Result Areas (KRAs)

To ensure that this Policy Objective can be achieved, we must deliver results in the following key areas, that is, we must –

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The following sections of this booklet explain the importance of these KRAs, describe the broad thrust of our efforts, and outline the indicators which we are using to assess progress. Each section lists the new key initiatives being taken to achieve our objectives and pinpoints the agency accountable for each initiative and the specific targets which we intend to meet.

I

Identify needs and review modes of provision

Over 90% of our direct welfare services are provided by 179 non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Subvention to NGOs is estimated to total \$5.4 billion in 1998-1999. We must ensure that the subvention system operates effectively so that NGOs can deliver quality services efficiently and cost effectively.

We will implement a system to evaluate and monitor the performance of NGOs on the basis of performance rather than the resources put into the service. At the same time, NGOs will be given more flexibility to manage their resources.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the number of welfare service units that have complied with each of the Service Quality Standards (SQSs)
- the number of welfare service units that have met the output standards under their respective Funding and Service Agreements (FSAs)

Initiative	Targets
<p>To review the social welfare subvention system</p> <p><i>(Social Welfare Department)*</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To introduce in 1999-2000, five of the 19 SQSs which define the procedures for managing and controlling service quality and the criteria for achieving these standards ● To complete the preparation of FSAs for the 103 individual services in the welfare sector by the end of 1999-2000 ● To introduce the first batch of 30 FSAs to the welfare sector in 1999-2000

* the brackets denote the agency with lead responsibility for the initiative

II

Maintain the necessary infrastructure and legislative and policy framework

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) and NGOs provide a wide range of welfare services in Hong Kong. We need to ensure that SWD and NGO staff are equipped with the necessary skills in providing quality services to maximise efficiency in the use of resources allocated.

The social security policy aims to meet the basic needs of the disadvantaged including the financially vulnerable, the elderly and the severely disabled. One of the key features of our social security system is the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme. The CSSA provides a “safety net” for those who are unable to meet the basic needs. We will continue to ensure that the Scheme can help those who cannot fend for themselves. At the same time, the Scheme must encourage “employable” recipients to re-join the workforce.

Social security expenditure constitutes a significant portion of welfare spending. To ensure that public money is properly spent and that social security assistance goes to those in real need, we will ensure that an effective mechanism is in place to prevent abuse and fraud.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the number of training courses arranged (and number of participants) to support the implementation of the new Service Performance Monitoring System
- the number of social security fraud cases detected

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To enhance SWD and NGO staff's knowledge of the new Service Performance Monitoring System <i>(Social Welfare Department (SWD))</i></p>	<p>To organise 18 training courses for 20 000 participants over three years and to develop relevant training-related and marketing materials</p>
<p>To strengthen the social security field units and the Special Investigation Teams to enable them to cope with increase in caseload, and to detect fraud <i>(SWD)</i></p>	<p>To create over 200 new posts in 1999-2000 to process applications, provide intensive assistance to the unemployed applicants, and deter fraud</p>



Involve the community in the provision of welfare services

Volunteer service is an expression of concern for the community. As such, we are keen to encourage greater participation as a means to help build a more caring community in Hong Kong.

While preserving the characteristics and focus of individual groups, the effectiveness of volunteerism can be improved through centralised efforts to encourage community participation.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the number of volunteers registered
- the number of organisations which have enlisted to participate in voluntary work
- the number of voluntary service hours served by members of the public

Initiatives

Targets

To publicise and promote more volunteerism in the community and maintain the momentum of public interest in volunteer service
(Social Welfare Department (SWD))

To launch 16 promotional and publicity programmes at central and district levels in 1999-2000

To establish a practical working mechanism to co-ordinate volunteer service in the social welfare sector
(SWD)

To establish 13 Volunteer Movement District Co-ordinating Committees in 1999-2000 to identify and enhance volunteer service, training opportunities and recognition programmes

IV

Deliver services and ensure compliance with an agreed framework

We provide central administrative support to subvented NGOs to help them plan and run their activities. It is our objective to provide greater support and flexibility so as to allow them to make the best use of resources with the aim of enhancing the quality of service provided to the public.

We also aim to strengthen the provision of family casework services to enhance the service provided to families with problems in response to the rapid economic changes which Hong Kong has experienced recently.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the number of additional administrative and support staff provided to implement the new Service Performance Monitoring System
- the number of additional family caseworkers provided to handle the increased caseload in the family service programme

Initiatives

Targets

To provide additional central administrative support to NGOs
(*Social Welfare Department (SWD)*)

To provide \$27 million in 1999-2000 to support NGO efforts in undertaking the new service performance measures

To strengthen family casework services
(*SWD*)

To provide 29 additional family caseworkers in 1999-2000 to meet the increase in service demand and to improve service quality by relieving the caseload of family caseworkers

V

Improve service delivery in both quantitative and qualitative terms

We must protect our children from abuse. In view of the rising number of child abuse cases, we need to strengthen multi-disciplinary efforts to improve treatment and other supportive services for victims and their families. We will continue to launch publicity and public education programmes to promote public awareness of the impact of child abuse on the affected children and their families.

Young people are a vital asset to our community. It is important that they be given the support and opportunities to prepare them to be responsible and contributing members of society. To better meet the multi-farious needs of young people, we will continue to achieve efficient use of resources through setting up integrated teams, ensure efficient inter-disciplinary co-operation and service interfacing and foster the active involvement of schools, families and the community at large in support of our young people.

We are committed to providing quality rehabilitation services to meet the needs of people with disabilities. Our ultimate aim is to facilitate their integration into the community and to enable them to realise their full potential.

To improve services to clients in our social security field units, we will continue to monitor closely the delivery of services with a view to implementing improvements.

Indicators

Our indicators of progress in this area are –

- the number of child protection workers available to deal with victims of child abuse
- the implementation of recommendations of the Review of School Social Work Service accepted by the Administration
- the number of disabled persons receiving day and residential services
- the proportion of clients who will be attended to by Social Security Field Unit staff within 10 minutes at the offices of the Unit

Initiatives

Targets

To strengthen the provision of various youth services at the district level
(Social Welfare Department (SWD))

To improve the co-ordination of different service units in a district by strengthening the organisation and operation of the Local Children and Youth Services Committee and improved interfacing between the various services available in 1999-2000

To replace the Social Security Payment System by a new Computerised Social Security System so as to ensure efficient delivery of service and to assist in compilation of management information
(SWD)

To have the new System in place in 2000

Initiatives	Targets
<p>To improve protection of children from abuse and enhance public awareness of the problem (<i>SWD</i>)</p>	<p>To provide 23 additional child protection workers by 2000-2001 to handle an increasing number of child abuse cases</p>
<p>To provide additional day care and residential places for people with disabilities (<i>SWD</i>)</p>	<p>To provide over 400 additional day and residential places for people with disabilities in 1999-2000</p>
<p>To provide an Infirmity Care Supplement to frail aged blind people (<i>SWD</i>)</p>	<p>To provide an Infirmity Care Supplement to an additional 28 frail elderly living in homes and care and attention homes for the aged blind in 1999-2000</p>
<p>To improve the operation of the school social work service (<i>SWD</i>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To introduce in 1999-2000 a package of improvement measures including the formulation of multi-disciplinary guidelines to enhance service co-ordination and collaboration between school social workers and other relevant professionals ● To establish in 1999-2000, a Steering Committee to monitor and review the direction and development of the service