

## ***Consultancy Study*** **of Women's Helpline Service Statistics**

Prepared for:  
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## I. Summary of findings

**1. Steady Increase in Service Users:** Between 2017 and 2024, 11,054 service users sought help through the helpline service. There was a noticeable increase in service users from 1,548 in 2017-2018 to 1,592 in 2023-2024, with a peak of 1,805 cases in 2022-2023 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2. Characteristics of the Women's Helpline Service Clientele:** Most service users were of working age, between 30 and 59. Most were married, with a significant portion married for over ten years. The majority of service users (58.7%) had one or more children; younger children were more common among those who had children. Most were homemakers or full-time employees, with most having attained a secondary education degree. Additionally, most service users were Chinese born in the Mainland and had resided in Hong Kong for over seven years. The proportion of service users receiving CSSA remained consistently low.

**3. Changes in Clientship:** Service users' age, level of education, and proportion of Hong Kong-born have increased. Employment trends showed a decrease in unemployed service users, whereas the share of part-time employees increased throughout the period.

**4. Trends in Service Users' Relationship, Legal, and Life Issues:** Among the issues reported, family relationships and relationship problems were the most common. There was a moderate increase in reports of a spouse's addiction, parent-child communication problems, issues with in-laws, and child abuse. Regarding legal matters, divorce laws and procedures were by far the most frequently addressed concerns over the years. In terms of life issues, financial issues or debt, housing concerns, and the pressure of caring for the family were most often mentioned by service users.

**5. Trends in Mental and Physical Well-being of Clients:** Over one-third of service users reported feeling depressed and anxious. A notable increase was observed in cases related to low self-esteem or body image issues, while cases involving suicidal thoughts or attempts remained relatively stable at a lower level. Cases of mood disorders or mental illnesses displayed an upward trend after 2022, reaching around 10%. Regarding physical health, the number of service users reporting issues concerning gynecopathy, menopause, or sexually transmitted diseases remained relatively low, ranging between 0% and 2%.

**6. Factors Associated with Compromised Mental Health:** Logistic regression analysis revealed that compromised mental health among service users was significantly associated with issues related to family relationships, spousal or intimate relationship problems, domestic violence and abuse, harassment and discrimination, and financial insecurity. Those who have sought legal assistance regarding domestic violence, harassment, or discrimination based on sex or family status were 1.5 to 2.88 times more likely to experience low self-esteem. A higher level of anxiety or depression was significantly associated with

consulting about labour laws and encountering spousal and intimate relationship problems. Lastly, service users who have contracted sexually transmitted diseases were four times more susceptible to mood disorders.

**7. Factors Associated with Engaging in Divorce and Undergoing Domestic Violence and Harassment Legal Proceedings:** The most common life issues resulting in clients engaging in divorce included a spouse's extramarital affairs, being abandoned by a spouse and other relationship problems. Other essential factors leading to engagement with divorce include having a spouse in debt, the experience of housing issues, and physical, mental, or sexual abuse. Clients who reported domestic abuse or child abuse were significantly more likely to undergo domestic violence and harassment legal proceedings.

**8. Factors Associated with Financial and Housing Issues and Pressures of Caring for the Family:** There was an upward trend in clients dealing with housing issues and the burden of caring for the family. Service users who inquired on legal matters related to debt and bankruptcy, reported a spouse in debt, or lacked sufficient housekeeping money were also likelier to report financial issues. Financial (debt, lack of adequate housekeeping money) and relationship issues (domestic violence, abuse) contributed to housing issues. Service users who had problems with family member relationships, from separation between Mainland China and HK, and parent-child communication issues were more likely to struggle with the pressures of caring for the family.

**9. Divorce and Mental Health Outcomes:** Logistic regression results indicate that divorce is not a significant factor in worsening mental health outcomes once socio-demographic characteristics of helpline clients and other life and legal issues are controlled for; however, among those undergoing a divorce, service users faced significantly higher risks to their mental health, particularly when contending with challenges related to family member relationships, the pressures of caregiving, conflicts with in-laws, abuse, as well as their spouse's extramarital affairs and addiction.

**10. Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic:** The pandemic has been linked to notable increases in various personal and relationship issues, particularly those related to family and financial matters, such as spouses' extramarital affairs, caregiver's burden, parent-child communication, relationships with in-laws, debts, and insufficient housekeeping money.

**11. Service Users' Assistance-Seeking Behaviours:** Regarding the services provided to service users, emotional support was the most frequently offered service, with an upward trend noted in the provision of legal information services during the reporting period. Overall, service users were satisfied with the Women's Helpline Service. Amongst others, helpline service users who experienced domestic violence, abuse, menopause or financial issues were more likely to have previously sought assistance from other social service organisations or hotlines. Service users who struggled with debt and information about sexual attitudes and knowledge were less likely to seek help from their social contacts before contacting the helpline service.

## II. Policy Implications and Suggestions

**1. Legal Empowerment 法律充權** : The findings reveal a rising trend in legal issues related to divorce laws and procedures, as well as domestic violence or harassment reported by service users during the observation period. Grappling with these legal challenges is significantly linked to deteriorating mental health. This evidence underscores the urgent need to improve women's awareness of their legal rights, which could be achieved by ensuring their access to affordable legal services and offering workshops designed to equip them with basic legal knowledge, fostering self-empowerment.

**2. Economic Empowerment 經濟充權** : The report shows that a majority of the service users are homemakers who have been facing financial difficulties and family problems, significantly impacting their mental well-being. Under traditional societal norms, women's economic dependence on their husbands often hinders their ability to leave a family environment plagued by domestic violence or other issues. Enhancing women's financial independence is crucial for empowering them within the domestic sphere.

**3. Carer Friendly Policy 照顧者就業友善措施** : To facilitate a balance between work and family responsibilities, the government should play a pivotal role in creating a women-friendly workplace. This could be achieved through policies and legislation that provide caregivers flexible working hours, increase community childcare services, and introduce caregiving leave. Furthermore, the government could offer more vocational training, as well as employment and entrepreneurship support, for women of varying educational backgrounds, ages, and family statuses. This would empower them to build their careers and engage in entrepreneurial endeavours. Regarding support for caregivers, the government should consider expanding the carer allowance scheme to encompass carers of various care recipients, particularly young children, to help alleviate their financial burdens.

**4. Strengthening Gender Education 加強性別教育** : The report indicates that service users are struggling with issues related to family, spousal or intimate relationships, domestic violence, abuse, harassment, and discrimination. These issues highlight the prevalence of gender inequality in the domestic and public spheres. This evidence affirms the necessity of promoting gender awareness and encouraging the participation of individuals of gender identities. This could be achieved by integrating gender education elements into the formal curriculum of primary and secondary schools to foster gender awareness from an early age. Additionally, the government could support non-governmental organisations in providing education programs on gender equality and equal opportunities to the public.

**5. Mental Health Support 精神健康支援** : The research highlights that women in Hong Kong are facing a variety of mental health challenges stemming from family problems, relationship issues, and financial strains. Although a significant portion of these women did not seek any help, among those who did, only a small fraction received formal support from social services

or medical institutions. To address women's mental health needs more effectively, the government and service providers should promote gender-responsive mental health care at various levels of service provision. This approach would assist women in the community in identifying mental health risks early on and facilitate their access to appropriate care. Furthermore, to alleviate the burden on caregivers, service providers could develop activities tailored to meet the mental health needs of female caregivers. Providing childcare services during these activities would also help relieve women of their gendered caregiving responsibilities.

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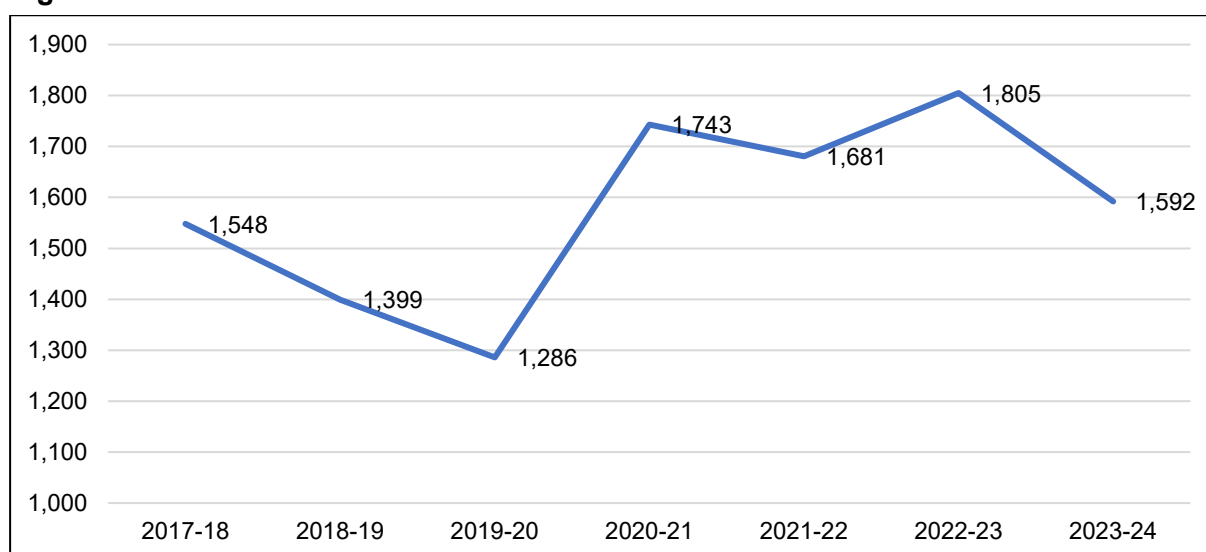
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## II. Seven-Year Trends

### 1. Total Number of Cases

This section presents descriptive results of the socio-demographic characteristics of service users seeking assistance through the Women’s Helpline Service from January 2017 to March 2024. Overall, 11,054 service users with valid data sought help during these seven years. We present the statistics by year and in total and explore whether any noticeable shifts in service user characteristics are discernible. Data visualisations are included to facilitate the interpretation of trends in the HKFWC’s Women’s Helpline Service users. Overall, there was an increase in the number of service users, with a peak of 1,805 cases in 2022-2023 during the COVID-19 pandemic (see **Figure 1**).

**Figure 1. Trend in the Number of Service Users**

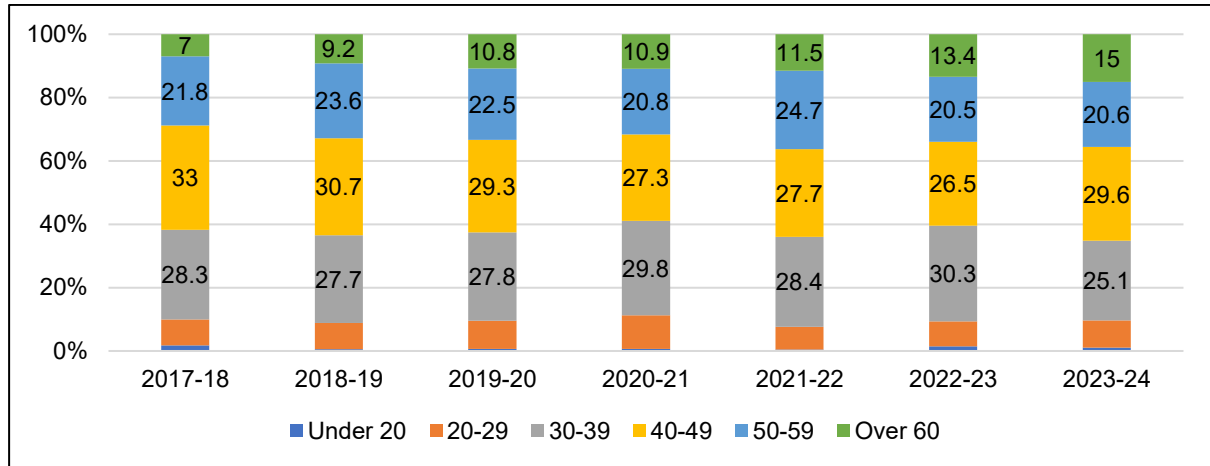


### 2. Service Users’ Socio-Demographic Characteristics

#### 2.1 AGE

*Table 1* shows the frequency and percentage distribution of age groups of the Women’s Helpline Service users over the past eight years (from January 2017 to March 2024). The age groups are divided into six categories: under 20, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and over 60. Most service users were of **working age**, i.e. 30-39 (28.3%), 40-49 (29.1%), and 50-59 (22.0), respectively. The age groups under 20 (1%), between 20-29 (8.4%), and over 60 (11.2%) used the Women’s Helpline Service less frequently in comparison. However, considering the trends over time, the percentage of service users over 60 has increased steadily from 2019-2020, whereas the total share of those aged 30-39 has decreased recently (see **Figure 2**).

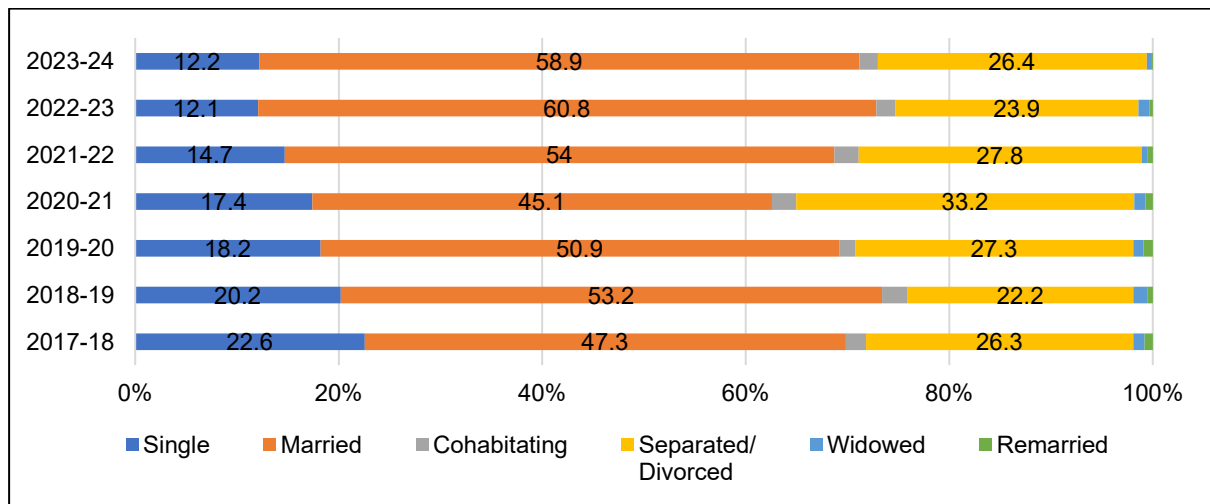
**Figure 2. Service Users' Age Group Distribution**



## 2.2 MARITAL STATUS

*Table 2* shows the service users' frequency and percentage distribution according to their marital status. We created a stacked bar chart visualising the percentage distribution, as shown in **Figure 3**. Most service users were generally married, ranging from 45.1% (2020-2021) to 60.8% (2022-2023). The second largest group, namely service users who were **divorced or separated**, varied significantly from year to year, with the highest rate observed in 2020-2021 (33.2%) and the lowest in 2018-2019 (22.2%). The number and percentage of single service users seeking help remained relatively low, declining from 22.6% in 2017-2018 to just over 12% in 2023-2024.

**Figure 3. Service Users' Marital Status Distribution**





**Table 1. Service Users' Age Groups Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Under 20</b>	23	1.8	7	0.6	7	0.7	8	0.7	7	0.5	22	1.5	15	1.1	<b>89</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>20-29</b>	107	8.2	92	8.2	89	8.9	128	10.6	91	7.1	116	7.8	112	8.6	<b>735</b>	<b>8.4</b>
<b>30-39</b>	370	28.3	311	27.7	277	27.8	361	29.8	362	28.4	449	30.3	328	25.1	<b>2,458</b>	<b>28.3</b>
<b>40-49</b>	431	33	345	30.7	292	29.3	331	27.3	353	27.7	392	26.5	386	29.6	<b>2,530</b>	<b>29.1</b>
<b>50-59</b>	285	21.8	265	23.6	224	22.5	252	20.8	315	24.7	303	20.5	269	20.6	<b>1,913</b>	<b>22.0</b>
<b>Over 60</b>	91	7	103	9.2	108	10.8	132	10.9	146	11.5	198	13.4	196	15	<b>974</b>	<b>11.2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,307</b>		<b>1,123</b>		<b>997</b>		<b>1,212</b>		<b>1,274</b>		<b>1,480</b>		<b>1,306</b>		<b>8,699</b>	

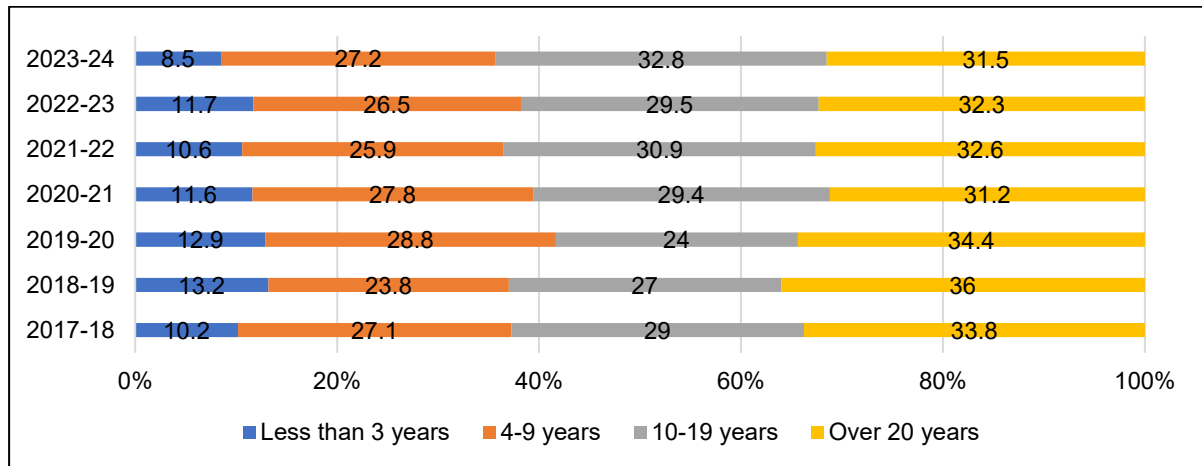
**Table 2. Service Users' Marital Status Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Single</b>	299	22.6	238	20.2	196	18.2	259	17.4	211	14.7	189	12.1	171	12.2	<b>1,563</b>	<b>16.5</b>
<b>Married</b>	627	47.3	628	53.2	547	50.9	671	45.1	776	54	952	60.8	825	58.9	<b>5,026</b>	<b>53.1</b>
<b>Cohabiting</b>	26	2	30	2.5	17	1.6	36	2.4	35	2.4	30	1.9	25	1.8	<b>199</b>	<b>2.1</b>
<b>Separated/ Divorced</b>	349	26.3	262	22.2	293	27.3	494	33.2	400	27.8	374	23.9	370	26.4	<b>2,542</b>	<b>26.8</b>
<b>Widowed</b>	14	1.1	16	1.4	11	1	16	1.1	9	0.6	17	1.1	7	0.5	<b>90</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Remarried</b>	10	0.8	6	0.5	10	0.9	11	0.7	7	0.5	4	0.3	2	0.1	<b>50</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,325</b>		<b>1,180</b>		<b>1,074</b>		<b>1,487</b>		<b>1,438</b>		<b>1,566</b>		<b>1,400</b>		<b>9,470</b>	

### 2.3 DURATION OF MARRIAGE

Moreover, among those married service users, most (62.1%) were **married for more than ten years**. **Indeed, the share of married service users for less than three years has been steadily declining after 2018-2019, from 13.2% in 2018-2019 to merely 8.5% in 2023-2024** (see **Figure 4**).

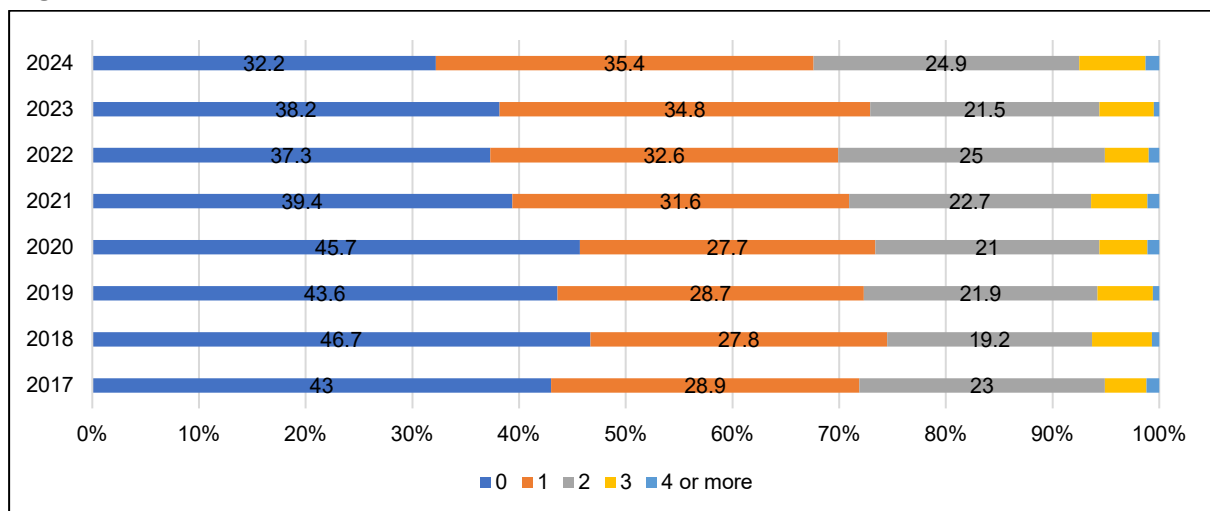
**Figure 4. Service Users' Duration of Marriage Distribution**



### 2.4 NUMBER AND AGES OF CHILDREN

While the number of children in service users' households ranged from 0-6 among all service users' families, **most service users had at least one child across the seven-year period (58.6%)**, despite a declining trend in childless households, followed by those with one child (30.7%) and two children (22.2%) (see **Figure 5**). Regarding the ages of service users' children, there were slightly more younger children (below ten years old) compared to adolescents (11-17 years old) and adult children (18 years and above).

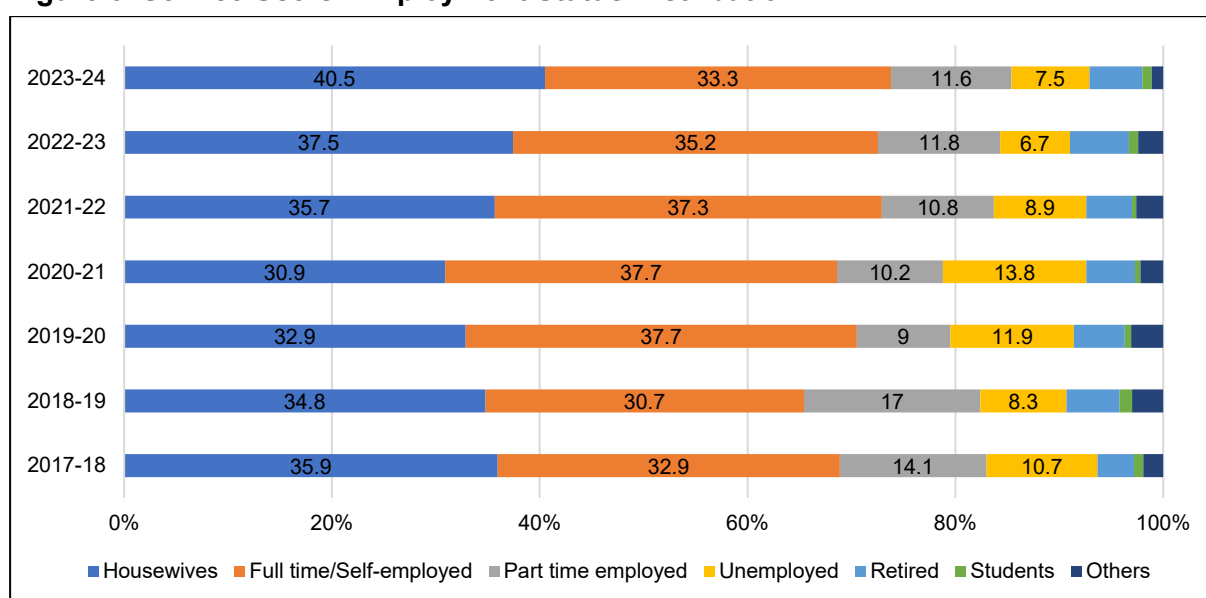
**Figure 5. Service Users' Number of Children**



## 2.5 EMPLOYMENT STATUS

*Table 3* and **Figure 6** provide service users' employment status distribution over the past eight years. The percentage of **homemakers** among all service users remained stable at 35.5%, while the rate of **full-time and self-employed** service users fluctuated from 37.7% in 2019-2020 to 33.3% in 2023-2024. Furthermore, there was a noticeable decrease in the percentage of unemployed service users, from 13.8% in 2020-2021 to 7.5% in 2023-2024, and an increase in the rate of part-time employed from 9% in 2019-2020 to 11.6% in 2023-2024. The fluctuation in the employment status of service users may reflect changes in the overall economy or job market in Hong Kong during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Most service users worked as **clerks** (26.8%) or in **services and sales** jobs (26.7%). A relatively minor number of service users, in relative terms, were occupied in administrative management (3.5%), as teachers, lawyers, or medical professionals (8%), or as civil servants (1%) (see *Table 4*).

**Figure 6. Service Users' Employment Status Distribution**



## 2.6 EDUCATION

Most service users consistently attained a **secondary degree**, ranging from 56.2% in 2021-2022 to 59.1% in 2017-2018. At the same time, the proportion of service users with a **tertiary degree or above** has steadily increased, from 26.3% in 2017-2018 to consistently over 30% since 2019-2020 (see *Table 5* and **Figure 7**). This indicates a growing trend towards attaining higher education among service users. This trend is corroborated, considering there has been a decrease in the proportion of service users with primary school education or below from 14.6% in 2017-2018 to 10.6% in 2023-2024. Moreover, the proportion of service users with a tertiary degree has increased over time<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Due to a relatively large number of missing values, service users' education was not included in subsequent bivariate and multivariate statistical analyses.



**Table 3. Service Users' Employment Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Housewives</b>	428	35.9	388	34.8	342	32.9	417	30.9	475	35.7	563	37.5	517	40.5	<b>3,130</b>	<b>35.5</b>
<b>Full-time/Self employed</b>	392	32.9	342	30.7	392	37.7	508	37.7	497	37.3	529	35.2	425	33.3	<b>3,085</b>	<b>35.0</b>
<b>Part-time employed</b>	168	14.1	189	17	94	9	137	10.2	144	10.8	177	11.8	148	11.6	<b>1,057</b>	<b>12.0</b>
<b>Unemployed</b>	128	10.7	92	8.3	124	11.9	186	13.8	118	8.9	100	6.7	96	7.5	<b>844</b>	<b>9.6</b>
<b>Retired</b>	42	3.5	57	5.1	51	4.9	64	4.7	58	4.4	85	5.7	65	5.1	<b>422</b>	<b>4.8</b>
<b>Students</b>	11	0.9	13	1.2	6	0.6	7	0.5	5	0.4	13	0.9	12	0.9	<b>67</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Others</b>	23	1.9	33	3	32	3.1	30	2.2	34	2.6	36	2.4	14	1.1	<b>202</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,192</b>		<b>1,114</b>		<b>1,041</b>		<b>1,349</b>		<b>1,331</b>		<b>1,503</b>		<b>1,277</b>		<b>8,807</b>	

**Table 4. Service Users' Occupation Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Administrative Management</b>	23	4.6	17	3.6	29	7.2	12	2.3	16	3.2	11	1.9	13	2.7	<b>121</b>	<b>3.5</b>
<b>Professional</b>	44	8.8	33	7	38	9.5	45	8.7	39	7.7	43	7.3	35	7.4	<b>277</b>	<b>8.0</b>
<b>Clerical</b>	124	24.8	125	26.5	117	29.1	144	27.7	133	26.2	162	27.6	121	25.6	<b>926</b>	<b>26.8</b>
<b>Technical</b>	11	2.2	10	2.1	4	1	10	1.9	10	2	6	1	19	4	<b>70</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>Service and Sales</b>	171	34.1	129	27.4	102	25.4	146	28.1	122	24.1	132	22.5	121	25.6	<b>923</b>	<b>26.7</b>
<b>Labourer</b>	43	8.6	36	7.6	19	4.7	30	5.8	40	7.9	47	8	31	6.6	<b>246</b>	<b>7.1</b>
<b>Disciplined services officer</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.3	2	0.4	<b>4</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>Civil servant</b>	1	0.2	4	0.8	5	1.2	6	1.2	3	0.6	8	1.4	9	1.9	<b>36</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Other</b>	84	16.8	117	24.8	88	21.9	126	24.3	144	28.4	176	30	122	25.8	<b>857</b>	<b>24.8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>		<b>471</b>		<b>402</b>		<b>519</b>		<b>507</b>		<b>587</b>		<b>473</b>		<b>3,460</b>	

**Table 5. Service Users' Educational Level Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Primary or below</b>	139	14.6	97	12.9	84	11.9	84	11.3	73	9.6	70	7.8	82	10.6	<b>629</b>	<b>11.2</b>
<b>Secondary (Form 1 to 7)</b>	561	59.1	439	58.4	404	57.1	424	56.9	429	56.2	531	58.9	447	57.8	<b>3,235</b>	<b>57.9</b>
<b>Tertiary or above</b>	250	26.3	216	28.7	219	31	237	31.8	262	34.3	300	33.3	244	31.6	<b>1,728</b>	<b>30.9</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>950</b>		<b>752</b>		<b>707</b>		<b>745</b>		<b>764</b>		<b>901</b>		<b>773</b>		<b>5,592</b>	

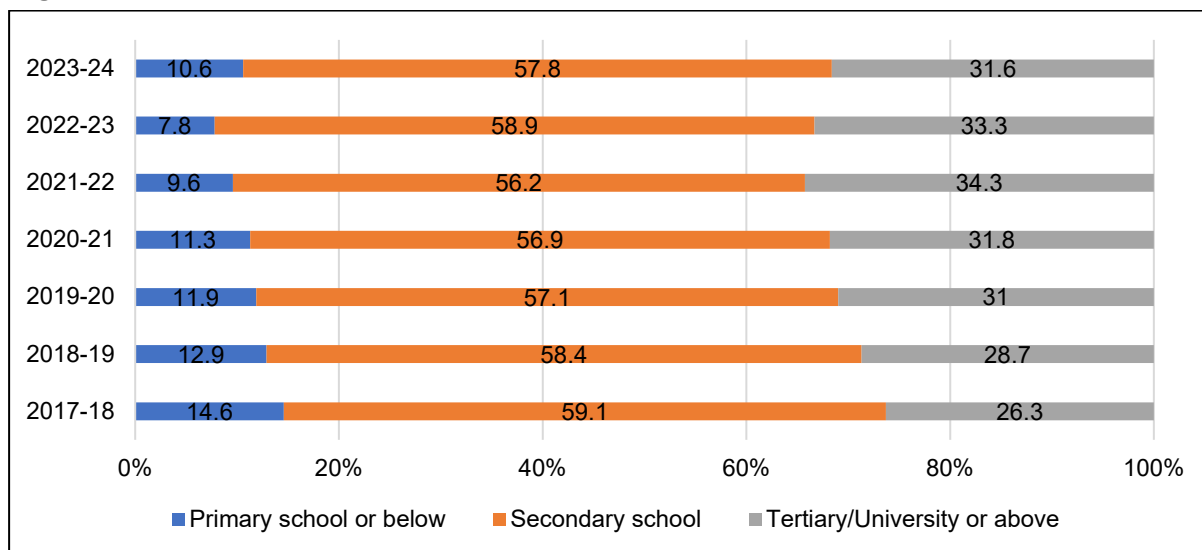
**Table 6. Service Users' CSSA Recipient Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>CSSA Recipients</b>	99	10.7	70	9	69	10	78	9	79	9.5	63	6.3	100	11.8	<b>558</b>	<b>9.4</b>
<b>Non CSSA Recipients</b>	620	89.3	709	91	618	90	786	91	751	90.5	938	93.7	746	88.2	<b>5,168</b>	<b>90.6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>928</b>		<b>779</b>		<b>687</b>		<b>864</b>		<b>830</b>		<b>1,001</b>		<b>846</b>		<b>5,935</b>	

**Table 7. Service Users' Spouse Employment Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Full-time/Self-employed</b>	504	74	523	72.7	484	76.5	556	69.5	639	75	711	72.5	633	74	<b>4,050</b>	<b>73.4</b>
<b>Part-time</b>	26	3.8	25	3.5	17	2.7	26	3.3	18	2.1	42	4.3	26	3	<b>180</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Student</b>	1	0.1	4	0.6	0	0	1	0.1	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1	<b>8</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>Unemployed</b>	57	8.4	49	6.8	47	7.4	82	10.3	65	7.6	58	5.9	59	6.9	<b>417</b>	<b>7.6</b>
<b>Retired</b>	72	10.6	70	9.7	51	8.1	83	10.4	84	9.9	91	9.3	81	9.5	<b>532</b>	<b>9.6</b>
<b>Others</b>	21	3.1	48	6.7	34	5.4	52	6.5	46	5.4	78	8	55	6.4	<b>334</b>	<b>6.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>681</b>		<b>719</b>		<b>633</b>		<b>800</b>		<b>852</b>		<b>981</b>		<b>855</b>		<b>5,521</b>	

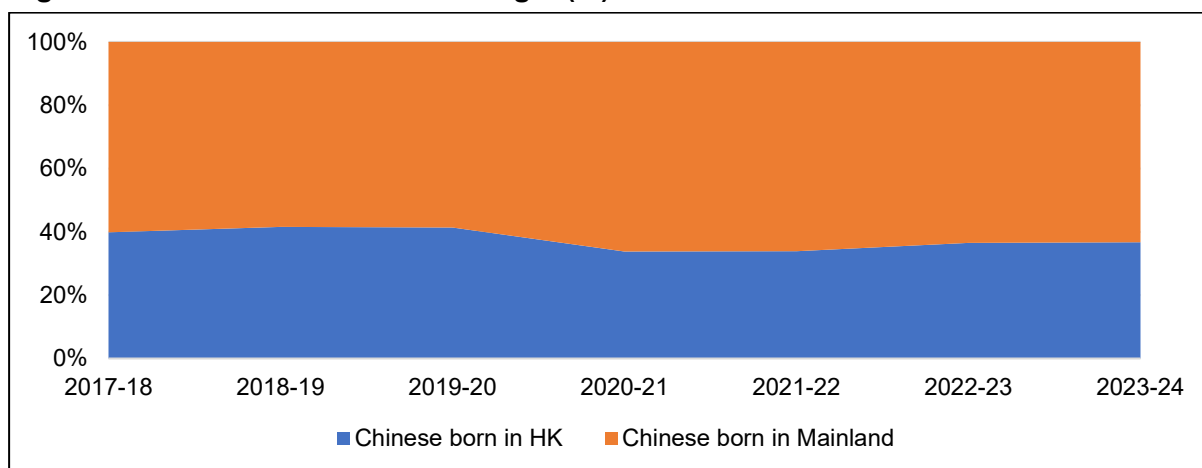
**Figure 7. Service Users' Educational Level Distribution (%)**



## 2.7 WELFARE BENEFIT RECEIPT AND SPOUSE'S EMPLOYMENT

Over the years, the number of service users receiving **CSSA subsidies** remained consistent at a low level, with around 1 out of 10 service users receiving financial assistance (see *Table 6*). The only outlier was 2023-2024, in which the relative share of CSSA recipients among service users was comparatively higher (11.8%). Around 3 out of 4 of the service users' **spouses were in full-time employment or self-employed**, compared to around 7.6% who were unemployed or 9.6% who were retired during the observed period (see *Table 7*).

**Figure 8. Service Users' Place of Origin (%)**

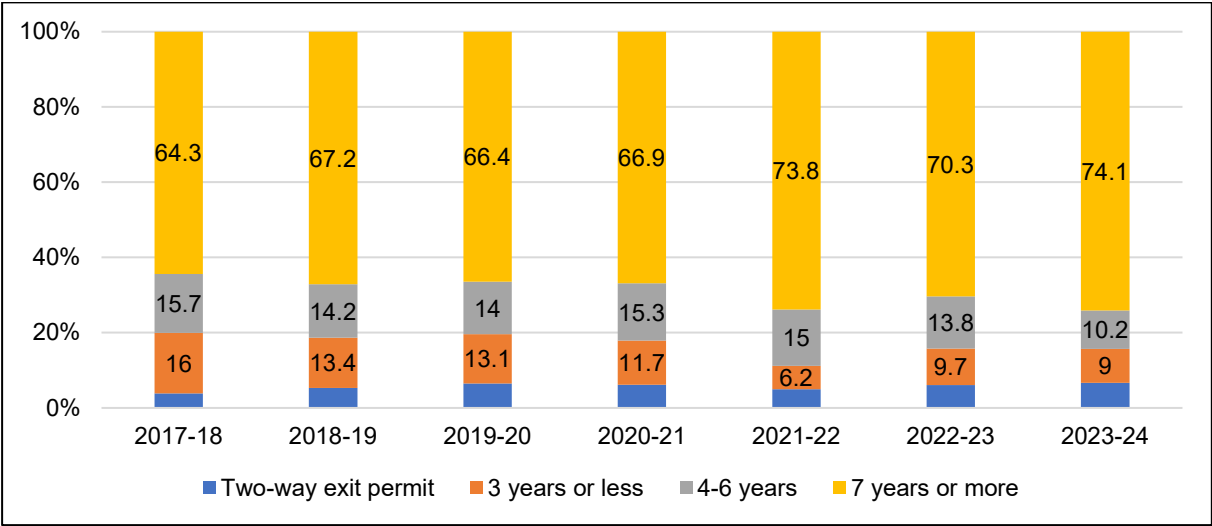


## 2.8 PLACE OF ORIGIN

Regarding the service users' place of origin, most of them consistently around 60% were **Chinese born in the Mainland**. However, there was a slight decline in the proportion of service users born in mainland China, which dropped from 66.2% in 2020-2021 to 63.3% in 2023-2024, while the proportion of those born in Hong Kong increased from 33.8% to 36.7% over the same period (see *Table 8* and **Figure 8**). Among the "new" immigrants among the service users, more than half (69.2%) **resided in Hong Kong for seven years or above**. By

contrast, just under one-third (30.8%) lived in Hong Kong for six years or less. The percentage of service users with an entry permit increased from 3.9% in 2017-2018 to 6.7% in 2023-2024(see *Table 9* and **Figure 9**). Around 15% of the service users' spouses were employed outside Hong Kong over the observed period (see *Table 10*).

**Figure 9. Service Users' Duration of Residence in Hong Kong (%)**





**Table 8. Service Users' Place of Origin Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Chinese born in Hong Kong</b>	616	39.9	575	41.4	523	41.4	588	33.8	570	33.9	653	36.5	584	36.7	<b>4,109</b>	<b>37.4</b>
<b>Chinese born in Mainland</b>	929	60.1	814	58.2	741	58.6	1,150	66.2	1,111	66.1	1,138	63.5	1,006	63.3	<b>6,889</b>	<b>62.6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,645</b>		<b>1,389</b>		<b>1,264</b>		<b>1,738</b>		<b>1,681</b>		<b>1,791</b>		<b>1,590</b>		<b>11,098</b>	

**Table 9. Service Users' Duration of Residence in Hong Kong Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Two-way exit permit</b>	14	3.9	13	5.3	14	6.5	19	6.2	16	5	24	6.1	23	6.7	<b>123</b>	<b>5.6</b>
<b>3 years or less</b>	57	16	33	13.4	28	13.1	36	11.7	20	6.2	38	9.7	31	9	<b>243</b>	<b>11.1</b>
<b>4-6 years</b>	56	15.7	35	14.2	30	14	47	15.3	48	15	54	13.8	35	10.2	<b>305</b>	<b>14.0</b>
<b>7 years or more</b>	229	64.3	166	67.2	142	66.4	206	66.9	237	73.8	275	70.3	254	74.1	<b>1,509</b>	<b>69.2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>		<b>247</b>		<b>214</b>		<b>308</b>		<b>321</b>		<b>391</b>		<b>343</b>		<b>2,180</b>	

**Table 10. Service users' Spouses Workplace Distribution**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Hong Kong</b>	460	85.3	472	81.4	433	84.4	541	89.9	591	85.9	705	86	607	85.7	<b>3,809</b>	<b>85.6</b>
<b>China/ Mainland China and Hong Kong</b>	58	10.8	73	12.6	49	9.6	44	7.3	73	10.6	78	9.5	71	10	<b>446</b>	<b>10.0</b>
<b>Others</b>	21	3.9	35	6	31	6	17	2.8	24	3.5	37	4.5	30	4.2	<b>195</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,450</b>	

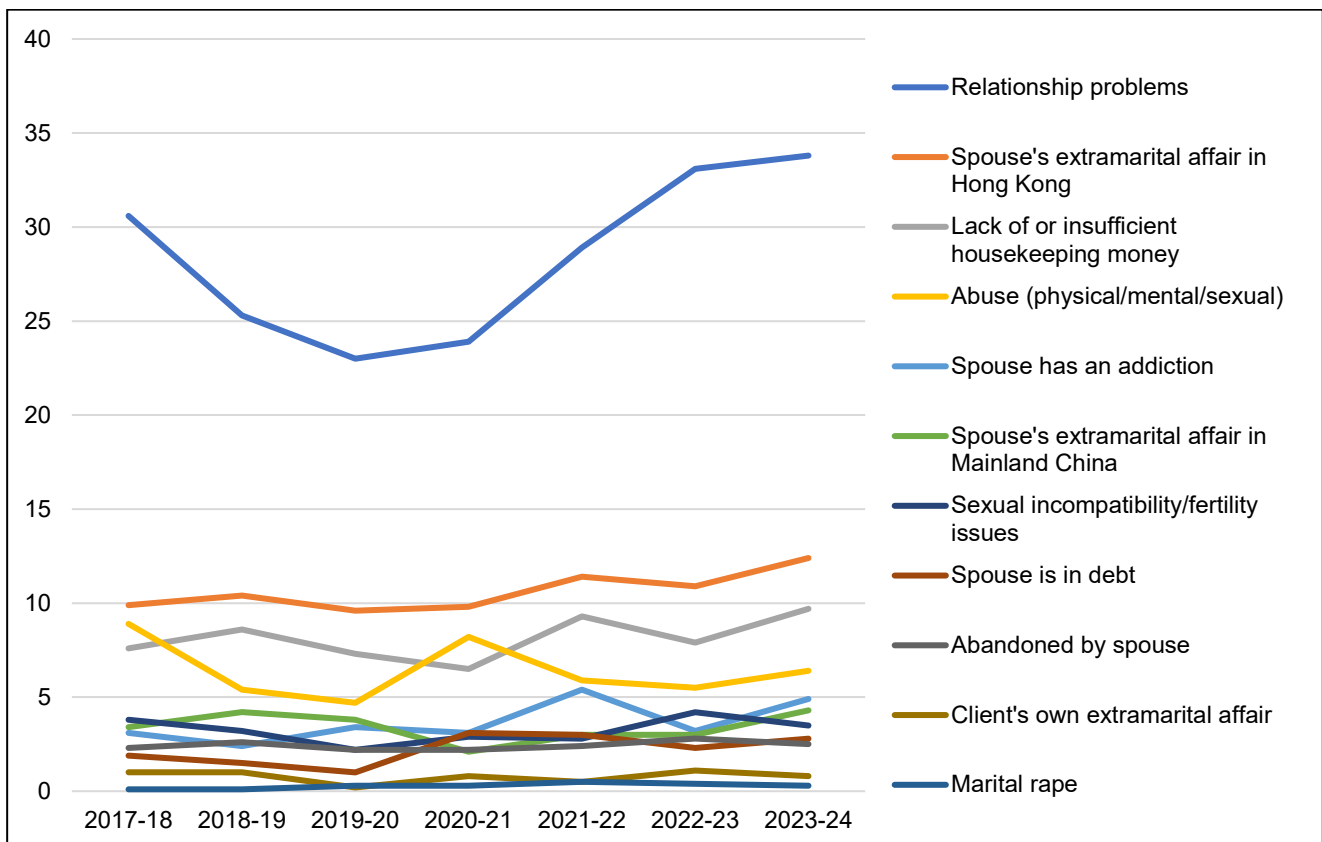
### 3. Service Users' Relationship, Legal and Life Issues

This section presents descriptive findings regarding the relationship and personal issues reported by service users between 2017 and 2024, encompassing concerns related to marriage and cohabitation, family relationships, and life and legal matters. Notably, the COVID-19 pandemic has been associated with marked increases in various relationship and personal issues, particularly family and financial matters.

#### 3.1 MARRIAGE AND COHABITATION ISSUES

Over the years, **marriage and cohabitation issues** reported by the service users have exhibited a slight uptrend, with minor fluctuations, as depicted in **Figure 10**. "Relationship problems," referring to conflicts, incompatible personalities, or communication challenges, remained the most frequently reported issue, consistently accounting for over 22% of cases. The data also shows an upward trend in two categories during the pandemic, namely "spouses' extramarital affairs in Hong Kong or having a mistress" and "lack of or insufficient housekeeping money," which escalated from 9.9% to 12.4% and from 7.6% to 9.7%, respectively. Spouse addiction demonstrates a moderate increase in addiction issues such as gambling, alcoholism, and prostitution, increasing from 3.1% in 2017-2018 to 4.9% in 2023-2024 (see *Table 11*).

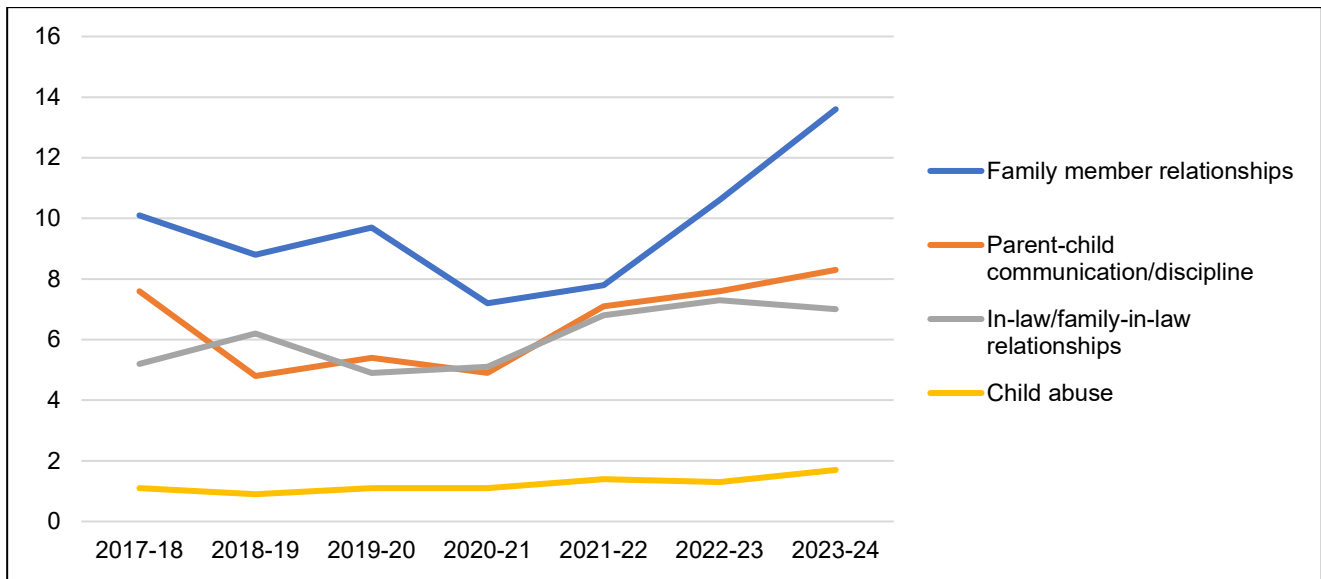
**Figure 10. Service Users' Marriage and Cohabitation Issues (%)**



### 3.2 FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Our analysis reveals that **family member relationships** emerged as service users' most frequently mentioned issue over the past eight years, as illustrated in **Figure 11** (see also *Table 12*). This category experienced a sharp increase between 2021 and 2024, stabilising at over 13%. Besides, the data indicates upward trends in cases reporting about intergenerational relationships, with notable increases in the percentage of cases pertaining to “parent-child communication/discipline” and “in-law/family-in-law relationships” amidst the pandemic. Another trend worthy of attention is the reported cases of child abuse. Although representing a relatively low percentage, a gradual increase has been observed since 2019, culminating at 1.7% in March 2024.

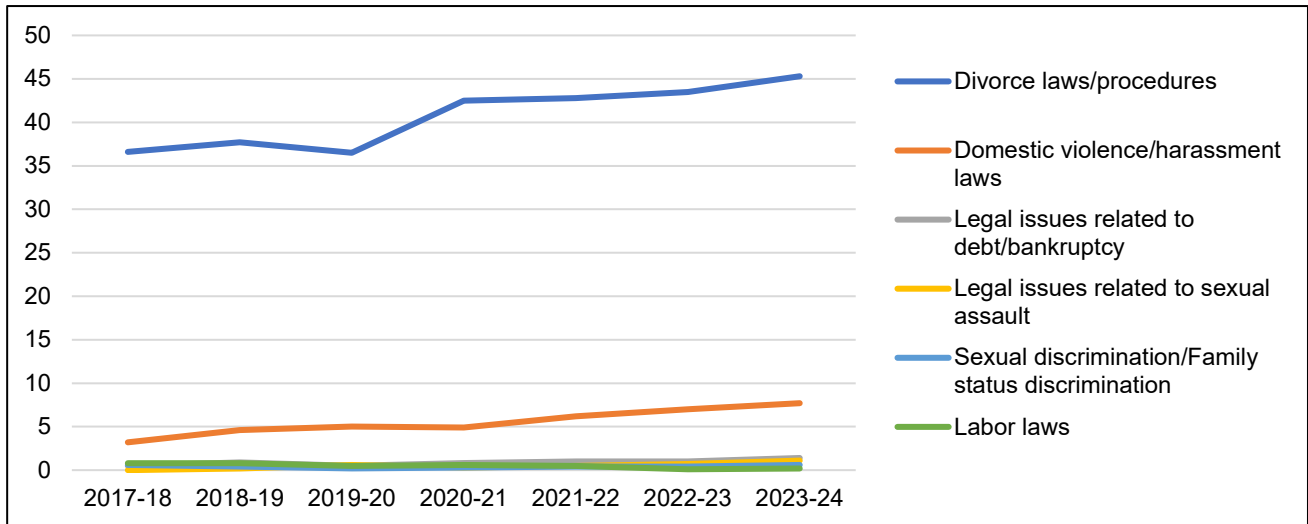
**Figure 11. Service Users' Family Relationship Issues (%)**



### 3.3 LEGAL ISSUES

**Figure 12** reports the legal issues mentioned by the service users during the period from 2017 to 2024. Legal problems concerning spousal and familial affairs have topped the chart. The percentage of cases concerning **divorce laws and procedures** was the most frequently addressed over the years, displaying a moderate upward trend from 36.5% in 2019-2020 to 45.3% in 2023-2024. Besides, the percentage of cases regarding **domestic violence or harassment laws** has been relatively higher compared to other legal issues, demonstrating a consistently increasing trend ranging between 3.2% in 2017-2018 and 7.7% in 2023-2024 (see *Table 13*).

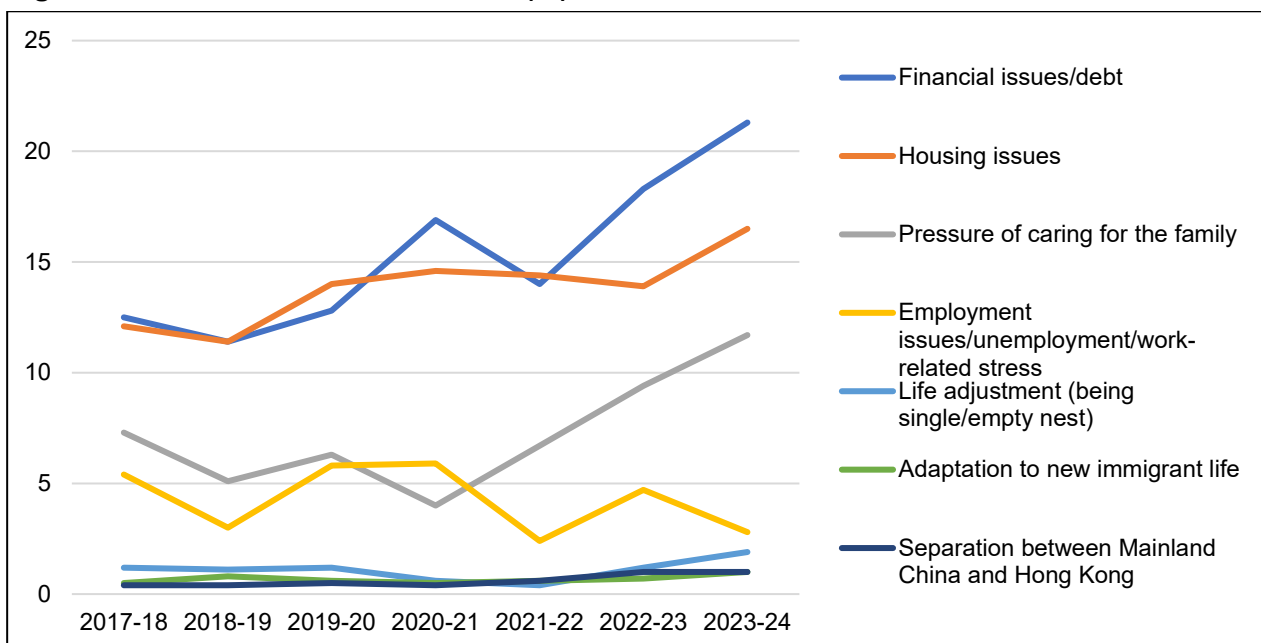
**Figure 12. Service Users' Legal Issues (%)**



### 3.4 LIFE ISSUES

The data analysis further reveals the three life issues most frequently mentioned by service users: **financial issues or debt, housing concerns, and the pressure of caring for the family**, each showing fluctuations over the period (as shown in *Table 14* and **Figure 13**). Among these, “financial issue/debt” emerged as the most common challenge faced by service users, particularly during and after the pandemic, increasing from 12.8% in 2019-2020 to 21.3% in 2023-2024. Housing issues also persisted as a significant concern, steadily rising from 12.1% in 2017-2018 to 16.5% in 2023-2024. **The percentage of cases involving caregiving pressure saw a noticeable increase during the pandemic**, jumping from 6.3% in 2019-2020 to 11.7% in 2023-2024. Conversely, work-related issues, such as employment and stress, fell from 5.4% in 2017-2018 to 2.8% in 2023-2024. Other issues were less addressed, including adaptation to new immigrant life, life adjustment, and separation between mainland China and Hong Kong.

**Figure 13. Service Users' Life Issues (%)**



**Table 11. Service Users' Marriage and Cohabitation Relationship Issues**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China, Having a mistress	51	3.4	59	4.2	49	3.8	36	2.1	51	3	54	3	68	4.3	<b>368</b>	<b>3.3</b>
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong, Having a mistress	153	9.9	146	10.4	123	9.6	170	9.8	192	11.4	197	10.9	198	12.4	<b>1,179</b>	<b>10.7</b>
Client's own extramarital affair	15	1	14	1	3	0.2	14	0.8	8	0.5	19	1.1	13	0.8	<b>86</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Abuse (physical, mental, sexual)	138	8.9	75	5.4	60	4.7	143	8.2	99	5.9	99	5.5	102	6.4	<b>716</b>	<b>6.5</b>
Marital rape	2	0.1	2	0.1	4	0.3	6	0.3	8	0.5	8	0.4	5	0.3	<b>35</b>	<b>0.3</b>
Relationship problems (conflict, incompatible personalities, communication issues)	474	30.6	354	25.3	296	23	417	23.9	485	28.9	598	33.1	538	33.8	<b>3,162</b>	<b>28.6</b>
Sexual incompatibility/fertility issues	59	3.8	45	3.2	28	2.2	50	2.9	47	2.8	75	4.2	56	3.5	<b>360</b>	<b>3.3</b>
Lack of or insufficient housekeeping money	117	7.6	121	8.6	94	7.3	113	6.5	156	9.3	143	7.9	154	9.7	<b>898</b>	<b>8.1</b>
Spouse is in debt	29	1.9	21	1.5	13	1	54	3.1	50	3	42	2.3	45	2.8	<b>254</b>	<b>2.3</b>
Abandoned by spouse (spouse doesn't come home, missing)	35	2.3	36	2.6	28	2.2	38	2.2	40	2.4	51	2.8	40	2.5	<b>268</b>	<b>2.4</b>
Spouse has the addiction (gambling, alcoholism, prostitution)	48	3.1	34	2.4	44	3.4	54	3.1	90	5.4	58	3.2	78	4.9	<b>406</b>	<b>3.7</b>
Others	86	5.6	79	5.6	88	6.8	127	7.3	148	8.8	180	10	138	8.7	<b>846</b>	<b>7.7</b>
Not specified	721	46.6	356	25.4	63	4.9	190	10.9	415	24.7	479	26.5	336	21.1	<b>2,560</b>	<b>23.2</b>

**Table 12. Service Users' Family Relationship Issues**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Child abuse</b>	17	1.1	13	0.9	14	1.1	19	1.1	23	1.4	24	1.3	27	1.7	<b>137</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Parent-child communication, discipline</b>	118	7.6	67	4.8	69	5.4	85	4.9	119	7.1	138	7.6	132	8.3	<b>728</b>	<b>6.6</b>
<b>Family member relationships</b>	156	10.1	123	8.8	125	9.7	126	7.2	131	7.8	192	10.6	217	13.6	<b>1,070</b>	<b>9.7</b>
<b>In-law/family-in-law relationships</b>	80	5.2	87	6.2	63	4.9	89	5.1	115	6.8	131	7.3	112	7	<b>677</b>	<b>6.1</b>
<b>Others</b>	33	2.1	42	3	31	2.4	49	2.8	74	4.4	69	3.8	64	4	<b>362</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Not specified</b>	1,044	67.4	640	45.7	110	8.6	304	17.4	888	52.8	988	54.7	806	50.6	<b>4,780</b>	<b>43.2</b>

**Table 13. Service Users' Legal Issues**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Divorce laws, procedures</b>	567	36.6	527	37.7	469	36.5	740	42.5	720	42.8	785	43.5	721	45.3	<b>4,529</b>	<b>41.0</b>
<b>Domestic violence, harassment laws</b>	49	3.2	65	4.6	64	5	85	4.9	105	6.2	126	7	122	7.7	<b>616</b>	<b>5.6</b>
<b>Legal issues related to sexual assault</b>	0	0	3	0.2	8	0.6	6	0.3	9	0.5	12	0.7	18	1.1	<b>56</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Sexual discrimination, Family status discrimination</b>	9	0.6	5	0.4	2	0.2	5	0.3	7	0.4	8	0.4	10	0.6	<b>46</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Legal issues related to debt, bankruptcy</b>	8	0.5	13	0.9	7	0.5	14	0.8	17	1	18	1	23	1.4	<b>100</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Labor laws</b>	13	0.8	11	0.8	7	0.5	10	0.6	9	0.5	2	0.1	3	0.2	<b>55</b>	<b>0.5</b>
<b>Others</b>	150	9.7	97	6.9	100	7.8	152	8.7	176	10.5	164	9.1	151	9.5	<b>990</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Not specified</b>	750	48.4	399	28.5	73	5.7	173	9.9	465	27.7	543	30.1	440	27.6	<b>2,843</b>	<b>25.7</b>

**Table 14. Service Users' Life Issues**

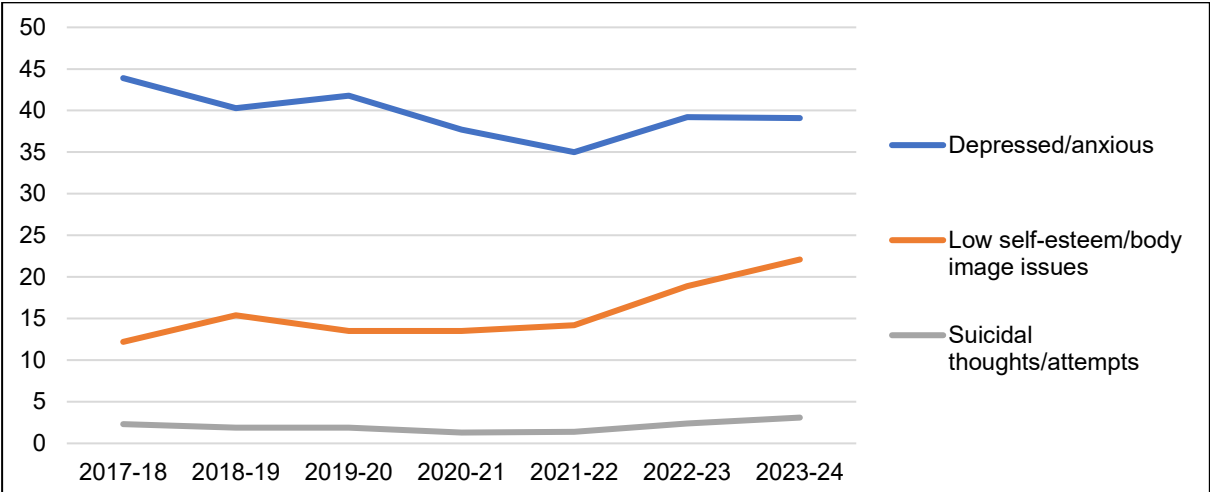
	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Housing issues</b>	188	12.1	180	12.9	180	14	254	14.6	242	14.4	251	13.9	262	16.5	<b>1,557</b>	<b>14.1</b>
<b>Financial issues, debt</b>	193	12.5	160	11.4	165	12.8	294	16.9	236	14	330	18.3	339	21.3	<b>1,717</b>	<b>15.5</b>
<b>Employment issues, unemployment, work-related stress</b>	84	5.4	42	3	74	5.8	102	5.9	40	2.4	85	4.7	45	2.8	<b>472</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Pressure of caring for the family</b>	113	7.3	71	5.1	81	6.3	70	4	112	6.7	169	9.4	187	11.7	<b>803</b>	<b>7.3</b>
<b>Adaptation to new immigrant life</b>	8	0.5	11	0.8	8	0.6	9	0.5	10	0.6	13	0.7	16	1	<b>75</b>	<b>0.7</b>
<b>Life adjustment (being single, empty nest)</b>	19	1.2	15	1.1	15	1.2	10	0.6	7	0.4	21	1.2	31	1.9	<b>118</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Separation between Mainland China and Hong Kong</b>	6	0.4	5	0.4	7	0.5	7	0.4	10	0.6	18	1	16	1	<b>69</b>	<b>0.6</b>
<b>Others</b>	85	5.5	71	5.1	69	5.4	74	4.2	86	5.1	60	3.3	62	3.9	<b>507</b>	<b>4.6</b>
<b>Not specified</b>	959	62	557	39.8	83	6.5	222	12.7	766	45.6	806	44.7	661	41.5	<b>4,054</b>	<b>36.7</b>

## 4. Service Users' Mental and Physical Well-being

### 4.1 MENTAL HEALTH

Figures 14 to 16 display the prevalence of various mental and physical health issues experienced by service users between 2017 and 2024. As shown in Table 15 and Figure 14, the most prevalent mental health problem was **feeling depressed and anxious**, consistently exceeding 35% throughout the reporting period. A marked increase was noted in cases related to **low self-esteem or body image issues**, escalating from 12.2% in 2017-2018 and peaking at 22.1% in 2023-2024. The percentage of cases involving suicidal thoughts or attempts remained relatively low, ranging between 1.3% and 3.1% during the period. Conversely, cases of mood disorders or mental illnesses displayed a fluctuating trend; the percentage initially declined in 2018-2019 and then rebounded after 2022-23, reaching 12.2% in 2023-2024 (Figure 15).

Figure 14. Service Users' Mental Health Issues (%)

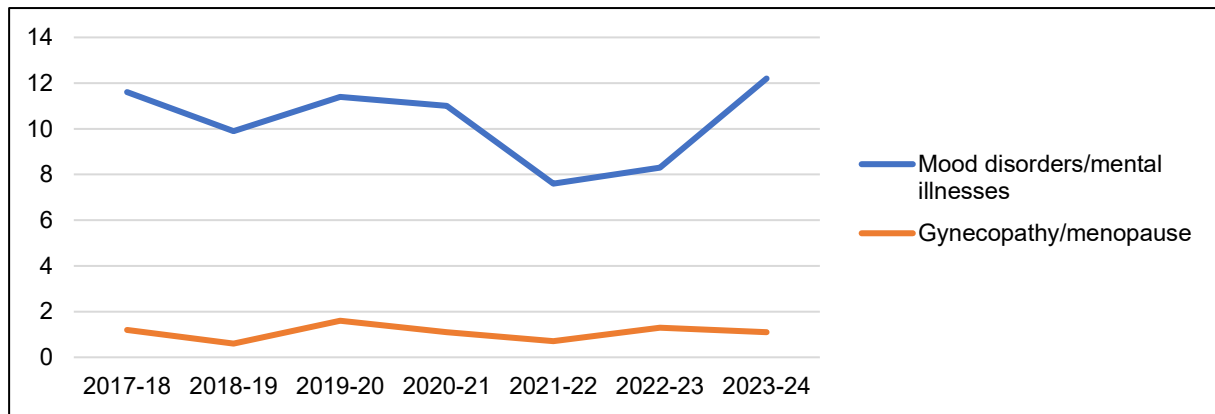


### 4.2 HEALTH AND MEDICAL ISSUES

Regarding physical health, as illustrated in Figure 15, the percentage of cases concerning gynecopathy or menopause remained relatively stable, generally hovering around 1.1% throughout the period (see also Table 16).



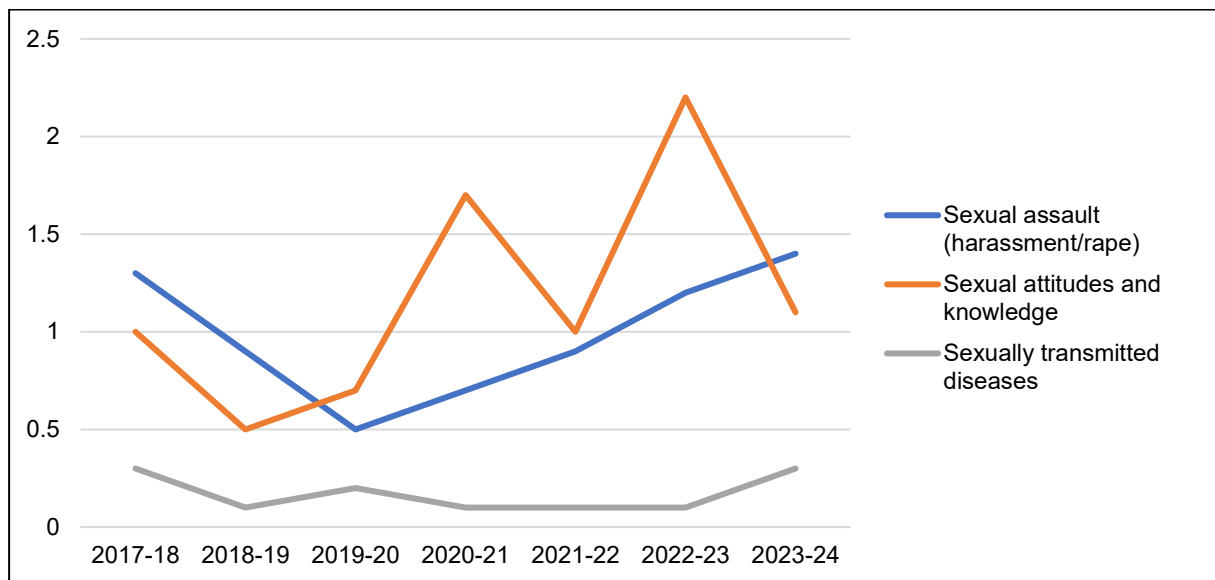
**Figure 15. Service Users' Health and Medical Issues (%)**



#### 4.3 SEXUAL ISSUES

During this period, the percentage of sex-related issues reported by service users stayed relatively low, averaging around 1%. Nonetheless, a notable increase was observed in reports of sexual assaults, including harassment and rape, which climbed from 0.5% in 2019-2020 to 1.4% in 2023-2024 (see *Table 17* and **Figure 16**). The trend in sexual attitudes and knowledge saw fluctuations over the years, with a steep decline observed since 2022-2023. Contrastingly, the percentage of cases involving sexually transmitted diseases exhibited a slight increase in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 despite consistently remaining below 1% throughout the period.

**Figure 16. Service Users' Sexual Issues (%)**



**Table 15. Service Users' Mental Health Issues**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Low self-esteem/body image issues</b>	189	12.2	215	15.4	173	13.5	236	13.5	238	14.2	341	18.9	352	22.1	<b>1,744</b>	<b>15.8</b>
<b>Depressed/anxious</b>	679	43.9	564	40.3	538	41.8	657	37.7	589	35	708	39.2	622	39.1	<b>4,357</b>	<b>39.4</b>
<b>Suicidal thoughts/attempts</b>	36	2.3	26	1.9	24	1.9	22	1.3	23	1.4	44	2.4	49	3.1	<b>224</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Others</b>	318	20.5	112	8	79	6.1	113	6.5	134	8	140	7.8	121	7.6	<b>1,017</b>	<b>9.2</b>
<b>Not specified</b>	509	32.9	380	27.2	61	4.7	183	10.5	592	35.2	586	32.5	506	31.8	<b>2,817</b>	<b>25.5</b>

**Table 16. Service Users' Health and Medical Issues**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Gynecopathy/menopause</b>	18	1.2	9	0.6	20	1.6	20	1.1	12	0.7	24	1.3	18	1.1	<b>121</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Mood disorders/mental illnesses</b>	180	11.6	138	9.9	147	11.4	192	11	127	7.6	149	8.3	194	12.2	<b>1,127</b>	<b>10.2</b>
<b>Others</b>	103	6.7	56	4	45	3.5	75	4.3	87	5.2	79	4.4	81	5.1	<b>526</b>	<b>4.8</b>
<b>Not specified</b>	1,195	77.2	780	55.8	143	11.1	349	20	1,150	68.4	1,271	70.4	1,060	66.6	<b>5,948</b>	<b>53.8</b>

**Table 17. Service Users' Sexual Issues**

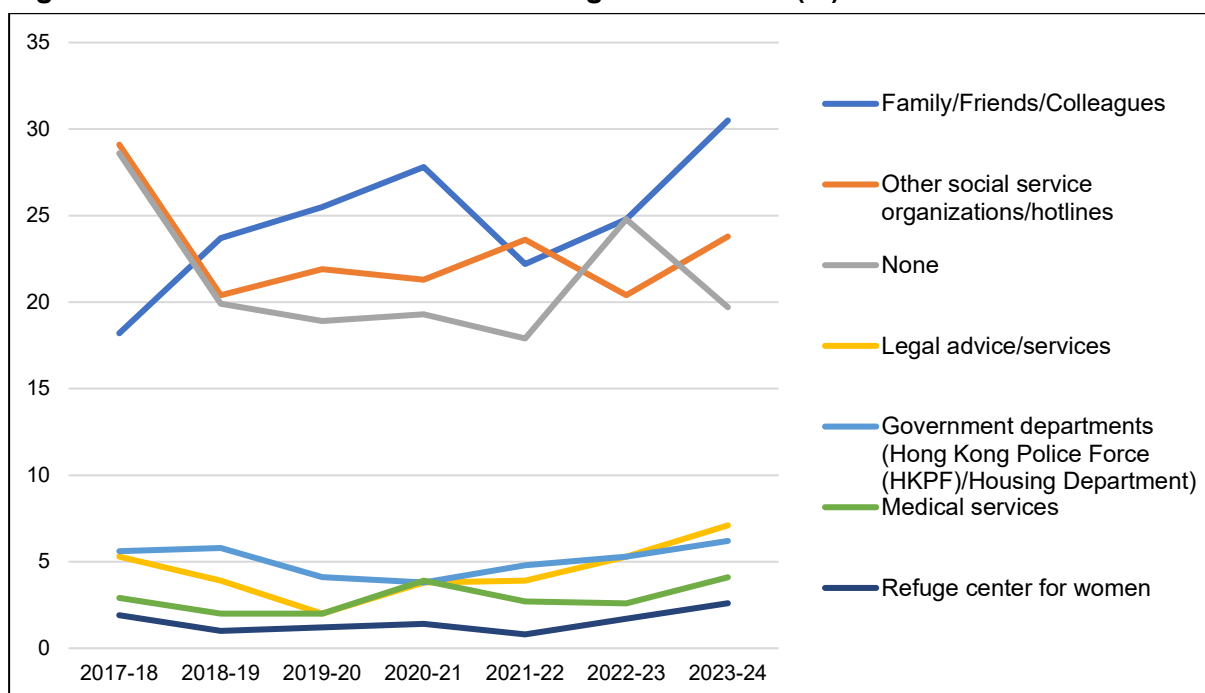
	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Sexual attitudes and knowledge</b>	16	1	7	0.5	9	0.7	30	1.7	16	1	40	2.2	17	1.1	<b>135</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Sexual assault (harassment/rape)</b>	20	1.3	13	0.9	6	0.5	12	0.7	15	0.9	22	1.2	22	1.4	<b>110</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Sexually transmitted diseases</b>	5	0.3	2	0.1	2	0.2	2	0.1	1	0.1	2	0.1	4	0.3	<b>18</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Others</b>	26	1.7	15	1.1	9	0.7	14	0.8	17	1	20	1.1	17	1.1	<b>118</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Not specified</b>	1,357	87.7	884	63.2	156	12.1	409	23.5	1,278	76	1,404	77.8	1,277	80.2	<b>6,765</b>	<b>61.2</b>

## 5. Service Users' Assistance Seeking and Services Offered

### 5.1 ASSISTANCE SOUGHT IN THE PAST

This section outlines the trends in client help-seeking behaviours and the services provided to them. *Table 18* and **Figure 17** show that **service users most frequently sought assistance within their social networks, including family, friends, and colleagues**, with an average of around 24.7% throughout the observed period. Beyond their immediate social circles, service users also turned to other social service organisations or hotlines, with the percentage remaining steady, ranging from 20.4% in 2018-2019 to 23.8% in 2023-2024. Different forms of assistance mentioned less frequently include government departments, legal advice or services, medical services, and women's refuge centres, which generally accounted for less than 10% throughout the period. Notably, over the years, **there were approximately 21.4% of cases on average where individuals had yet to seek help from any sources**.

**Figure 17. Service Users' Assistance Sought in the Past (%)**

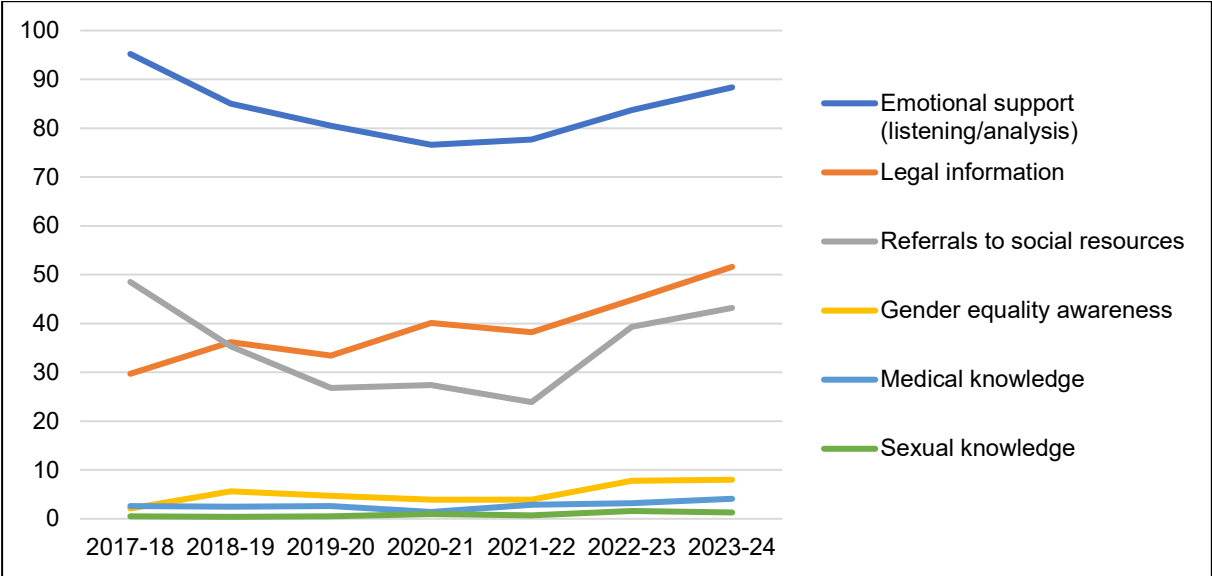


### 5.2 SERVICES PROVIDED TO USERS

Regarding the services provided to service users, as shown in **Figure 18**, **emotional support, characterised by active listening and empathetic responses, was the most frequently offered service**, averaging 83.9% of cases during the observed period. A moderate upward trend has been observed in the provision of **legal information services**, increasing from 29.7% in 2017-2018 to 51.6% in 2023-2024. Meanwhile, the percentage of cases involving social service referrals declined from 48.5% in 2017-2018 to 23.9% in 2021-2022 before rebounding sharply and reaching a peak of 43.2% in 2023-2024. Non-service-

based assistance, such as promoting gender equality awareness, sexual knowledge, and medical knowledge, remained under 10% during the period (see *Table 19*).

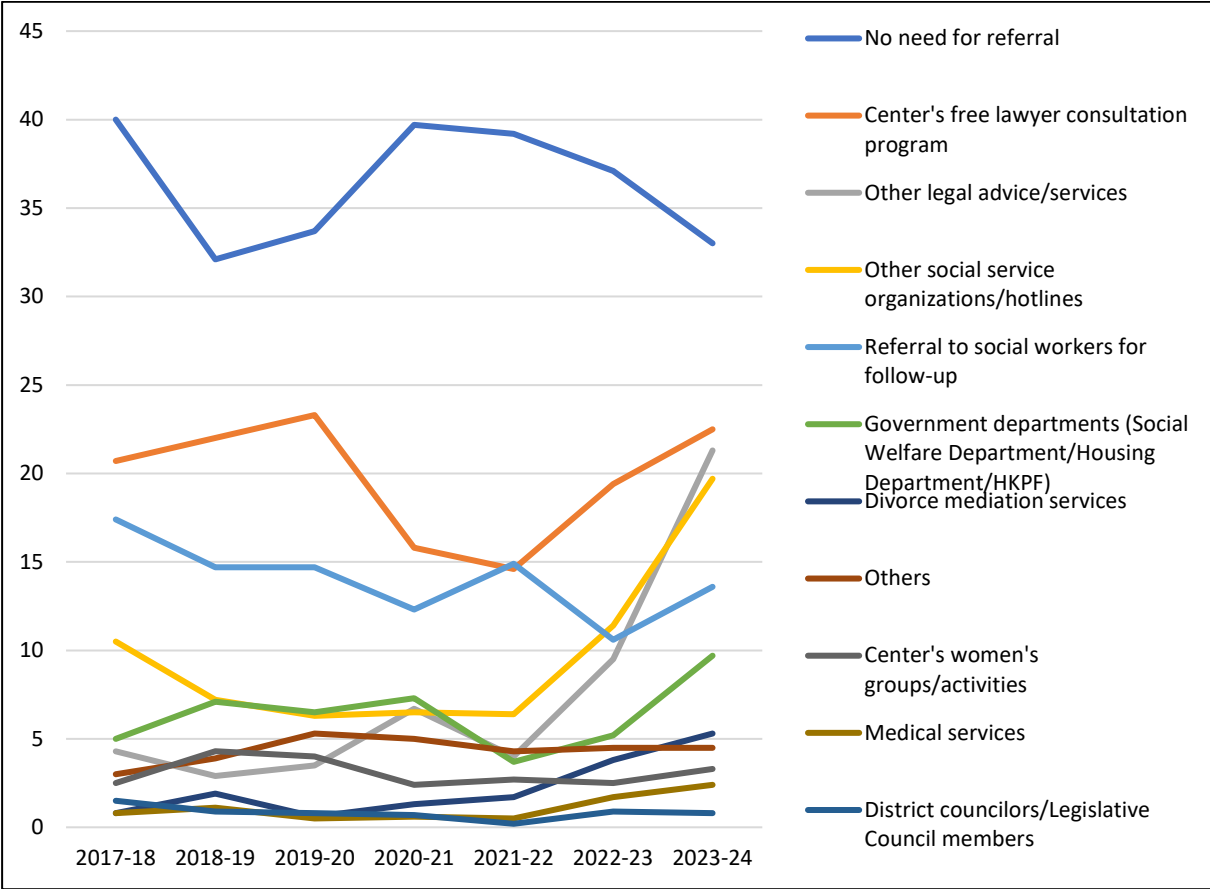
**Figure 18. Services Provided to Service Users (%)**



5.3 REFERRAL SERVICES

Regarding service referrals, illustrated in **Figure 19**, the centre’s free lawyer consultation programme emerged as the most frequently referred service, ranging from 14.6% to 23.3%. While referrals to social workers for follow-up have remained a pivotal aspect of the referral services, they gradually declined throughout the reporting period, dropping from 17.4 % in 2017-2018 to 13.6% in 2023-2024. On the other hand, two types of referral services have witnessed rapid increases in recent years: “other legal advice/services” and “other social service organisations or hotlines.” The former saw a rise from 4.3% in 2017-2018 to 21.3% in 2023-2024, while the latter rose from 6.4% in 2021-2022 to 19.7% in 2023-2024(see also *Table 20*). Moreover, helpline service users were referred to government departments such as the Social Welfare Department, Housing Department or Hong Kong Police Force, with an average percentage of around 6.3% during the observed period. Other less utilised referral services include divorce mediation services, District councillors or Legislative Council members, the centre’s women’s groups or activities, and medical services, each remaining below 5% on average during the observed period. Notably, over the years, there have been many cases, around 30-40% of cases annually, that did not need any referral.

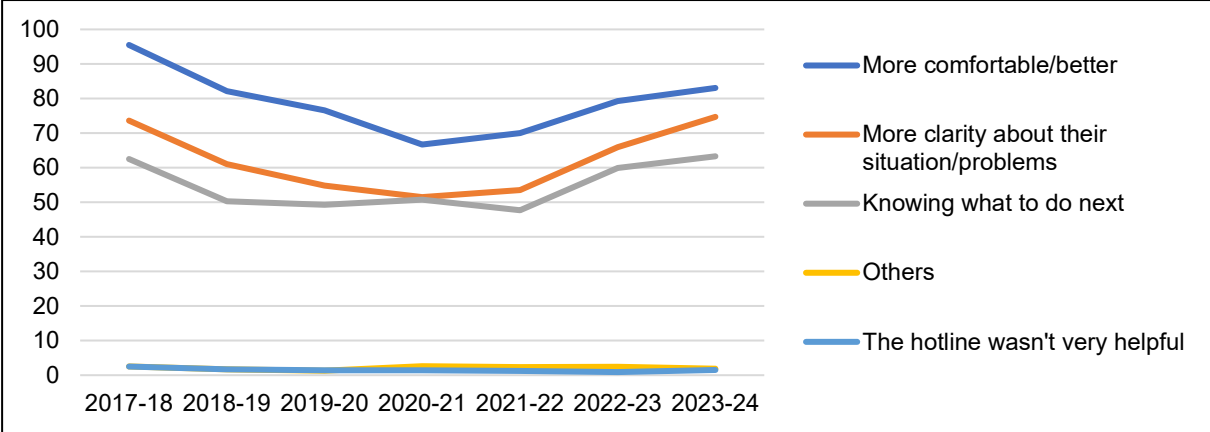
**Figure 19. Referral Services**



5.4 USERS' CONSULTATION EVALUATION

Table 21 and Figure 20 further illustrate that the helpline service users' consultation evaluations were generally positive, with around 80% feeling more comfortable or better after the consultation in 2023-2024. In the same year, around 7 out of 10 service users stated that they had more clarity about their situation and just under 70% that they knew what to do next. These figures improved from a noticeable slump during 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, respectively. Despite these fluctuations, however, the percentage of service users who thought the hotline was not very helpful remained consistently below 2% during the observed years.

**Figure 20. Service Users' Consultation Evaluation**



**Table 18. Assistance Sought in the Past**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>None</b>	443	28.6	279	19.9	243	18.9	336	19.3	301	17.9	448	24.8	313	19.7	<b>2,363</b>	<b>21.4</b>
<b>Family/Friends/Colleagues</b>	281	18.2	331	23.7	328	25.5	484	27.8	373	22.2	448	24.8	485	30.5	<b>2,730</b>	<b>24.7</b>
<b>Refuge center for women</b>	29	1.9	14	1	15	1.2	24	1.4	14	0.8	30	1.7	41	2.6	<b>167</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Other social service organizations/hotlines</b>	450	29.1	285	20.4	282	21.9	372	21.3	396	23.6	369	20.4	379	23.8	<b>2,533</b>	<b>22.9</b>
<b>Government departments (Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF)/Housing Department)</b>	87	5.6	81	5.8	63	4.1	66	3.8	81	4.8	96	5.3	98	6.2	<b>572</b>	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Legal advice/services</b>	82	5.3	55	3.9	53	2	68	3.8	65	3.9	96	5.3	113	7.1	<b>532</b>	<b>4.8</b>
<b>Medical services</b>	45	2.9	28	2	26	2	42	3.9	45	2.7	47	2.6	65	4.1	<b>298</b>	<b>2.7</b>
<b>Others</b>	95	6.1	123	8.8	88	6.8	132	7.6	177	10.5	160	8.9	114	7.2	<b>889</b>	<b>8</b>

**Table 19. Service Provided**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Emotional support (listening/analysis)</b>	1,473	95.2	1,189	85	1,035	80.5	1,335	76.6	1,306	77.7	1,511	83.7	1,407	88.4	<b>9,256</b>	<b>83.7</b>
<b>Legal information</b>	459	29.7	507	36.2	429	33.4	699	40.1	642	38.2	808	44.8	822	51.6	<b>4,366</b>	<b>39.5</b>
<b>Gender equality awareness</b>	32	2.1	78	5.6	61	4.7	68	3.9	66	3.9	141	7.8	127	8	<b>573</b>	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Sexual knowledge</b>	8	0.5	6	0.4	7	0.5	17	1	11	0.7	28	1.6	21	1.3	<b>98</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Medical knowledge</b>	41	2.6	35	2.5	33	2.6	25	1.4	48	2.9	58	3.2	66	4.1	<b>306</b>	<b>2.8</b>
<b>Referrals to social resources</b>	751	48.5	494	35.3	345	26.8	477	27.4	402	23.9	709	39.3	687	43.2	<b>3,865</b>	<b>35</b>

**Table 20. Referral Services**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Referral to social workers for follow-up</b>	269	17.4	205	14.7	189	14.7	215	12.3	250	14.9	192	10.6	217	13.6	<b>1,537</b>	<b>13.9</b>
<b>Center's free lawyer consultation program</b>	321	20.7	308	22	300	23.3	278	15.8	245	14.6	351	19.4	358	22.5	<b>2,161</b>	<b>19.5</b>
<b>Center's women's groups/activities</b>	38	2.5	60	4.3	51	4	41	2.4	45	2.7	45	2.5	53	3.3	<b>333</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Divorce mediation services</b>	13	0.8	26	1.9	8	0.6	22	1.3	28	1.7	69	3.8	85	5.3	<b>251</b>	<b>2.3</b>
<b>Other legal advice/services</b>	66	4.3	40	2.9	45	3.5	116	6.7	68	4	172	9.5	339	21.3	<b>846</b>	<b>7.7</b>
<b>Government departments</b>	78	5	99	7.1	83	6.5	128	7.3	62	3.7	94	5.2	154	9.7	<b>698</b>	<b>6.3</b>
<b>Other social service organizations/hotlines</b>	163	10.5	101	7.2	81	6.3	114	6.5	108	6.4	205	11.4	314	19.7	<b>1,086</b>	<b>9.8</b>
<b>Medical services</b>	13	0.8	16	1.1	6	0.5	11	0.6	9	0.5	30	1.7	38	2.4	<b>123</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>District councilors/Legislative Council members</b>	23	1.5	13	0.9	10	0.8	13	0.7	4	0.2	17	0.9	13	0.8	<b>93</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Others</b>	46	3	55	3.9	68	5.3	87	5	72	4.3	82	4.5	71	4.5	<b>481</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>No need for referral</b>	619	40	449	32.1	434	33.7	692	39.7	661	39.2	669	37.1	526	33	<b>4,050</b>	<b>36.6</b>

**Table 21. After the session, the service user feels**

	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2017-2024	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>More comfortable/better</b>	1478	95.5	1149	82.1	985	76.6	1,163	66.7	1177	70	1432	79.3	1323	83.1	<b>8,707</b>	<b>78.8</b>
<b>More clarity about their situation/problems</b>	1139	73.6	854	61	705	54.8	898	51.5	900	53.5	1190	65.9	1189	74.7	<b>6,875</b>	<b>62.2</b>
<b>Knowing what to do next</b>	968	62.5	703	50.3	634	49.3	886	50.8	802	47.7	1082	59.9	1008	63.3	<b>6,083</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>The hotline wasn't very helpful</b>	38	2.5	24	1.7	18	1.4	25	1.4	20	1.2	17	0.9	24	1.5	<b>166</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Others</b>	39	2.5	24	1.7	17	1.3	45	2.6	38	2.3	44	2.4	31	1.9	<b>238</b>	<b>2.2</b>



## IV. Statistical Analysis

### 6. Logistic Regressions on Service Users' Legal and Life Issues

In the following sections, we present a series of multivariate statistical analyses to explore which socio-demographic and other factors are correlated with the most pronounced legal and life matters affecting service users, everything else being equal. In the interest of allowing more accessible interpretations of the logistic regression findings, we only report the statistically significant explanatory variables.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, we order all explanatory factors by the odds ratios (descending from large to small) and distinguish factors that are more likely to lead to the outcome (orange) from those that are less likely to lead to the outcome (green).

#### 5.1 LEGAL ISSUES

Table 26 shows the factors related to service users engaging with divorce laws and procedures. Service users reporting a spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong or Mainland China are 4.5 times and 3.2 times more likely to seek information on divorce laws and procedures. Service users with other relationship problems or who were abandoned by their spouse were also around 3-times more likely to seek information on divorce laws and procedures. Other vital factors leading to engagement with divorce were a spouse in debt, the experience of housing issues, and physical, mental, or sexual abuse. Service users who struggle with relationships with their family, friends, and colleagues, who face employment-related issues, or with parent-child communication and discipline are less likely to seek advice about divorce laws and procedures.

Table 27 shows the results on the factors related to service users undergoing domestic violence and harassment legal proceedings. Here, service users who report abuse of themselves or their children or who seek advice about legal issues related to sexual assault are between 3.5 and 5.9 times more likely to undergo domestic violence and harassment legal proceedings. There is also a range of other factors that are statistically related to service users' undergoing domestic violence and harassment legal proceedings, including spouse's problems with addiction, other relationship problems (conflict, incompatible personalities), housing issues and debt. Service users who were born in Hong Kong were less likely to undergo domestic violence and harassment legal proceedings.

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<sup>2</sup> All full models will be shared separately together with the full SPSS syntax.

**Table 26. Logistic Regression on Service Users Engaging with Divorce Laws and Procedures**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong/Having a mistress	<b>4.585</b>	3.824	5.497	0.093	<.001
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China/Having a mistress	<b>3.203</b>	2.408	4.26	0.146	<.001
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>3.04</b>	2.681	3.447	0.064	<.001
Abandoned by spouse (spouse doesn't come home/missing)	<b>2.94</b>	2.058	4.201	0.182	<.001
Spouse is in debt	<b>2.697</b>	1.824	3.987	0.2	<.001
<i>Fulltime/Self-employed</i>	<b>2.508</b>	1.597	3.938	0.23	<.001
<i>Divorced</i>	<b>2.374</b>	1.12	5.032	0.383	0.024
Housing issues	<b>2.123</b>	1.8	2.503	0.084	<.001
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>2.071</b>	1.267	3.383	0.25	0.004
<i>Parttime</i>	<b>1.919</b>	1.199	3.071	0.24	0.007
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>1.901</b>	1.521	2.376	0.114	<.001
<i>Retired</i>	<b>1.709</b>	1.002	2.913	0.272	0.049
<i>Housewife</i>	<b>1.671</b>	1.063	2.626	0.231	0.026
Lack of or insufficient housekeeping money	<b>1.654</b>	1.352	2.022	0.103	<.001
Number of children	<b>1.157</b>	1.083	1.236	0.034	<.001
Age	<b>0.703</b>	0.664	0.745	0.029	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>0.601</b>	0.491	0.735	0.103	<.001
Friend/colleague relationships	<b>0.542</b>	0.396	0.741	0.16	<.001
Employment issues/unemployment/work-related stress	<b>0.541</b>	0.388	0.755	0.17	<.001
Parent-child communication/discipline	<b>0.431</b>	0.347	0.535	0.11	<.001
Cohabiting	<b>0.36</b>	0.153	0.847	0.436	0.019
Marital rape	<b>0.335</b>	0.137	0.821	0.458	0.017
Sexual attitudes and knowledge	<b>0.312</b>	0.153	0.633	0.362	0.001
Sexual discrimination/Family status discrimination	<b>0.231</b>	0.087	0.61	0.495	0.003
Single	<b>0.116</b>	0.051	0.267	0.424	<.001

## 5.2 LIFE ISSUES

Table 28 shows the factors related to service users reporting financial issues. Not surprisingly, service users who inquired about legal issues related to debt and bankruptcy, reported a spouse in debt or needed more housekeeping money were between 2.6 and 3.7

times more likely to report financial issues. Unemployed service users are also more likely to report financial issues.

**Table 27. Logistic Regression on Service Users Undergoing Domestic Violence and Harassment Legal Proceedings**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>5.915</b>	4.651	7.524	0.123	<.001
Legal issues related to sexual assault	<b>5.542</b>	2.126	14.45	0.489	<.001
Child abuse	<b>3.569</b>	2.208	5.767	0.245	<.001
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>1.749</b>	1.184	2.583	0.199	0.005
Spouse has the addiction (gambling/alcoholism/prostitution)	<b>1.660</b>	1.133	2.431	0.195	0.009
Lack of or insufficient housekeeping money	<b>1.522</b>	1.150	2.015	0.143	0.003
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.500</b>	1.200	1.875	0.114	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>1.492</b>	1.109	2.008	0.151	0.008
Housing issues	<b>1.421</b>	1.113	1.813	0.125	0.005
Financial issues/debt	<b>1.321</b>	1.027	1.699	0.128	0.03
<i>Number of children</i>	<b>1.138</b>	<i>1.012</i>	<i>1.28</i>	<i>0.06</i>	<i>0.031</i>
<i>Born in HK</i>	<b>0.78</b>	<i>0.63</i>	<i>0.965</i>	<i>0.109</i>	<i>0.022</i>

**Table 28. Logistic Regression on Service Users Reporting Financial Issues**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Legal issues related to debt/bankruptcy	<b>3.762</b>	2.091	6.768	0.3	<.001
Housing issues	<b>3.356</b>	2.886	3.902	0.077	<.001
Spouse is in debt	<b>3.199</b>	2.27	4.51	0.175	<.001
Employment issues/unemployment/work-related stress	<b>3.191</b>	2.429	4.193	0.139	<.001
Lack of or insufficient housekeeping money	<b>2.633</b>	2.187	3.171	0.095	<.001
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>1.873</b>	1.433	2.448	0.137	<.001
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>1.799</b>	<i>1.147</i>	<i>2.821</i>	<i>0.23</i>	<i>0.011</i>
Family member relationships	<b>1.478</b>	1.212	1.803	0.101	<.001
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>1.339</b>	1.044	1.716	0.127	0.021
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong/Having a mistress	<b>1.315</b>	1.085	1.595	0.098	0.005
<i>Age</i>	<b>0.834</b>	<i>0.783</i>	<i>0.889</i>	<i>0.032</i>	<i>&lt;.001</i>
Sexual incompatibility/fertility issues	<b>0.608</b>	0.414	0.893	0.196	0.011

Table 29 shows that both financial (debt, lack of sufficient housekeeping money) and relationship issues (domestic violence, abuse) contributed to housing issues. Service users engaged in divorce were more than twice (2.146) as likely to report housing issues, whereas those who are already divorced were less than half (0.459) as likely to report housing issues after controlling for all other factors.

**Table 29. Logistic Regression on Service Users Reporting Housing Issues**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Financial issues/debt	<b>3.354</b>	2.882	3.903	0.077	<.001
Sexual discrimination/Family status discrimination	<b>2.509</b>	1.109	5.676	0.417	0.027
Divorce laws/procedures	<b>2.146</b>	1.824	2.524	0.083	<.001
Adaptation to new immigrant life	<b>1.89</b>	1.055	3.384	0.297	0.032
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.755</b>	1.51	2.041	0.077	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>1.562</b>	1.274	1.915	0.104	<.001
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>1.446</b>	1.135	1.843	0.124	0.003
Lack of or insufficient housekeeping money	<b>1.358</b>	1.117	1.651	0.1	0.002
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>1.277</b>	1.012	1.61	0.119	0.039
<i>Born in Hong Kong</i>	<b>0.69</b>	0.601	0.793	0.071	<.001
<i>Divorced</i>	<b>0.459</b>	0.212	0.995	0.395	0.048
<i>Married</i>	<b>0.388</b>	0.18	0.837	0.393	0.016

Table 30 shows the factors related to service users reporting pressures of caring for the family. Service users who have issues with **family member relationships**, from **separation between Mainland China and HK**, and **parent-child communication issues** are between 3 and 4 times more likely to suffer from the pressure of caring for the family. **Financial issues/debt** and **lack of insufficient housekeeping money** increase the odds of suffering from the pressures of caring for the family. Other significant factors include problems related to **sexual assault**, **sexual discrimination**, **work-related stress**, **in-law relationships**, **domestic violence**, and **abuse**. Retired service users, housewives, women working full-time or part-time, or the unemployed have a higher chance of suffering from the pressures of caring for the family. A higher number of children also increases the care burden among service users.

**Table 30. Logistic Regression on Service Users Reporting Pressures of Caring for the Family**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
<i>Retired</i>	<b>5.649</b>	2.035	15.678	0.521	<.001
<i>Housewife</i>	<b>4.859</b>	1.887	12.511	0.483	0.001
Family member relationships	<b>3.83</b>	3.096	4.737	0.108	<.001
<i>Part-time employed</i>	<b>3.785</b>	1.442	9.934	0.492	0.007
Separation between Mainland China and Hong Kong	<b>3.138</b>	1.48	6.653	0.383	0.003
Parent-child communication/discipline	<b>3.106</b>	2.431	3.969	0.125	<.001
<i>Full-time/Self-employed</i>	<b>3.072</b>	1.193	7.906	0.482	0.02
Legal issues related to sexual assault	<b>2.963</b>	1.008	8.709	0.55	0.048
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>2.854</b>	1.074	7.588	0.499	0.036
Sexual discrimination/Family status discrimination	<b>2.595</b>	1.037	6.491	0.468	0.042
Financial issues/debt	<b>2.468</b>	2.005	3.039	0.106	<.001
Employment issues/unemployment/work-related stress	<b>2.347</b>	1.647	3.346	0.181	<.001
Adaptation to new immigrant life	<b>2.291</b>	1.137	4.614	0.357	0.02
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>2.258</b>	1.655	3.082	0.159	<.001
In-law/family-in-law relationships	<b>1.998</b>	1.53	2.608	0.136	<.001
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.702</b>	1.39	2.085	0.103	<.001
Lack of or insufficient housekeeping money	<b>1.611</b>	1.246	2.082	0.131	<.001
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>1.452</b>	1.065	1.978	0.158	0.018
<i>Born in HK</i>	<b>1.387</b>	1.155	1.667	0.094	<.001
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>1.381</b>	1.018	1.872	0.155	0.038
<i>Number of children</i>	<b>1.192</b>	1.074	1.323	0.053	<.001
Divorce laws/procedures	<b>0.741</b>	0.599	0.915	0.108	0.005

### 5.3 MENTAL HEALTH

The following tables focus on the factors affecting service users' mental health. First, Table 31 shows the factors related to service users reporting low self-esteem and body image issues. Service users who have sought **legal assistance regarding domestic violence, harassment, or discrimination based on sex or family status** are 1.5 and 2.88 times more likely to experience low self-esteem or a low body image, respectively. Those who have encountered **sex-related challenges**, including sexual assault or issues related to sexual attitudes and knowledge, are more prone to having low self-esteem. Service users facing **spousal and intimate issues** such as romantic relationship difficulties, sexual

incompatibility, and a spouse's extramarital affair, as well as family-related issues like caregiver stress and problems with family members, also exhibit a higher tendency towards low self-esteem. **Financial and housing concerns** and personal issues, including life adjustment and challenges with friends or colleagues, are also associated with low self-esteem. Older service users tend to exhibit lower self-esteem.

**Table 31. Logistic Regression on Service Users with Low Self-Esteem and Body Image Issues**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Sexual discrimination/Family status discrimination	<b>2.883</b>	1.357	6.127	0.385	0.006
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>2.653</b>	2.104	3.347	0.118	<.001
Life adjustment (being single/empty nest)	<b>2.291</b>	1.447	3.629	0.235	<.001
Friend/colleague relationships	<b>2.031</b>	1.611	2.56	0.118	<.001
Pressure of caring for the family	<b>1.841</b>	1.507	2.25	0.102	<.001
Financial issues/debt	<b>1.833</b>	1.564	2.147	0.081	<.001
Sexual assault (harassment/rape)	<b>1.823</b>	1.032	3.219	0.29	0.038
Sexual incompatibility/fertility issues	<b>1.658</b>	1.237	2.222	0.149	<.001
Sexual attitudes and knowledge	<b>1.64</b>	1.022	2.631	0.241	0.04
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.624</b>	1.401	1.883	0.075	<.001
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>1.501</b>	1.179	1.91	0.123	<.001
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China/Having a mistress	<b>1.379</b>	1.012	1.878	0.158	0.042
Housing issues	<b>1.331</b>	1.128	1.571	0.085	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>1.264</b>	1.051	1.521	0.094	0.013
Age	<b>1.115</b>	1.049	1.184	0.031	<.001
Number of children	<b>0.842</b>	0.779	0.911	0.04	<.001
Lack of or insufficient housekeeping money	<b>0.771</b>	0.619	0.96	0.112	0.02

Second, service users consulting about **labour laws** are more likely to exhibit a high level of anxiety or depression (see Table 32). Factors contributing to increased anxiety or depression among service users include a range of **spousal and intimate relationship problems**, such as abuse, spouse's extramarital affairs, romantic relationship issues, abandonment by a spouse, sexual incompatibility, relationship difficulties with a partner, and a spouse's addiction. **Family-related issues** also play a significant role, including caregiver stress, parent-child communication challenges, and conflicts with in-laws.

**Table 32. Logistic Regression on Service Users with Anxiety or Depression**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Labour laws	<b>2.515</b>	1.193	5.302	0.381	0.015
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>2.459</b>	1.927	3.136	0.124	<.001
Legal issues related to sexual assault	<b>2.427</b>	1.121	5.253	0.394	0.024
Pressure of caring for the family	<b>2.337</b>	1.918	2.848	0.101	<.001
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>2.228</b>	1.817	2.732	0.104	<.001
Adaptation to new immigrant life	<b>2.102</b>	1.076	4.106	0.342	0.03
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>1.913</b>	1.532	2.389	0.113	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>1.82</b>	1.54	2.152	0.085	<.001
Legal issues related to debt/bankruptcy	<b>1.737</b>	0.978	3.085	0.293	0.06
Life adjustment (being single/empty nest)	<b>1.723</b>	1.08	2.751	0.239	0.023
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong/Having a mistress	<b>1.642</b>	1.403	1.922	0.08	<.001
Parent-child communication/discipline	<b>1.61</b>	1.319	1.965	0.102	<.001
Spouse is in debt	<b>1.591</b>	1.148	2.206	0.167	0.005
Gynecopathy/menopause	<b>1.57</b>	1.012	2.434	0.224	0.044
Financial issues/debt	<b>1.558</b>	1.357	1.788	0.07	<.001
In-law/family-in-law relationships	<b>1.551</b>	1.276	1.886	0.1	<.001
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China/Having a mistress	<b>1.534</b>	1.192	1.975	0.129	<.001
Friend/colleague relationships	<b>1.497</b>	1.205	1.86	0.111	<.001
Abandoned by spouse (spouse doesn't come home/missing)	<b>1.438</b>	1.057	1.955	0.157	0.021
Sexual incompatibility/fertility issues	<b>1.381</b>	1.049	1.819	0.14	0.021
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.38</b>	1.227	1.551	0.06	<.001
Spouse has the addiction (gambling/alcoholism/prostitution)	<b>1.282</b>	0.989	1.662	0.132	0.06
Housing issues	<b>1.279</b>	1.112	1.471	0.072	<.001
<i>Born in HK</i>	<b>1.127</b>	<i>1.019</i>	<i>1.248</i>	<i>0.052</i>	<i>0.021</i>
<i>Age</i>	<b>1.079</b>	<i>1.028</i>	<i>1.133</i>	<i>0.025</i>	<i>0.002</i>
<i>Number of children</i>	<b>0.901</b>	<i>0.848</i>	<i>0.957</i>	<i>0.031</i>	<i>&lt;.001</i>

**Financial difficulties**, encompassing legal concerns related to finance and debt, spouse's debt, housing issues, and family's financial difficulties or debts, are also associated with a higher risk of anxiety or depression. **Life issues**, such as the adaptation challenges faced by new immigrants, life adjustments, and issues with friends or colleagues, alongside **physical health conditions** like gynecological disorders or menopause, and legal problems associated with sexual assault, also increase the likelihood of anxiety or depression. Service users born in Hong Kong and those who are older are more susceptible to these mental

health challenges. Conversely, having more children appears to reduce the likelihood of suffering from anxiety or depression.

Third, **unemployed service users** were 4.45 times more likely to experience suicidal thoughts or engage in suicidal attempts (see Table 34). Service users who have been subjected to **sexual assault or abuse** also show increased odds of having suicidal thoughts or attempting suicide. Similarly, service users whose spouses are involved in **extramarital affairs** or struggle with **addiction**, as well as those dealing with challenges stemming from **family or in-law relationships**, exhibit a higher likelihood of experiencing suicidal ideation. Service users who **lack sufficient funds for housekeeping** are more likely to develop suicidal thoughts or attempts. Moreover, older service users are more prone to both suicidal thoughts and attempts.

**Table 33. Logistic Regression on Service Users with Suicidal Thoughts or Attempts**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>4.447</b>	1.003	19.721	0.76	0.05
Sexual assault (harassment/rape)	<b>3.811</b>	1.204	12.064	0.588	0.023
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China/Having a mistress	<b>2.734</b>	1.544	4.841	0.291	<.001
Spouse has the addiction (gambling/alcoholism/prostitution)	<b>2.246</b>	1.298	3.884	0.28	0.004
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>2.233</b>	1.383	3.605	0.244	0.001
Family member relationships	<b>2.161</b>	1.438	3.248	0.208	<.001
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong/Having a mistress	<b>1.981</b>	1.295	3.031	0.217	0.002
In-law/family-in-law relationships	<b>1.828</b>	1.135	2.945	0.243	0.013
Lack of or insufficient housekeeping money	<b>1.698</b>	1.087	2.65	0.227	0.02
<i>Age</i>	<b>1.208</b>	1.037	1.407	0.078	0.015

Fourth, service users who have contracted **sexually transmitted diseases** demonstrate an increased susceptibility to mood disorders by 4.1 times. Additionally, those who have encountered **family-related issues**, including abuse, caregiver stress, spouse's addiction, and problems with in-laws or other family members, face a higher risk of developing mood disorders. Service users grappling with **financial difficulties**, debt, or housing challenges also exhibit a greater likelihood of experiencing mood disorders. Moreover, **challenges in friendships** may further elevate the risk of encountering mood disorders. While older individuals and those who are unemployed are more prone to developing mood disorders, the likelihood is reduced for those who are employed full-time or self-employed, have a larger number of children, and are seeking information about divorce laws and procedures.



**Table 34. Logistic Regression on Service Users with Mood Disorders**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Sexually transmitted diseases	<b>4.148</b>	1.28	13.44	0.6	0.018
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>2.167</b>	1.38	3.404	0.23	<.001
In-law/family-in-law relationships	<b>1.921</b>	1.49	2.478	0.13	<.001
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>1.885</b>	1.434	2.477	0.139	<.001
Spouse has the addiction (gambling/alcoholism/prostitution)	<b>1.55</b>	1.092	2.2	0.179	0.014
Pressure of caring for the family	<b>1.539</b>	1.209	1.961	0.123	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>1.453</b>	1.176	1.794	0.108	<.001
Friend/colleague relationships	<b>1.38</b>	1.047	1.817	0.141	0.022
Financial issues/debt	<b>1.345</b>	1.107	1.634	0.099	0.003
<i>Age</i>	<b>1.304</b>	1.213	1.402	0.037	<.001
Housing issues	<b>1.233</b>	1.004	1.515	0.105	0.046
Divorce laws/procedures	<b>0.698</b>	0.578	0.843	0.096	<.001
<i>Number of children</i>	<b>0.676</b>	0.613	0.745	0.05	<.001
<i>Full-time/Self-employed</i>	<b>0.616</b>	0.393	0.965	0.229	0.034

#### 5.4 ASSISTANCE SEEKING

Logistic regression analysis also allows us to explore the assistance-seeking patterns among the helpline service users. For instance, Table 35 shows that service users who face issues with friend and colleague relationships, a spouse's extramarital affairs in Hong Kong and the Mainland, and employment issues were more likely to seek assistance from their family members, friends, and colleagues. Service members dealing with relationship problems and engaging in divorce were also more likely to seek assistance from family, friends, and colleagues. By contrast, service who struggled with debt and information about sexual attitudes and knowledge were less likely to seek help from their social contacts.

Table 36 shows the factors related to service users having previously sought assistance from other social service organisations or hotlines. The findings suggest that service users suffering from sexually transmitted diseases were more than seven times (7.381) more likely to seek assistance from other social service organisations or hotlines. Those who inquired about domestic violence and harassment laws, experienced abuse, or struggled with menopause or financial issues were also more likely to have previously sought assistance from other social service organisations or hotlines but at a slightly lower level (about twice more likely or less).

**Table 35. Logistic Regression on Service Users Having Previously Sought Assistance with Family, Friends, and Colleagues**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Friend/colleague relationships	<b>1.905</b>	1.535	2.364	0.11	<.001
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong/Having a mistress	<b>1.667</b>	1.427	1.947	0.079	<.001
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China/Having a mistress	<b>1.644</b>	1.28	2.11	0.127	<.001
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>1.562</b>	1.249	1.955	0.114	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>1.442</b>	1.224	1.7	0.084	<.001
Abandoned by spouse (spouse doesn't come home/missing)	<b>1.391</b>	1.023	1.894	0.157	0.036
Employment issues/unemployment/work-related stress	<b>1.341</b>	1.04	1.73	0.13	0.024
<i>Born in HK</i>	<b>1.322</b>	1.187	1.471	0.055	<.001
Divorce laws/procedures	<b>1.305</b>	1.149	1.481	0.065	<.001
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.281</b>	1.135	1.447	0.062	<.001
Financial issues/debt	<b>0.861</b>	0.744	0.997	0.075	0.046
Sexual attitudes and knowledge	<b>0.552</b>	0.325	0.938	0.271	0.028

**Table 36. Logistic Regression on Service Users Having Previously Sought Assistance from Other Social Service Organisations or Hotlines**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Sexually transmitted diseases	<b>7.381</b>	2.166	25.157	0.626	0.001
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>1.671</b>	1.355	2.061	0.107	<.001
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>1.647</b>	1.352	2.005	0.101	<.001
Gynecopathy/menopause	<b>1.639</b>	1.057	2.539	0.223	0.027
Financial issues/debt	<b>1.471</b>	1.277	1.695	0.072	<.001
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.304</b>	1.15	1.479	0.064	<.001
Friend/colleague relationships	<b>0.74</b>	0.572	0.956	0.131	0.021
Sexual incompatibility/fertility issues	<b>0.673</b>	0.489	0.928	0.164	0.016
Sexual attitudes and knowledge	<b>0.464</b>	0.239	0.9	0.338	0.023
<i>Married</i>	<b>0.413</b>	0.21	0.81	0.344	0.01

Service users who have issues with **sexual attitudes and knowledge** are 3.5 times more likely not to have sought previous assistance from any source. Service users who are born in Hong Kong and who struggle with **romantic relationship issues (being a mistress)** are more likely not to have sought any previous support from other sources (see Table 37). By contrast, service users who suffer from **abuse, life adjustment issues, family member relationships**, inquiring about **domestic violence/harassment laws, housing issues**, and a **spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong** are less likely not to have sought advice from

any other source previously. Younger service users are more likely not to have sought previous assistance.

**Table 37. Logistic Regression on Service Users Having Sought No Prior Assistance**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Sexual attitudes and knowledge	<b>3.574</b>	2.313	5.523	0.222	<.001
Born in HK	<b>1.319</b>	1.176	1.479	0.058	<.001
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>1.297</b>	1.017	1.656	0.124	0.036
Age	<b>0.935</b>	0.885	0.989	0.028	0.018
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong/Having a mistress	<b>0.801</b>	0.666	0.963	0.094	0.018
Housing issues	<b>0.77</b>	0.649	0.914	0.087	0.003
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>0.689</b>	0.522	0.909	0.141	0.008
Family member relationships	<b>0.686</b>	0.564	0.834	0.1	<.001
Life adjustment (being single/empty nest)	<b>0.545</b>	0.305	0.975	0.296	0.041
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>0.541</b>	0.412	0.711	0.139	<.001

## 5.5 MENTAL HEALTH AMONG SERVICE USERS ENGAGING IN DIVORCE PROCEEDINGS

Among those engaging in a divorce, service users who have suffered from **domestic violence**, including child abuse, those who have consulted laws regarding domestic violence or harassment, and those experiencing **spousal and intimate issues** such as romantic relationship difficulties, sexual incompatibility, or a spouse's extramarital affairs, were more likely to exhibit low self-esteem or body image issues. Additionally, lower self-esteem is linked with service users dealing with **family problems** such as caregiver stress or conflicts among family members. Service users facing **physical health challenges** such as gynaecological conditions or menopause, as well as **financial and housing difficulties**, are also more likely to have reduced self-esteem. Similarly, older service users tend to display lower self-esteem (see Table 38).

Among those undergoing a divorce, service users are more prone to experiencing anxiety or depression when confronted with **spousal and intimate relationship problems** (see Table 39). These include challenges in romantic relationships, a spouse's extramarital affairs, abuse, inquiries about domestic violence or harassment laws, sexual incompatibility, difficulties in the relationship with their spouse, and abandonment by their spouse. Additionally, **family issues** such as caregiver stress, problems with family members, parent-child interaction difficulties, and conflicts with in-laws, as well as financial difficulties such as family or spouse's debt, also increase the likelihood of experiencing anxiety or depression.

**Table 38. Logistic Regression on Low Self-esteem Among Service Users Engaging in Divorce**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>4.007</b>	2.815	5.703	0.18	<.001
Gynecopathy/menopause	<b>3.798</b>	1.588	9.085	0.445	0.003
Financial issues/debt	<b>2.091</b>	1.674	2.613	0.114	<.001
Child abuse	<b>1.89</b>	1.089	3.279	0.281	0.024
Pressure of caring for the family	<b>1.888</b>	1.404	2.54	0.151	<.001
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>1.784</b>	1.303	2.443	0.16	<.001
Sexual incompatibility/fertility issues	<b>1.754</b>	1.16	2.654	0.211	0.008
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.637</b>	1.33	2.016	0.106	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>1.565</b>	1.135	2.159	0.164	0.006
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China/Having a mistress	<b>1.501</b>	1.033	2.183	0.191	0.033
Housing issues	<b>1.298</b>	1.047	1.609	0.109	0.017
Age	<b>1.133</b>	1.032	1.244	0.048	0.009
Number of children	<b>0.87</b>	0.777	0.974	0.058	0.016
Divorced	<b>0.551</b>	0.356	0.851	0.222	0.007

**Table 39. Logistic Regression on Anxiety or Depression Among Service Users Engaging in Divorce**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Romantic relationship issues/interactions with the opposite sex/being a mistress	<b>3.041</b>	2.018	4.581	0.209	<.001
Pressure of caring for the family	<b>2.964</b>	2.158	4.071	0.162	<.001
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>2.469</b>	1.919	3.176	0.129	<.001
Domestic violence/harassment laws	<b>2.21</b>	1.629	2.998	0.156	<.001
Financial issues/debt	<b>1.772</b>	1.464	2.147	0.098	<.001
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China/Having a mistress	<b>1.718</b>	1.27	2.325	0.154	<.001
Family member relationships	<b>1.713</b>	1.248	2.353	0.162	<.001
Parent-child communication/discipline	<b>1.634</b>	1.159	2.303	0.175	0.005
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong/Having a mistress	<b>1.585</b>	1.314	1.911	0.095	<.001
Spouse is in debt	<b>1.494</b>	1.029	2.17	0.19	0.035
Sexual incompatibility/fertility issues	<b>1.492</b>	1.016	2.192	0.196	0.041
Abandoned by spouse (spouse doesn't come home/missing)	<b>1.485</b>	1.043	2.114	0.18	0.028
In-law/family-in-law relationships	<b>1.366</b>	1.066	1.752	0.127	0.014
Relationship problems (conflict/incompatible personalities/communication issues)	<b>1.294</b>	1.104	1.518	0.081	0.002

Among service users contemplating or proceeding with a divorce, those who seek information on **labour laws** exhibit a notably higher inclination towards experiencing suicidal thoughts or engaging in suicidal attempts (see Table 40). It may imply that service users considering a divorce are also concerned about employment and job-related issues since they must find a means to survive after a divorce. Service users facing challenges related to **family member relationships, sexual incompatibility or fertility issues, spouse's extramarital affairs, abuse, spouse's addiction, and conflicts with in-laws** are at an increased risk of developing suicidal ideation and attempts.

**Table 40. Logistic Regression on Suicidal Thoughts or Attempts Among Service Users Engaging in Divorce**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Labor laws	<b>30.567</b>	2.623	356.202	1.253	0.006
Family member relationships	<b>3.298</b>	1.707	6.375	0.336	<.001
Sexual incompatibility/fertility issues	<b>3.16</b>	1.457	6.852	0.395	0.004
Spouse's extramarital affair in Mainland China/Having a mistress	<b>2.874</b>	1.375	6.004	0.376	0.005
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>2.816</b>	1.574	5.038	0.297	<.001
Spouse has the addiction (gambling/alcoholism/prostitution)	<b>2.564</b>	1.289	5.101	0.351	0.007
Spouse's extramarital affair in Hong Kong/Having a mistress	<b>2.413</b>	1.424	4.09	0.269	0.001
In-law/family-in-law relationships	<b>2.071</b>	1.122	3.823	0.313	0.02

**Table 41. Logistic Regression on Service Users with Mood Disorders Among Those Engaging in Divorce**

	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)		S.E.	Sig.
		Lower	Upper		
Abuse (physical/mental/sexual)	<b>2.206</b>	1.562	3.114	0.176	<.001
In-law/family-in-law relationships	<b>2.095</b>	1.488	2.949	0.175	<.001
Pressure of caring for the family	<b>1.651</b>	1.113	2.448	0.201	0.013
Family member relationships	<b>1.567</b>	1.025	2.397	0.217	0.038
Age	<b>1.267</b>	1.124	1.43	0.061	<.001
Number of children	<b>0.809</b>	0.696	0.942	0.077	0.006
Full-time/Self-employed	<b>0.316</b>	0.124	0.803	0.476	0.015

Finally, among those considering a divorce, service users who endure **abuse**, confront **issues with in-laws**, bear the **pressure of caregiving**, face **problems with family members**, and those who are older exhibit a higher likelihood of experiencing mood disorders (see Table 41). In contrast, service users who were employed full-time and had more children demonstrated a reduced likelihood of developing mood disorders.