

Strategic directions of drug treatment and rehabilitation services for 2021-2023

The Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau today (March 31) promulgated the Three-year Plan on Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services in Hong Kong for 2021-2023. The Plan recommends the strategic directions for the drug treatment and rehabilitation (T&R) services between 2021 and 2023.

In February 2020, a working group comprising representatives from T&R agencies, counselling centres, academia, the medical services and government departments was formed to oversee the formulation of the Plan. Dr Ben Cheung, the then Chairman of the Action Committee Against Narcotics (ACAN), led the working group.

Speaking on the preparation of the Plan, Dr Cheung said, "The formulation of Three-year Plans has been a consensus-building process among stakeholders involved in the T&R services. The Narcotics Division conducted an extensive consultation exercise to tap views and ideas on drug-related issues from stakeholders of the anti-drug field in preparation of this ninth Three-year Plan. The Plan aims to recommend broad strategic directions for service providers to review and develop their own action plans and programmes having regard to the latest drug scene."

The ACAN Chairman, Dr Donald Li, said, "The steady decline in the number of reported drug abusers since its peak in 2008 reflects the joint efforts of the Government and the anti-drug sector over the past years. Yet, the evolving drug scene and emergence of new drugs continue to present new challenges to the anti-drug work. Thanks to the work of the working group and the Narcotics Division, the Plan provides useful directions to guide the T&R services in the coming three years."

The Commissioner for Narcotics, Ms Ivy Law, thanked Dr Cheung and members of the working group, as well as the anti-drug stakeholders for sharing candidly their invaluable experience and views.

Ms Law said, "With the benefits of the views received, the Plan sets out a host of 33 strategic directions to guide the T&R services in the coming three years. The Narcotics Division, in partnership with stakeholders, will continue to oversee and co-ordinate efforts as appropriate in pursuing T&R initiatives along the strategic directions."

The strategic directions in the Plan are grouped under seven aspects, namely "collaboration"; "prompt response to changing drug scene and social environment"; "early medical intervention and support"; "targeted services for different groups of drug abusers"; "aftercare services"; "capacity building of relevant personnel"; and "others". The full text of the Plan is

available on the Narcotics Division's website (www.nd.gov.hk/en/index.htm).

T&R is an essential component of the multi-pronged anti-drug strategy, which also covers preventive education and publicity, legislation and law enforcement, external co-operation, and research.