

Minutes of the Second Meeting of Community Affairs Committee
under Yuen Long District Council in 2025

Date: 9 April 2025 (Wednesday)
Time: 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, Yuen Long District Council, 13/F., Yuen Long Government Offices,
2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long

Present

Chairman : Ms CHIU Sau-han, MH
Vice Chairman : Mr TANG Sin-hang
Members : Ms HO Hiu-man
Mr LI Kai-lap, Riben
Mr LAM Chung-yin
Mr LAM Tim-fook
Mr SEI Chun-hing
Mr CHUI Kwan-siu
Ms MA Shuk-yin
Ms CHAN Yin-kwan, Yankie
Mr CHING Chan-ming
Mr WONG Yuen-tai, MH
Mr WONG Siu-chung
Mr TANG Che-keung, MH
Ms LAI Yuet-kwan, Fennie
Mr TAM Tak-hoi
Co-opted : Mr WU Kin-keung, Calvin
Members : Mr KWOK Hoi-kit, Victor
Mr YEUNG Siu-fai

Secretary : Miss WONG Tsz-yi, Nicole Executive Officer (District Council) 6,
Yuen Long District Office

In Attendance Miss LAU Sze-nga, Vivicia Senior Liaison Officer (1),
Yuen Long District Office
Ms LO Hoi-lam, Burcu Police Community Relations Officer
(Yuen Long), Hong Kong Police Force
Miss YU Siu-lei, Gladys Senior School Development Officer
(Yuen Long)1, Education Bureau

Item II & III

Ms LING Wai-yu Social Work Officer 2 (Planning & Coordinating),
Social Welfare Department
Ms MO Sin-yu Assistant Social Work Officer 3 (Planning &
Coordinating), Social Welfare Department

Item V

Mr NG Ting-fung, Alan Deputizing Clinical Stream Coordinator
(Pharmacy), New Territories West Cluster,
Hospital Authority
Mr LUI Tsz-kin Cluster Manager (Public Affairs and Donation
(transliteration) Management) / Senior Information Officer,
New Territories West Cluster

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Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Members and department representatives to the second meeting of the Community Affairs Committee (“CAC”) under the Yuen Long District Council (“YLDC”) in 2025.

Item I: Confirmation of minutes of the first meeting of CAC in 2025 held on 19 February 2025

2. Members unanimously confirmed the minutes of the first meeting of CAC in 2025 held on 19 February 2025.

Questions raised by Members:

Item II: Mr SEI Chun-hing proposed a discussion on “Communication without Boundaries: Yuen Long District Medical Services and Crime Reporting Video Sign Language Support Programme and Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment Education Programme – Creating Equal Access for Persons with Hearing Impairment” (CAC Paper No. 4/2025)

3. The Chairman referred Members to Paper No. 4 and the written replies from the Social Welfare Department (“SWD”), the Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”), the Hospital Authority (“HA”) and the Education Bureau (“EDB”). She also welcomed Ms LING Wai-yu, Social Work Officer 2 (Planning & Coordinating) of the SWD and Ms MO Sin-yu, Assistant Social Work Officer 3 (Planning & Coordinating) of the SWD, to the meeting.

4. Members’ views and enquiries on the item were summarised as follows:

- (1) It was noted that hearing impaired persons had reported a lack of sign language interpretation services when seeking medical treatment at hospitals or assistance at reporting centres, or ineffective communication due to varying standards of on-site sign language interpreters. Members suggested that relevant departments provide 24-hour sign language interpretation services through a video sign language interpretation system;
- (2) Members noted the written reply from the SWD stating that the Multi-service Centres for Hearing Impaired Persons (“MSCs”) could provide sign language interpretation services for those in need. However, they pointed out that the current service point in Northwest New Territories was located in Tuen Mun, which was inconvenient for hearing impaired persons in Yuen Long District. Members enquired whether the SWD had referred hearing impaired persons in Yuen Long District to use such services;
- (3) Members enquired with the EDB about the number of students with hearing impairment in Yuen Long District and the related school-based support for them. Regarding the Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrolment Education (“SLCO”) Programme, Members suggested expanding the service scope of the programme and organising training workshops for parents; and
- (4) Members suggested that the Government formulate a comprehensive policy and explore the application of artificial intelligence technology, such as a real-time sign language interpretation system, to address the diverse needs of hearing impaired persons while promoting Hong Kong’s development as a smart city.

5. Miss Gladys YU of the EDB responded that the SLCO Programme was a project initiated by the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies of the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The EDB had not collected data on

participating schools and students from the relevant research centre. Meanwhile, the EDB adopted a dual-track mode in providing education services for students with special educational needs (including students with hearing impairment). For students with hearing impairment, those with severe or profound hearing impairment or those who could not construct knowledge because of inadequate speech abilities (i.e. those students who might need to use sign language in communication and learning) would, with parents' consent, be referred to the special school for children with hearing impairment in Kwai Chung to receive intensive support services. As for students with hearing impairment who had comparatively better speech reception and oral language-learning abilities, they would attend ordinary schools for integrated education.

6. Ms MO Sin-yu of the SWD responded that the department had all along been concerned about the needs of hearing impaired persons and, through subventions to non-governmental organisations (“NGOs”), operated two MSCs and four Social and Recreational Centres for Persons with Disabilities specifically serving hearing impaired persons in the territory with diversified services. Hearing impaired persons could visit these centres or make appointments for sign language interpretation services via fax or SMS. These centres also utilised smartphones/tablets to provide video sign language interpretation services for service users. In addition, the MSCs provided casework and counselling services (including personal and family) for hearing impaired persons in need. Where necessary, the SWD would refer hearing impaired persons and their families to the MSCs.

7. The Chairman concluded that building a barrier-free society required the support and co-ordination of all parties and Members were willing to assist in related promotional work. She also requested relevant departments to take note of Members' views.

Item III: Ms Fennie LAI, Mr CHUI Kwan-siu, Ms CHIU Sau-han, Mr Riben LI, Mr LAM Chung-yin, Ms MA Shuk-yin, Mr TAM Tak-hoi and Ms Yankie CHAN proposed a discussion on “How to combat drug abuse among young people in the district” (CAC Paper No. 5/2025)

8. The Chairman referred Members to Paper No. 5 and the written replies from the SWD, the HKPF and the EDB.

9. Members' views and enquiries on the item were summarised as follows:

- (1) Members were pleased to note that the Police had recently stepped up anti-drug publicity efforts, including displaying banners in schools and rural areas within the district and distributing leaflets with deterrent messages, which had achieved certain results. To enhance the dissemination of anti-drug messages to ethnic minorities (“EMs”) in the district, Members suggested that the Police produce leaflets printed in EM languages and distribute them in the community with the assistance of District Council (“DC”) Members;
- (2) Currently, nearly half of the schools in Yuen Long District had joined the Healthy School Programme implemented by the Narcotics Division (“ND”) of the Security Bureau (“SB”). Members suggested that the Government encourage all schools in the district to participate. In addition, Members enquired about the effectiveness of the school drug testing scheme and the participation statistics of schools in the district;
- (3) Members enquired about the SWD's statistics on drug relapse among rehabilitated drug abusers in Yuen Long District. They pointed out that some young people had turned to drugs due to peer influence or mental stress and suggested strengthening counselling and support for young people;

- (4) Members suggested that the Government impose a total ban on all e-cigarette products and enquired about the related work schedule;
- (5) To enhance anti-drug education among students, Members suggested that the Police make good use of social media platforms commonly used by young people, invite popular idols to assist in disseminating anti-drug messages, and organise secondary school debate competitions on anti-drug topics;
- (6) Members suggested strengthening publicity and education efforts targeting parents, such as distributing notices to parents through schools and organising talks to educate parents on identifying drugs and to raise their awareness; and
- (7) Members pointed out that many NGOs (such as the Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre) currently provided free guided tours for local schools, which were considered educationally effective. Members suggested that the EDB encourage more schools to participate.

10. A consolidated reply provided by Ms LING Wai-yu of the SWD was as follows:

- (1) Regarding community-based drug treatment services, the Enlighten Centre in Yuen Long District served as a Counselling Centre for Psychotropic Substance Abusers (“CCPSA”). Operated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong (“ELCHK”), the centre provided services for psychotropic substance abusers (including youth at risk);
- (2) The SWD currently operated overnight and daytime outreach teams to engage and counsel young people;
- (3) The school drug testing scheme and related statistics fell under the purview of the ND of the SB;
- (4) Regarding Members’ request for statistics on drug relapse among rehabilitated drug abusers at CCPSAs, the SWD would check whether such statistics had been maintained;

(Post-meeting note: The SWD later confirmed that it had not maintained statistics on drug relapse among rehabilitated drug abusers at CCPSAs.)

- (5) In terms of publicity, on 6 December 2024, the SWD collaborated with the ELCHK, the Yuen Long District School Development Section of the EDB, the Yuen Long District Secondary School Heads Association and the Yuen Long District Primary School Heads Association to organise a seminar and professional training session on youth abuse of “space oil drug”. These activities aimed to enhance the competences of frontline teaching staff and social workers in addressing the problem of youth drug abuse, including educating them about the composition and harms of “space oil drug”. The SWD would continue to disseminate anti-drug messages; and
- (6) The Yuen Long District Social Welfare Office of the SWD had collaborated with 11 social service units in the district to form the “Project D – Love Ourselves More” Working Group, focusing on the problem of youth drug abuse. This year, the working group would continue publicity and educational efforts to raise public awareness of “space oil drug” and other drugs, while promoting the importance of mental health to prevent young people from turning to drugs due to mental stress.

11. A consolidated reply provided by Ms Burcu LO of the HKPF was as follows:
- (1) The Yuen Long Police District had produced publicity leaflets on the harms of “space oil drug” and would print additional copies for distribution to DC Members. The Police also noted Members’ views and would explore with the SWD the production of multilingual leaflets;
 - (2) Currently, the Police conducted monthly large-scale operations targeting “space oil drug” to prevent its spread in the community. The Police planned to collaborate with DC Members at a later stage to conduct anti-drug publicity campaign in the district;
 - (3) On 28 April this year, the Police, together with the Yuen Long District Office, the Yuen Long District Fight Crime Committee (“YLDFCC”) and the SWD, signed an anti-drug charter with primary and secondary schools in the district and distributed publicity materials. Anti-drug school talks were also conducted on an ongoing basis. In addition, the Police organised a talk on addressing student crisis in early April, inviting representatives from local schools and over 20 members of the Parent-Teacher Association from the district to attend; and
 - (4) The Police had been utilising various social media platforms for publicity and welcomed Members’ assistance in disseminating related information.
12. The Chairman concluded by suggesting that the EDB enhance support for schools in anti-drug publicity. She also suggested the YLDFCC reserve part of its activity funding for schools to organise anti-drug-related activities to raise students’ awareness of drugs.

Item IV: Ms MA Shuk-yin, Ms CHIU Sau-han, Ms Fennie LAI, Ms Yankie CHAN, Mr TAM Tak-hoi, Mr LAM Chung-yin and Mr Riben LI proposed a discussion on “Enquiry on the construction progress of Tin Shui Wai Hospital” (CAC Paper No. 6/2025)

13. The Chairman referred Members to Paper No. 6 and the written reply from the HA.
14. Members enquired about the specific timetable for the expansion project of Tin Shui Wai Hospital (“TSWH”) and details of the related expansion. Regarding the written reply from the HA stating that patients with complicated medical conditions would be referred to Tuen Mun Hospital and Pok Oi Hospital as needed, Members considered that such arrangements did not adequately address the medical needs of Yuen Long District. Members also expressed concern over the recent prolonged waiting times at the accident and emergency department of TSWH.

15. The Chairman concluded by expressing hope that the HA would expedite the expansion project of TSWH and requested the Secretariat to convey Members’ views to the HA.

(Post-meeting note: The Secretariat forwarded the follow-up reply from the HA to the CAC on 13 May 2025.)

Item V: Mr WONG Yuen-tai proposed a discussion on “Discussion on the HA’s enhanced drug dispensing arrangements” (CAC Paper No. 7/2025)

16. The Chairman referred Members to Paper No. 7 and the written reply from the HA. She also welcomed Mr Alan NG, Deputizing Clinical Stream Coordinator (Pharmacy) of the New

Territories West Cluster of the HA, and Mr LUI Tsz-kin, Cluster Manager (Public Affairs and Donation Management) / Senior Information Officer of the New Territories West Cluster of the HA, to the meeting.

17. Members' views and enquiries on the item were summarised as follows:

- (1) Members enquired about the number of chronic disease patients affected by the new measure in the district, the additional patient flow for drug refill services at hospitals, and the impact of the new measure on the workload of the pharmacy department;
- (2) Members enquired about the principles adopted by the HA in determining the intervals for drug refill services;
- (3) Members enquired about the implementation details of the new measure, including the procedures for authorising others to collect medications on behalf of mobility impaired patients and the flexible arrangements for doctor-patient consultations on the prescribing quantity of medications; and
- (4) Members considered that drug refills in community pharmacies would bring convenience to the public, but expressed concerns about the refill procedures and the required waiting time. They suggested that the HA make use of the application "HA Go" to streamline the process and introduce a medication delivery service to enhance overall flexibility.

18. A consolidated reply provided by Mr Alan NG of the HA was as follows:

- (1) Due to factors such as an ageing population, the increasing number of chronic disease patients, the introduction of new drugs, and the expansion of the Drug Formulary, the HA's overall expenditure on drugs had increased, and the Government currently had to provide substantial subsidies for the drug costs. In 2023-24, specialist outpatient ("SOP") services accounted for 90% of outpatient drug expenditure, while general outpatient services accounted for 10%. As the intervals of follow-up appointments for SOP services were longer, and the quantity and variety of drugs dispensed were greater, the likelihood of drug wastage was higher;
- (2) "As Needed" medications (such as painkillers) were more likely to result in mismatch between the prescribing quantity and the actual needs of patients, leading to wastage. Besides, as patients' medical conditions were prone to change, some patients might not need to take the long-term medications that had been dispensed. Taking paracetamol as an example, about 65% of patients did not return for refills of the drug after the implementation of staged medication supply, showing that the new arrangement could effectively reduce drug wastage;
- (3) The HA had been continuously optimising the drug dispensing system to ensure effective utilisation of resources, improve cost-effectiveness, and balance patients' needs and medication safety. Starting from 24 March this year, the HA implemented the first phase of staged medication supply arrangement, under which all discharged patients and patients attending outpatient clinics would be dispensed medications with a maximum of 24 weeks. Drug refills would be arranged for prescriptions exceeding 24 weeks. The prescribing quantity and follow-up appointment date would be determined by doctors based on the clinical needs of patients;
- (4) The new arrangement standardised the prescription quantity of "As Needed" medications. If the prescription exceeded 28 days, the system would automatically set the dispensing

quantity at 25% of the prescribing quantity, which could be adjusted by doctors based on patients' clinical needs. The new arrangement, which had been in place for about two weeks, was operating smoothly. Doctors' prescribing practices had not been affected, and the HA had produced promotional videos and leaflets to educate the public;

- (5) The HA would continue to monitor the operation of the new arrangement and implement the second phase in a timely manner. In future, in line with the direction of primary healthcare development and the community pharmacy programme, more community pharmacies would be established. Patients would be arranged to collect medications regularly from the community pharmacies, with medication counselling service provided by community pharmacists to enhance medication safety and patients' self-health management;
- (6) Currently, patients were not required to collect medications in person. Authorised family members and caregivers could collect the medication refills on behalf of the patients by presenting the refill coupon and verifying the relevant information. The prescribing quantity of medications would be based on clinical needs, and patients could discuss the quantity with their doctors to ensure appropriate treatment; and
- (7) The HA currently provided a medication delivery service accessible via the application "HA Go", and enhancements to the support for drug refill services were expected to be introduced in the third quarter of this year.

19. The Chairman concluded that Members expected the HA to expedite the enhancement of technical support for drug refill services to benefit more members of the public.

Any other business:

**Item VI: 'The 16th "Quit to Win" Smoke-free Community Campaign' of the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health
(CAC Paper No. 8/2025)**

20. The Chairman referred Members to Paper No. 8. The Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health invited the YLDC to be a supporting organisation of the 16th "Quit to Win" Smoke-free Community Campaign and wished to display the YLDC logo on relevant promotional materials.

21. As Members raised no objection, the Chairman announced that the YLDC had been endorsed as a supporting organisation for the 16th "Quit to Win" Smoke-free Community Campaign.

Item VII: Date of next meeting

22. The Chairman said that the next CAC meeting would be held in the Conference Room of the YLDC at 2:30 p.m. on 11 June 2025.

23. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 4:00 p.m.