

CMAB launches training resources to enhance sensitivity of medical and healthcare professionals towards sexual minorities

The Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau (CMAB) today (January 28) held a briefing session to introduce to medical and healthcare professionals new training resources aimed at enhancing their knowledge of and sensitivity towards sexual minorities. Around 80 representatives from various professional bodies from the medical and healthcare sector attended the briefing.

The training resources have been developed by clinical psychologists of the Social Welfare Department who have rich experience in designing and teaching relevant courses. The resources comprise two parts. The first part is the generic content aimed at enhancing the knowledge of medical and healthcare professionals on the fundamental concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as the concerns of and services needed by sexual minorities. The second part is related specifically to the medical and healthcare field, including the possible scenarios the practitioners may encounter and the handling skills they can adopt when providing services to sexual minorities, as well as the sources for obtaining further information and advice in dealing with complicated cases.

Addressing the briefing session, the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip, said, "The Government has all along been committed to promoting equal opportunities for people of different sexual orientations and transgendered persons with a view to fostering the culture and values of inclusiveness, mutual respect and non-discrimination. One of the key initiatives is to provide domain-specific training resources to cater for the needs of different fields to enhance the knowledge and sensitivity of respective practitioners towards sexual minorities.

"I express my gratitude to all the experts who have helped draw up the training resources, and all the medical and healthcare professionals who have generously shared their invaluable advice. This has enabled us to produce suitable training resources that cater well for the actual circumstances and needs of the medical and healthcare industry. I hope that the training resources would be included as part of the pre-service or in-service training of the various medical and healthcare departments, institutions and organisations so that practitioners can provide more suitable services to sexual minorities.

"We will also continue to roll out training resources targeting social workers, human resources professionals and teachers in due course."

He added, "In addition to drawing up these training resources, we have

been supporting sexual minorities by implementing a series of measures, including subsidising a 24-hour support hotline, PRIDE Line, operated by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals. PRIDE Line provides instant support, counselling and referral services for sexual minorities and their family members to relieve the stress and difficulties they face in everyday life. Since its establishment in January last year, the hotline has provided services to over 2 400 users. Regular support groups and interest classes have also been organised for different groups of sexual minorities.

"At the same time, we have been actively promoting to employers the Code of Practice against Discrimination in Employment on the Ground of Sexual Orientation. At present, more than 300 organisations employing over 500 000 employees have adopted the Code. We are also drawing up a charter on non-discrimination of sexual minorities covering various domains for voluntary adoption by service providers. We will continue our efforts in promotion and education through multiple channels such as online platforms, television, radio, newspapers, seminars and briefings to promote the message of equal opportunities for people of different sexual orientations and transgendered persons."

Medical and healthcare professional bodies that are interested in further understanding the training resources are welcome to contact the CMAB Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Unit by phone at 2810 3205 or by email to gisou@cmab.gov.hk.