



The Development of Community Mental Health Support Services and Peer Support Service in Hong Kong – Overview and Way Forward

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***Development of
Community Mental Health
Support Services in Hong Kong***

Background

- To enhance the social support and re-integration of the ex-mentally ill persons into the community, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) revamped the community mental health support services in October 2010 to set up 24 **Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness (ICCMWs)** through 11 NGOs in 18 districts across the territory.

ICCMW Service



- ICCMW provides district-based and comprehensive one-stop community support services, ranging from prevention to risk management, to ex-mentally ill persons, persons with suspected mental health problems, their families/carers and residents living in the community.

Resource Allocation

- To work in line with the Personalised Care Programme for patients with severe mental illness of the Hospital Authority and to provide more intensive services to the service users, the Government has injected resources repeatedly to enhance the manpower to ICCMWs.
- The annual allocation to ICCMWs has soared from HK\$135 million (US\$17.5 million) in 2010 to over HK\$303 million (US\$39.4 million), an increase by 124%.

Resource Allocation (con't)

- In 2017-18, ICCMW's manpower has been further strengthened to enhance outreaching services for hidden or unmotivated service targets in the community.
- In 2018-19, clinical psychological posts will be set up and additional social workers be provided in ICCMWs to step up professional support for the needy.

Pilot Project on Peer Support Service in Community Psychiatric Service Units

- With funding support of about HK\$ 10 million (US\$1.3 million) from the Lotteries Fund, SWD, through 11 NGOs operating ICCMW services, has implemented the 2-year Pilot Project on Peer Support Service in Community Psychiatric Service Units since March 2016.

Objectives

- to equip suitable ex-mentally ill persons as **Peer Supporters** with a view to speeding up their own recovery and helping other ex-mentally ill persons in need;
- to provide peer support for ex-mentally ill persons in recovery through trained peer supporters; and
- to enhance public acceptance of ex-mentally ill persons.

Scope of the Pilot Project

- The Pilot Project provides 32 full-time equivalent peer supporter positions.
- The NGO operators can employ peer supporters on part-time or full-time basis subject to actual operational situation but shall make sure the employment conditions are in compliance with the Employment Ordinance.

Role of Project Operators

The NGO operators shall:

- provide training and coaching to peer supporters to equip them with fundamental knowledge and skills to perform their duties; and
- provide training and employment assistance to peer supporters to facilitate them to take up employment in the open market

Roles of Peer Supporters

The Peer Supporters shall:

- provide emotional and recovery support for other ex-mentally ill persons by performing simple counselling during interviews and/or concern calls;
- assist the professionals to conduct outreaching or concern visits; and
- assist in planning and conducting recovery groups/programmes and public education programmes.

Updated Situation

- As at December 2017, 46 peer supporters are serving in the community psychiatric service units which include ICCMWs, halfway houses or vocational rehabilitation service units to provide peer support service to those in need.

Evaluation

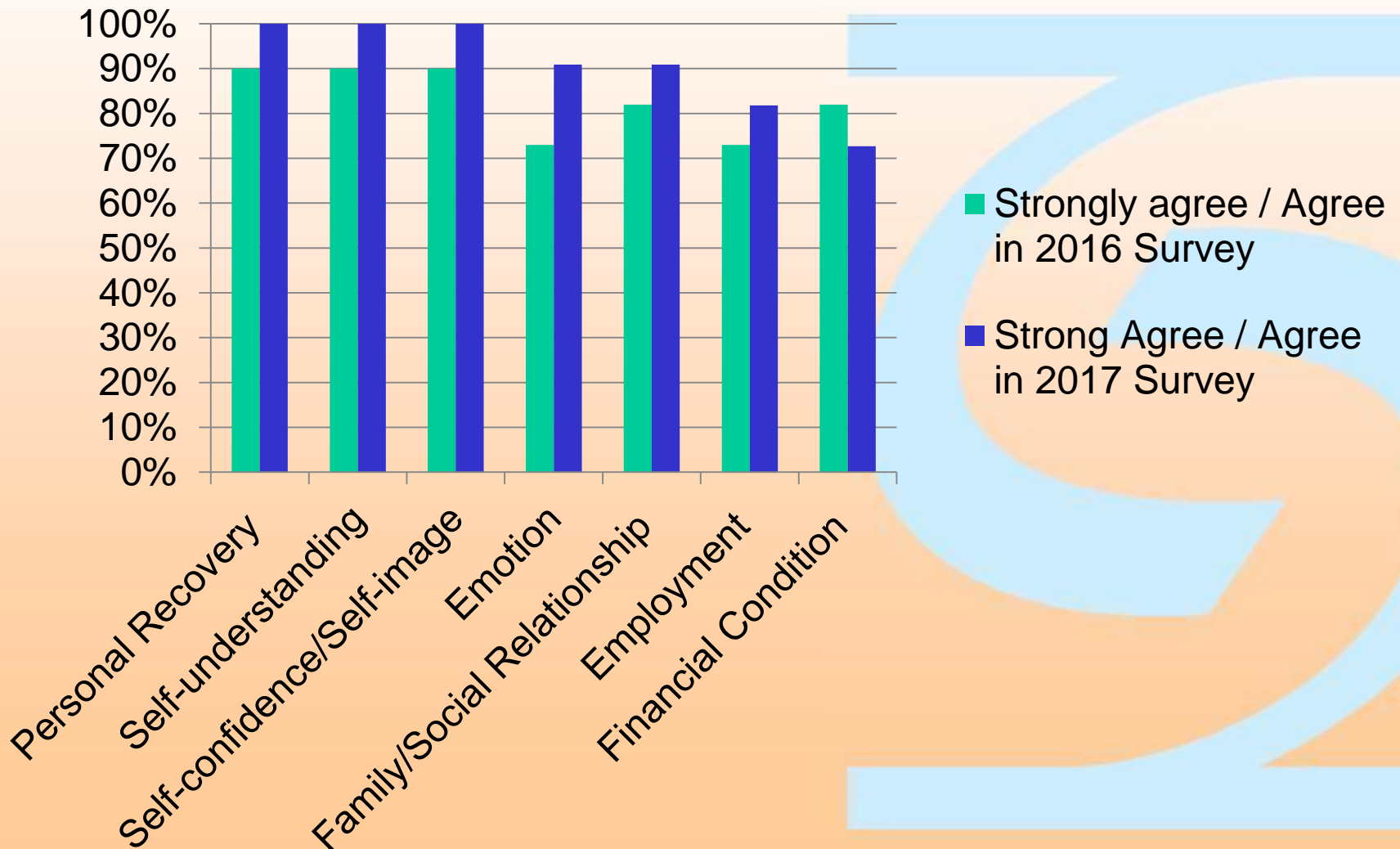
- To understand the effectiveness of the Pilot Project, evaluation has been conducted through:
- close communication with NGO operators
 - meeting with peer supporters
 - surveys to collect feedback from service operators, peer supporters and service users in July 2016 and July 2017 (totally over 1000 completed questionnaires collected in two surveys)

Findings of the Survey in 2016 and 2017



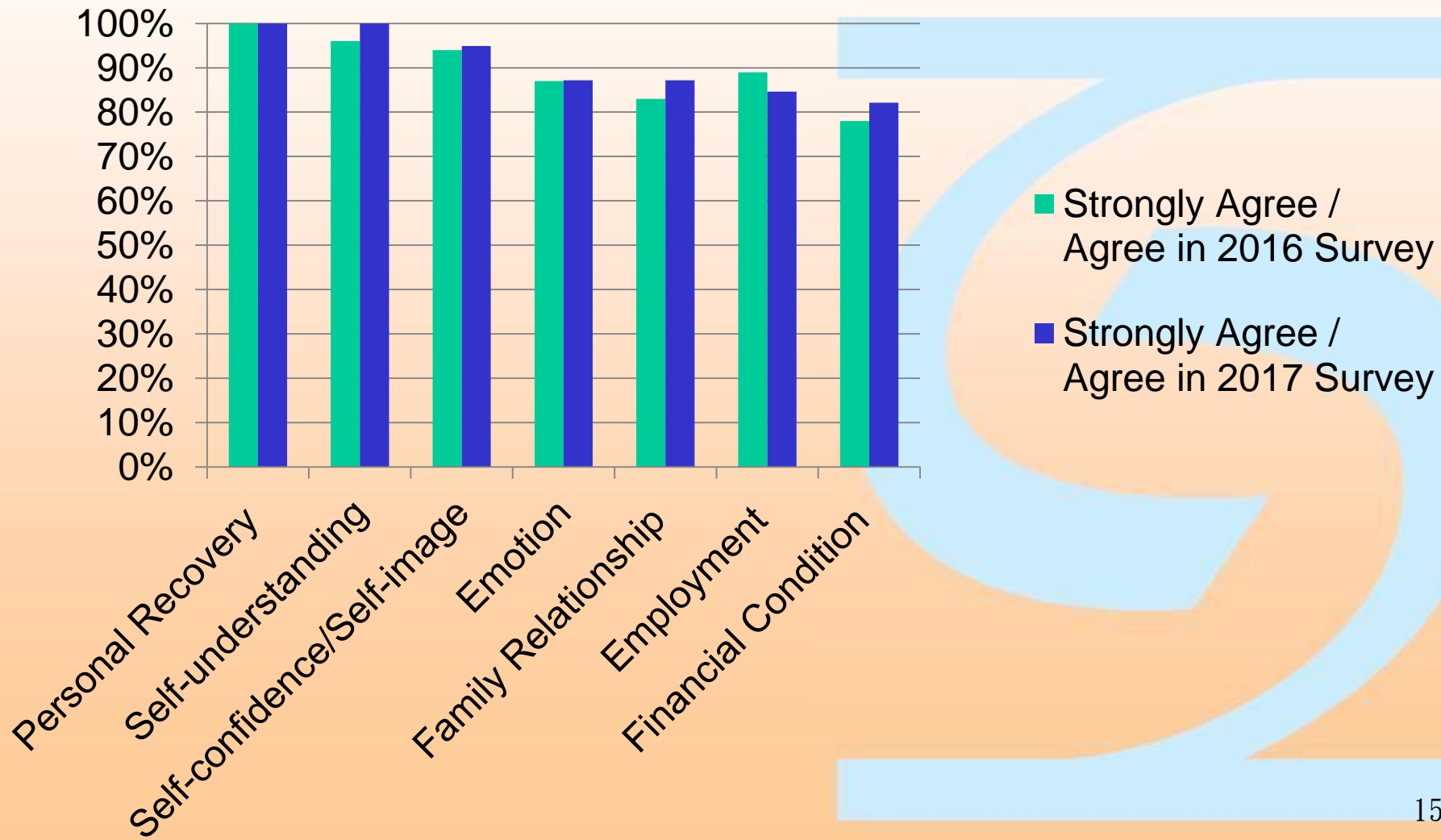
From Service Operators' Perspective:

Peer supporters' improvement after taking up the post



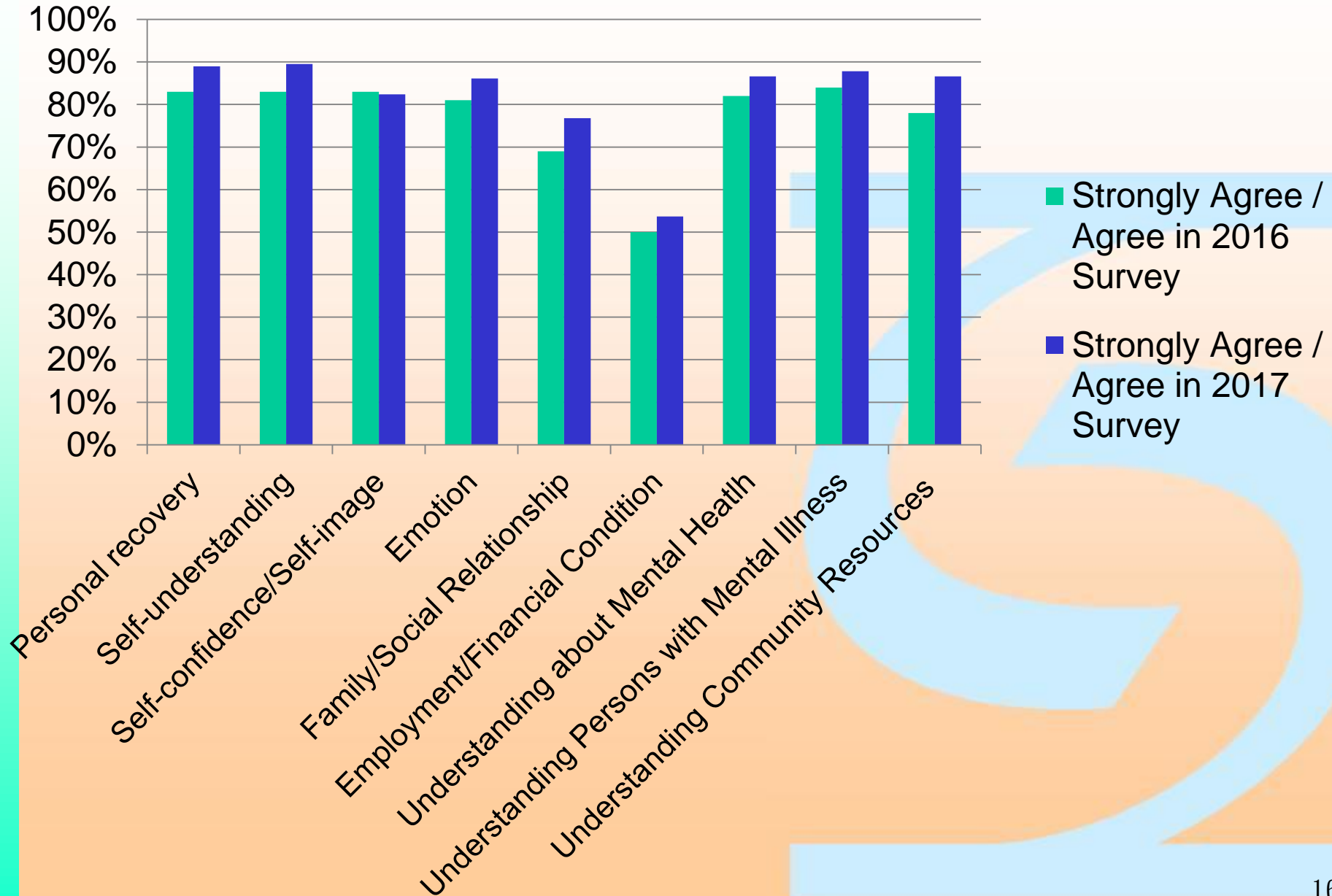
From Peer Supporters' Perspective:

Improvement after taking up the post



From Service users' Perspective:

Improvement after receiving peer support service



Way Forward

- With positive outcome and effectiveness of the Pilot Project, around \$8 million (US\$ 1.04 million) of annual recurrent funding has been secured for regularising the peer support service upon completion of the Pilot Project at end March of 2018
- Number of full-time equivalent peer supporter posts will be increased from 32 to 40

Thank You