

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

(A) **Anti-drug Work in Hong Kong**

- 1.1 The Government fights against drugs through a multi-pronged strategy as set out in paragraphs of 1.2 to 1.6 below.
- 1.2 **Preventive Education and Publicity (PE&P)** is the first line of defence in combating drug abuse. Anti-drug education and publicity programmes raise the awareness of the public on the harms of drugs, and appeal to them to stay away from drugs. Through different platforms and channels, the goal of the PE&P efforts is to promote early identification of hidden drug abusers and encourage early help-seeking. To ensure the effectiveness and efficacy of PE&P initiatives, the Narcotics Division (ND) consults the Action Committee Against Narcotics (ACAN) and its Sub-committee on PE&P regularly in reviewing and devising relevant strategic directions and work plans.
- 1.3 The provision of **Treatment and Rehabilitation (T&R)** services helps drug abusers overcome addiction, quit drugs, maintain abstinence, and eventually reintegrate into the society. The Government has long adopted a multi-modality approach to render T&R services, so as to cater to the diverse needs of drug abusers from varying backgrounds.
- 1.4 On **Legislation**, the Government all along remains vigilant in monitoring global and local drug trends, and takes timely action to bring new substances under legislative control. The Government from time to time proposes amendments to the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134) and Control of Chemicals Ordinance (Cap. 145) to include new substances under statutory control, having regard to a host of relevant factors, including international control requirements, the uses and harmful effects of the substances, severity of abuse in the local and overseas contexts, advice of ACAN and relevant authorities, etc. One of the aims of such exercise is to ensure that law enforcement agencies in Hong Kong could respond effectively to the drug scene.

- 1.5 On the front of **Law Enforcement**, law enforcement agencies are fully committed to combating illegal drug-related activities, including trafficking, possession, import, export, supply and manufacture of dangerous drugs. The strategy of targeting drug supply at source through stemming the illegal import of dangerous drugs, strengthening the policing of black spots, targeting drug trafficking on the Internet and social media, and deploying other measures to combat drug trafficking is adopted.
- 1.6 On **External Cooperation**, the Government is committed to international and regional efforts to combat drug trafficking and abuse all along, and has established extensive networks with external counterparts in dealing with drug problem. Through actively participating in regional and international drug fora, Hong Kong has established extensive networks with counterparts from various jurisdictions. As the drug problem knows no boundary, the Government continues to closely co-operate and co-ordinate efforts with other jurisdictions.
- 1.7 **Research** is an important component to support the evidence-based anti-drug strategy in Hong Kong. ND and ACAN have from time to time commissioned or supported various research projects and surveys. To gain deeper understandings on various drug-related areas and to explore effective solutions, in particular those that would be applicable to the local context, researches on different drug-related topics such as drug harms, drug-taking subculture, and analysis of drug-related research data would continue to be encouraged. Since the establishment of Beat Drugs Fund (BDF) Regular Funding Scheme in 1996, a total of 81 projects with research elements have been supported. There are also surveys of drug use among students and public opinion surveys on anti-drug publicity measures. Research and survey findings are uploaded to ND's website¹ while ND proactively shares research findings on T&R with the relevant sectors to facilitate the development of evidence-based T&R services.

¹ The relevant research projects and surveys can be found on https://www.nd.gov.hk/en/research_reports.html.

1.8 The drug situation and anti-drug efforts in Hong Kong are reported to the Legislative Council from time to time² to keep the public informed of the latest drug situation, the Government's work against drugs, and to raise public awareness of drug issues in Hong Kong.

(B) Objective of Three-year Plan for 2024 - 2026

1.9 Under the policy of encouraging and helping drug abusers to achieve abstinence, the objectives of this Three-year Plan are –

- (a) to evaluate the existing T&R programmes in Hong Kong and assess whether the services provided align with the latest drug scene and service needs;
- (b) to identify areas for adjustment and enhancement of the existing T&R services; and
- (c) to advise on the strategic directions to which T&R services should take in the three-year period from 2024 to 2026.

(C) Preparation of Three-year Plan for 2024 - 2026

1.10 The Three-year Plan is the fruit of partnership between ND and the anti-drug sector. During the preparation, ND consulted representatives of more than 80 parties through 28 meetings and focus group discussions held between April and September 2023. These parties included counselling centres for psychotropic substance abusers and centre for drug counselling, drug treatment and rehabilitation centres, substance abuse clinics of the Hospital Authority (HA), district youth outreaching social work teams and overnight outreaching teams for young night drifters, outreaching teams for ethnic minorities, grantees of BDF, organisations providing support services for sexual minorities and sex workers, and relevant Government departments and experts in the anti-drug sector.

² In 2023, ND reported the drug situation in Hong Kong in 2022 to the Legislative Council Panel on Security on 6 June 2023. The paper and minutes of the panel meeting can be found on <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr2023/chinese/panels/se/papers/se20230606cb2-499-4-c.pdf> and <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr2023/english/panels/se/minutes/se20230606.pdf> respectively.

- 1.11 The preparation of the Three-year Plan was supported by the Working Group on the Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong (2024-2026) (Working Group), comprising members from a broad range of relevant fields including social welfare service units, drug treatment and rehabilitation agencies, medical professionals, academics, HA, and relevant Government bureaux and departments (B/Ds) and led by Professor Dennis WONG Sing-wing, the Chairman of ACAN Sub-committee on Treatment and Rehabilitation (T&R Sub-committee). The membership list and terms of reference of Working Group are at **Annex A**.
- 1.12 The framework for consultation as well as the formulation of this Three-year Plan were discussed and reviewed by ACAN, its T&R Sub-committee and the Drug Liaison Committee (DLC).

(D) Implementation and Follow-up

- 1.13 ND will disseminate this Three-year Plan to respective stakeholders, including relevant Government B/Ds, HA and non-governmental organisations for reference in planning and developing their services and programmes. It will also make the document available on its website. Views on areas other than T&R services collected during consultation will be shared with relevant parties through established mechanisms for consideration and follow-up as appropriate.
- 1.14 ND will maintain close liaison with the stakeholders to follow up on the implementation of the recommended strategic directions, and report progress to ACAN, its T&R Sub-committee and DLC as and when necessary.