

Introducing government funded social services in Shanghai

Social worker's & attitudes

Background:

The three organizations work with high-risk population and have similar background. In 2003, in order to reduce crime rate and increase social harmony, **Shanghai Politics and Law committee** lead the establishment of three organizations to work with three high risk populations. First, in 2003, 4 districts started as pilot district and social workers were hired into three different organizations working in the 4 districts in August. In November, 2003, Shanghai held its first social worker certificate tests. In 2004, three organizations were spread to **19 districts and counties**. Now the three organizations covers 13 districts and one county. Pudong, Fengxian and Songjiang district established their own social work system. All three organizations share same structure as well as a government department serve as their supervisor. They have program managers working in the **headquarter** and social workers working in **district office** in every district. At least one social worker will work in sub-district. All three organizations got **almost all their funds from government**. The departments also provide resources and policy support. Salaries of social workers are slightly different depends on which district the social workers in. According to the interviewees, **the range of salary is about 6000**. Social Workers in these organizations will be ranked by different **levels from Junior 10-1 to Senior 1-5** according to their working length of service and what degree or certificate they hold. Different level of social workers will have different basic salary which is universal. Different district will have different bonus every month. In a word, the organization do not have the full freedom of how to use their funds. The three organizations all require their employees to complete at least 48 hours of training sessions. Some district offices require additional hours of training. Those trainings are designed for different positions. For front line social workers, they provide basic theory of social work and the area they focus on, working skills and case study. For supervisors, they have social workers from HongKong or Taiwan to hold training sessions. For managers, there are program related trainings.

Sampling:

- 1) Total number of 15 participants. 4 program managers from different organizations, 2 districts office leader, 2 vice district office leaders. Other interviewees are all front line social workers.
- 2) Participants are aged from 24-55. 2 of them are male and 13 female. 13 of them have been worked in this area for nearly 10 years.
- 3) 14 interviewees were graduated from vocational college, when they got into this career and one of them majored in Social Work. One interviewee was graduated with a bachelor in Social Work. Most of the other participants were majored in Law related subjects.
- 4) Except one interviewee that has only worked in this area for less than a year, all of the other interviewees have had the official certification of social worker.
- 5) All interviewees are Shanghai citizens. They are working in 8 different districts in Shanghai.
- 6) Participants were recruited using purposeful sampling except one (who recruited by snowball sampling).

Social workers' attitudes toward the career

Most social workers believed that this job is meaningful. Especially for those who have been worked for 10 years, they showed gratitude for doing this job.

Several meanings were identified by them:

For individuals:

- 1) Personal Growth: personality change; family relationship; reputation growth, etc.

For society:

- 1) Helpers: help individual
- 2) Glues: connect different departments in the society; re-organize resources;
- 3) Promoters: to move the society to be better;

For policy makers:

All social workers interviewed had a point that they want to quit the career. Some common factors are showed as indicators of turnover:

- 1) Low pays: they are not quiet satisfied with their salary and those program managers believe the low pays is the crucial reasons of the turnover rate and difficulties of hiring.
- 2) Professional growth: some of the interviewees said that the reason they wanted to leave was to seek for higher professional growth.
- 3) The stress faced by male workers to support the family.
- 4) Perseived injustice: interviewees feel that their job duties are similar to that of a government employee but government employees earn more and have higher social status.

ZiQiang Social Services



关爱·乐助·自强

Have around 700 employees;
Targeted population: drug users among Shanghai Citizen who have been released by institutions.

Provide individual case work, therapy, group sessions to help them re-buid social connections and find a job;
Connect law enforcement;

XinHang Community Service



Has around 500 employees;
Targeted population: individuals who have just been released from prison and those who serve their probation in community;

Their duties are similar with ZiQiang Social Services.

Sunshine Community Youth Affiar Center



Have around 500 employees;
Targeted population: Youth aged from 14-25 who are drop-outs, un-employed or without legal guardian.

Except for individual case work, their work consist of more programs to empower their clients so that they can either go back to school or find a job.

Shanghai Enrichment Community Center



上海屋里厢社区服务中心

Under a big social service network called NPI, their work focus on community building. It has 66 employees.

Almost 75% percent of it' s funding is from government program but not restricted to Shanghai.