

SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRATION BOARD

Notes of the 24th Meeting of the Taskforce on Review of Code of Practice

Date: 13 February 2019
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Venue: Room GH317, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Present: Dr. LEUNG Chuen-suen (Convenor)
Ms. CHAN Tsz-wai, Anna
Dr. CHENG Yuk-tin, Carl (co-opted member)
Mr. LUN Chi-wai
Dr. LAM Chiu-wan (co-opted member)
Apology: Mr. WONG Ka-ming (co-opted member)
Secretary: Mr. LEE Wing-po, Eric, Registrar
Ms. FAN Lai-yee, Veronica, Assistant Registrar

1. Dr. LEUNG, Convenor of the Taskforce, presided the meeting. He introduced the membership in the new term of office and thanked Dr. Cheng, Dr. Lam and Mr. Wong for their continuous support to the Taskforce.

Matters Arising

2. The matters arising from the last meeting had been included in the meeting agenda.

To consider the next course of action on the Review of the Code of Practice

3. The Taskforce agreed to re-arrange the meeting agenda and put item 4 before 3.
4. The Taskforce noted that before putting the revised Code of Practice to consultation, the draft was necessary to be endorsed by the Board via the Committee on Professional Conduct and to go through legal vetting. The purpose of legal vetting was to mitigate risks of being challenged on legal points as the proposed changes were substantial. The Secretary estimated that the legal vetting process would take around one-month time and the scope of vetting was subject to the Taskforce's instruction. The Taskforce agreed to do it after the first draft was endorsed by the Board at its meeting to be held on 18 March 2019. When the revised Code was finalized after consultation, and before it would be published for gazette, a second round legal vetting might be required.
5. The Taskforce discussed how to conduct the consultation and the discussion was summarized as below:

Purpose

- (a) To enrich the proposed revisions to the Code of Practice.

Format

- (b) Invitation for written submission was a necessary process.

- (c) It should be made open to the public via the Board’s website.
- (d) Face-to-face consultations should also be conducted but the formats were yet to be fixed, suggestions included forum, explanatory session and focus group.

Target audience

- (e) To cover frontline RSWs, service users, management or administrator in agencies, teaching staff of fieldwork practicum in tertiary institutions. It was suggested to arrange a few consultation sessions specifically for RSWs from some work settings. As it was not easy to access to service users, members suggested doing so through agencies.

Approach

- (f) It was suggested to invite the “三會一方” to give comments on the document. The “三會一方” included the Hong Kong Social Workers' General Union (“HKSWGU”), Hong Kong Social Workers Association Limited, The Hong Kong Council of Social Service as well as the Hon. Shiu Ka-chun, the LegCo member of Functional Constituency – Social Welfare. The Convenor invited Mr. Lun, being the representative of HKSWGU on this platform, to raise it at its next regular meeting.
- (g) Another suggestion was to involve the Hong Kong Association of Schools of Social Work which was one of important stakeholders.
- (h) To proceed with the matter in a manageable manner, the Taskforce considered to adopt a soft approach. First step was to touch based with these associations or union and to collect their initial feedbacks as they represented voices from different stakeholders. The next step was to organize general and tailor-made consultation sessions for frontline RSWs. The Taskforce took note of the sequence of consultations and it was agreed that any further proposed refinement to the revised Code would be incorporated until the overall consultation was completed. It was subject to stakeholders’ feedbacks whether a second round consultation was required.

Timeline

- (i) The proposed timeline was as below:
 - Endorsement by Committee on Professional Conduct and Board (mid March 2019)
 - Legal vetting (mid March to mid April 2019)
 - Release on the Board’s website and invitation of written submission (May 2019)
 - Face-to-face consultation (May to July 2019)
 - Refinements to the revision of the Code of Practice (before September 2019)

To comment on the first draft of the revised Code of Practice in bilingual

- 6. Members suggested revising sections 1 and 2 with details marked in Annex 1.
- 7. In section 3, it was suggested revising the format of numbering as shown in Annex 1.
- 8. It was suggested that the long title of “registered social workers” (註冊社會工作者) and

“Social Workers Registration Board” (社會工作者註冊局) would be used when they first appeared in the document and in the subtitle. Otherwise, they would be replaced by “social workers” (社工) and “SWRB” (註冊局).

9. To speed up the process, members were invited to have an overall review on the whole documents and send their comments to the Board office by 20 February 2019. A list would then be consolidated for discussion at the next meeting.

Date of next meeting

10. The next meeting was scheduled on 28 February 2019.
11. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

19 February 2019