

SOCIAL WORKERS REGISTRATION BOARD
Notes of the 65th Meeting of the Committee on Professional Conduct

Date: 18 January 2017
Time: 7:15 p.m.
Venue: Conference Room, 26/F Eastern Commercial Centre, 83 Nam On Street, Shau Kei Wan, Hong Kong.
Present: Mr. WONG Ka-ming (Acting Convenor)
Mr. HUI Chung-shing, Herman
Dr. LEUNG Chuen-suen
Mr. LUN Chi-wai
Mr. SHIU Ka-chun
Mr. TSANG Kin-chiu
Apology: Mr. LUK Ka-mei
Mr. MA Kam-wah, Timothy
Secretary: Mr. LEE Wing-po, Eric, Registrar and
Ms. FAN Lai-yee, Veronica, Assistant Registrar

Mr. WONG, Convenor of the Committee, presided the meeting.

Confirmation of the notes of the 64th meeting

1. The notes of the last meeting were confirmed without amendment.

Matters arising from the 64th meeting

Review exercise of the Code of Practice

2. It was noted that the proposal to form a Taskforce on reviewing the Code of Practice and the Guidelines with the proposed Taskforce membership were submitted and approved by the Board via Board Paper 108/2016. The Taskforce included three Committee members and two co-opted members i.e. Dr. Cheng Yuk-tin and Dr. Lam Chiu-wan who had accepted our invitations.
3. The Committee agreed to refine the work plan and the Taskforce would initially work out the areas of revision, e.g. areas with operational issues or requiring an update or improvement, and propose a schedule for the Committee's consideration.
4. Members agreed that observations and suggestions from the Disciplinary Committee Panel Members during disciplinary hearings should be taken into consideration if such information was available.
5. It was noted that some members expressed their views that whether discharge of administrative or managerial duties by RSWs which are non-professional practice related should be governed under the Code of Practice, as that might hinder the RSWs in performing such duties and the complaint system would easily be abused.

6. Members proposed to have the first Taskforce meeting on 14 February 2017 or 15 February 2017 at 9:15am at Polytechnic University of Hong Kong subject to the availability of the two co-opted members. *(Post meeting notes: the meeting was confirmed at 9:15am on 15 February 2017.)*

Progress report on the complaint cases

7. (Business information deleted)

Proposed refinement to the work procedures of complaints handling

8. The Registrar presented the proposal of refining the work flow and mechanism of appointment of 2 Board Members and invited members for comments.

Additional “2 Board Members”

9. The meeting considered it necessary to appoint additional “2 Board Members” to vet and clear the backlog as currently only six Board Members being appointed would be too overloaded. *(Post meeting notes: after the meeting, Mr. Kwan Wing-shing and Ms. Luk Ka-mei had volunteered to join the pool of “2 Board Members”. Their appointments were approved via Board Paper 001/2017.)*

Roster of appointment of 2 Board Members

10. The meeting resolved to recommend to the Board a roster system for the appointments of the “2 Board Members”, so that cases were to be submitted to the pairs on the roster in the sequence of complaints received. The Registrar would do the conflict check with the pair of Board Members and should check their availability of attending the case within the next 10 work days. In case of conflict or non-availability of either one Board Member, the case would go to the next pair, with the same conflict and availability checks conducted, before the case file was sent to the pair on the roster. It was proposed to apply the roster to the cases in backlog where one or both Board Members having been assigned have ceased to be a Board Member. *(Post meeting notes: the recommendation was endorsed by the Board via Board Paper 001/2017.)*

Timeline for reply

11. The meeting recommended that the timeline for reply by 2 Board Members should be within 10 working days.
12. For cases that seeking further information from the parties concerned, the timeline for reply should be 2 weeks. If no reply by then, a reminder should be sent by registered mail with a 2-week extension. The case should be reported to the 2 Board Members if no reply after the reminder was sent. The 2 Board Members would decide whether further action should be taken.

13. If request for time extension is received, the Registrar should refer such request to the respective 2 Board Members. The maximum of extension should not be more than 3 months from the first letter issued to the parties concerned.

Relevant dates

14. For cases that the 2 Board Members request the complainant to provide supplementary information, the receipt date of such information should be taken as the date of complaint lodged to the Board.

Seeking supplementary information from parties concerned

15. If one Board Member decides to refer the case to the Board while another decided to seek supplementary information from the parties concerned, or if the 2 Board Members have conflicting views on the case, the Registrar should inform the 2 Board Members and invite them for discussion. The direction to refer to the Board shall prevail when no consensus could be reached within a reasonable period of time.

Disposal of papers kept by ex-Board Members

16. The meeting asked the Board Office to inform the ex-Board Members to shred or to return any complaint case papers they have kept with them.

(Business information deleted)

17. (Business information deleted)

Statistics to be released in website

18. The Registrar reported that statistics with more details would be released at the website once they are ready.

Regular update on the progress report

19. The Registrar told the meeting that regular reports would be compiled for the Committee to better monitor the work.

Any other business

20. The meeting noted that a group of the LGBT had presented their views on both the Schedule II of the Ordinance and the conversion therapy at a recent meeting.

Date of next meeting

21. Members agreed that the next meeting would be scheduled on 23 March 2017 at 7:15 pm.

22. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

10 February 2017