

Direction for the New Governance of Social Service Delivery: Insights from Organizations Supporting Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities during COVID-19

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Date : 24 January 2024 (Wednesday)
Time : 4:00pm
Zoom Link : <https://cityu.zoom.us/j/94148584028?pwd=d01hUDBaUXZPMnVYMWw3THlFaSs5Zz09>
Meeting ID: 941 4858 4028 Password: 324662
Moderator : Prof. Sylvia Kwok
Language : English

Abstract

Traditional social service delivery focuses on the dyadic relationships between service users and other professional bodies, with less emphasis on the development of informal social relationships and social support systems. We examine the interactions between people with intellectual disabilities and their social environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results indicate that unilateral systems of support with limited participation of other systems lead people with intellectual disabilities to live segregated lives, even though they reside in the community. To fully realize the right of inclusion in society for all people with intellectual disabilities, there is a need for a shared-care model that provides care in the community by the community through the establishment of neighbourly relations and expansion of the social networks of people with intellectual disabilities. We advocate for a shift in the role of social service providers and a reconsideration of establishing gemeinschaft-type relations in a gesellschaft society.

Biography

Dr. Michelle Hei Yan Shum is Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work at Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU). She is an experienced registered social worker with extensive exposure to diverse social work practices and has also served as the Director of the Master of Social Science in Social Work program at HKBU. Before awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, she had awarded the degree of Juris Doctor. Her research interests include law and social policy, social work ethics, socio-legal study on third-sector development, social service management, and community development. Prior to joining HKBU, Dr. Shum held the position of Honorary Lecturer at The University of Hong Kong (HKU), where she primarily conducted courses on law and social administration, as well as law and philanthropy, for undergraduate and post-graduate students. She has been teaching courses on legal knowledge for social workers at both HKBU and HKU for a decade. Currently, she also serves as a Committee Member of the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society.

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