

The background features a soft-focus image of a family (a man, a woman, and a child) in the upper left and a large pink flower in the lower right. The overall color palette is warm and pastel, with a blue gradient bar on the left side.

**Briefing on
Proposals on operating
the Hotline and Outreaching Service Team
(HOST)**

**Family and Child Welfare Branch
Social Welfare Department
5 May 2008**





Applicant

- Must be a bona fide non-profit making charitable institutions or trust that is exempted from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance
- Providing welfare services



Existing service of SWD Hotline

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- Social workers are available at specific time, i.e., 9:00 am to 10:00 pm (Monday to Saturday) and 1:00 pm to 10:00 pm (Sunday and Public Holiday) to provide counselling and advice to callers in need of social work intervention as well as information to the public
- Public enquiries are also handled on a 24-hour basis in the form of pre-recorded message or facsimile transmission through the Interactive Voice Processing System (IVPS).

Existing service of SWD Hotline - Service enhancement



- Service of SWD Hotline has been enhanced to provide timely assistance to individuals and families in-need through the provision of round-the-clock counselling services.
- Outside the duty hours of social workers of SWD Hotline, caller can choose to have their calls directly transferred to the Family Crisis Support Centre (FCSC) of Caritas – Hong Kong or the CEASE Crisis Centre of Tung Wah Group of Hospitals for immediate assistance from social workers.
- Since February 2008, service of “1823 Integrated Call Centre” (ICC) has been procured to handle enquiry calls relating to social security matters.



Further service enhancement

- With the planned operation of HOST and upon its commencement, social workers of SWD will man the hotline from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm from Monday to Friday and 9:00am to 12:00 noon on Saturday (excluding public holidays) in order to concentrate staffing to handle calls during this time period.
- HOST will provide hotline service and outreaching service to service users outside the duty hours of social workers of SWD Hotline.



Operating hours of HOST

Monday to Friday :

- From 5:00 pm to 9:00 am of the following working day. The working day means a day from Monday to Saturday, excluding public holiday [i.e., the HOST has to provide full day service during all public holidays).

Saturday to Sunday :

- From 12:00 noon of Saturday to 9:00 am of following Monday or working day, whichever the later, if Monday is a public holiday.



Scope of service

1. Hotline service

- To provide immediate professional advice or counselling to service users over phone
- To handle callers forwarded by ICC requiring social work support
- To man the police referral line which is set up for police to refer cases in crisis intervention and in need of social work intervention
- To handle enquiries for service information, including those readily available in SWD website, from public or other professionals



Scope of service (cont'd)

- To make referrals to service units of SWD and NGOs, SWD after office hours outreaching teams, other government departments and other concerned parties as appropriate, if follow up intervention is required
- To provide communication backup support to SWD after office hours outreaching teams as required in order to facilitate their delivery of immediate outreaching and crisis intervention

Scope of service (cont'd)



2. Outreaching Service

- To perform outreaching duties in the form of, but not limited to, on-site support and assessment, counselling, escort to hospital, delivery of food / warm clothing, etc. during the operating hours for all necessary cases except the followings -
 - cases involving suspected child abuse and spouse battering
 - cases involving psychiatric emergency
 - suicidal cases
 - sexual violence cases
 - elder abuse cases
 - situations calling for specific statutory procedures to be handled only by a public officer, for example, a child requiring care or protection owing to the absence of parents or guardians
- To make referrals to other service units if follow up is still required after the outreaching conducted by the HOST



Essential service requirements

- To provide an effective and reliable hotline system with the capacity of at least 10 physical lines for in-coming calls, at least 2 separate physical lines designated for calls forwarded by ICC and at least 1 separate physical line for police referral line
- To have an effective disaster recovery plan to recover the hotline system within 12 hours and a contingency plan to maintain the hotline service in case of the shut-down of the hotline system



Essential service requirements (cont'd)

- To provide an effective and feasible staff deployment mechanism so as to ensure sufficient staffing to meet fluctuating number of incoming calls as well as outreaching requirements at any point of time
- The calls requiring counselling service should be handled by registered social workers with a recognized degree or diploma in social work



Essential service requirements (cont'd)

- The management of the HOST should be under the supervision and guidance of a registered social worker with a recognized degree in social work and not less than 5 years of experience in social work practice
- All the incoming calls should first be picked up by registered social workers with a recognized degree or diploma in social work for effective screening
- The outreaching service should be performed by registered social workers with a recognized degree or diploma in social work at any point of time for professional assessment and intervention



Premises

- The Operator is required to arrange an existing fitted out premises for the operation of the project.
- The Operator may apply for a minor Lotteries Fund grant (i.e., no more than \$400,000) for the necessary minor renovation.
- A provision of rent & rates subsidy at welfare rate will be released separately on actual reimbursement basis.



Hotline system

- The Operator must provide a hotline system, which should be accepted by SWD, to interface with SWD Hotline system, so that all calls made to SWD Hotline during the operating hours of HOST will be transferred to the hotline system of the HOST.
- The hotline system of the HOST must meet the following minimum requirements -



Hotline system (cont'd)

- a) at least 10 physical lines for in-coming calls, at least 2 separate physical lines designated for calls forwarded by ICC and at least 1 separate line for police referral line
- b) a display system showing the number and the time of waiting calls
- c) able to provide function of voice mail, to allow the callers to leave their messages for operators to call back
- able to cater at least 100 voice mails each with minimum length of 1 minute and allow the Operator to check the number and the recording time of voice mails left in the voice box



Hotline system (cont'd)

- d) able to detect call hang-up and release the telephone line within 5 seconds after a call is terminated, regardless of whether the termination is initiated by the caller or forcibly made by the System
- e) a device for supervisor to listen to the calls during the conversation between callers and workers
- f) at least 2 hours uninterruptible power supply when the normal power is cut off
- g) off-site backup system to support the disaster recovery plan



Hotline system (cont'd)

- The Operator may make use of existing hotline system owned/ operated by the agency, or through acquisition of service from the market, or a combination of both, for operating the hotline system. **Setting up of a completely new hotline system to be owned by the Operator is not acceptable.**
- The applicant should demonstrate in the submitted proposal that the hotline system to be used for the HOST does meet all the minimum requirements of the hotline system. Vetting committee may at its discretion conduct on-site inspection where necessary.



Hotline system (cont'd)

- The hotline system of the HOST should be in place by **September 2008** (i.e., at least one month before actual roll out) for testing of interface with SWD's existing hotline system and ICC before the commencement of service.



Crisis management & contingency plan

- The Operator must develop operational guidelines for crisis management as well as a contingency plan to specify strategies for the continuation of service, and should ensure that the contingency plan can be activated at all time.
- Inform SWD as soon as possible when the contingency plan is activated and the alternative mode of service is provided.
- No additional allowance or compensation in any form will be payable by SWD in implementing the contingency plan.



Fee charging

- The Operator should provide the service to the service users free of charge.



Output & Outcome standards

Output standards

Hotline service

Output Standard	Output Indicator	Minimum Level
1	The waiting time for the service users to get their calls answered by registered social workers should not exceed 30 seconds.	80% of the incoming calls
2	The return time for calls leaving voice mail should not exceed 15 minutes.	80% of the calls leaving voice mail



Output & Outcome standards (cont'd)

Output standards

Outreaching service

Output Standard	Output Indicator	Minimum Level
3	The time required for the registered social worker to arrive at the scene for those cases requiring immediate outreaching should not exceed 60 minutes.	80% of the cases



Output & Outcome standards (cont'd)

Outcome standards

Hotline service

Outcome Standard	Outcome Indicator	Minimum Level
1	Out of the total number of calls requiring counselling, the percentage of these calls with the service users having perceived improvement in the problem(s).	80%



Output & Outcome standards (cont'd)

Outcome standards

Outreaching service

Outcome Standard	Outcome Indicator	Minimum Level
2	Out of the total number of cases with outreaching provided, the percentage of these cases with the service users having perceived improvement in the problem(s).	70%

The Operator is requested to propose tool for measurement of the outcome standards



Output & Outcome standards (cont'd)

- The Operator is requested to indicate **additional output/outcome measures** and **the level of attainment** they expect to achieve in their proposals, in particular objective / measurable outcome indicators showing the effectiveness of the hotline and outreaching service to assist service users, for example, the minimum number of counselling calls handled simultaneously.
- The pledged additional output / outcome measures and level of attainment will form an integral part of the Funding and Service Agreement (FSA).



Project duration and funding

- The HOST is a 3-year project tentatively commencing service on **1 October 2008** and operating up to **30 September 2011**.
- An annual contract sum of **\$4.82Mn** at 2007-08 price level will be allocated on a lump sum grant basis to the Operator to deliver the service. The lump sum includes all the expenses relating to the hotline system, its enhancement and maintenance.



Control mechanism

- To comply with the requirements as laid down in the Service Specification, the FSA, as well as the Operator's proposal and supplementary information, if any, as agreed with SWD.
- Continuation of service for the next term will be subject to assessment on the need for the service and performance of the Operator. SWD reserves the right to reallocate the project.



Control mechanism (cont'd)

- Where there is any change to the performance standards within the agreement period, SWD will seek mutual agreement with the Operator and the Operator will be required to achieve new requirements in accordance with the agreed implementation schedule.
- SWD reserves the right to apply the following monitoring methods -
 - announced and unannounced visits at periodic intervals; and
 - assessment of the implementation of Service Quality Standards (SQSs).



Control mechanism (cont'd)

- Monthly statistics, which is submitted on quarterly basis, on the output/outcome requirements and those additional/new items pledged by the Operator, and other relevant information as required in a prescribed format and time frame.
- Submit financial report and audited account on an annual basis.
- The Government reserves the right to suspend or terminate the agreement with the Operator before the expiry date. The Operator is obliged to facilitate the transitional arrangement as required.



Implementation schedule

Date

Task

24 April 2008

Invitation of proposals

6 June 2008

Closing of submission of proposals

June 2008

Vetting of proposals

July 2008

Announcement of results

October 2008

Commencement of service

Submission of proposal



- Applicants are required to submit a proposal -
 - not more than 20 A-4 pages for main content
 - pages formatted to font size = 12 / line spacing = 1 / margins = 2.5 cm
 - and not more than 50 pages in total including attachments
 - together with the required documents as stated in **Annex** of the Service Specification under seal
- Information to be included in the proposal is at **Annex** of the Service Specification.



Submission of proposal (cont'd)

- Applicants should submit **5 hard copies and 1 soft copy of the proposal on or before 6 June 2008 (Friday) at 5:00 pm** to the following address **by hand** -

Family and Child Welfare Branch

(Attn : Miss Maria Lau)

Social Welfare Department

Room 721, Wu Chung House

213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Hong Kong



Assessment of application

- A Vetting Committee will be set up by SWD to assess the proposals on the basis of -
 - ✓ knowledge and relevant experience of the agency
 - ✓ reliability of hotline system
 - ✓ staffing arrangement
 - ✓ flexibility in meeting changing situations
 - ✓ coordination and interfacing strategies



Assessment of application (cont'd)

- ✓ implementation plan of the project
 - ✓ management support
 - ✓ value-added proposals
 - ✓ other merits of the proposals
- Applicants may be invited to present their proposals to the Vetting Committee if needed.



Enquiries

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Q & A

