3RD

ENABLING
MASTERPLAN

2017-2021

Caring Nation, Inclusive Society

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"As the Republic's Golden Jubilee year draws to a close, Singaporeans should reflect on the kind of society they want, and continue to build a more inclusive society."

— *Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, 2 December 2015,*
Official Opening of the Enabling Village

FOREWORD BY CHAIRPERSON

The 3rd Enabling Masterplan (2017–2021) represents another significant step towards empowering persons with disabilities to achieve their fullest potential as integral and contributing members of society, as Singapore grows to be more inclusive.

The recommendations and proposed strategies have been endorsed by a 22-member Steering Committee comprising persons with disabilities, caregivers, leaders and professionals in the disability field, voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) and government agencies. This Committee has identified broad areas which will help direct efforts in the disability sector over the next five years.

The 3rd Enabling Masterplan sets forth a multi-faceted plan to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, support their caregivers, and build a community that is more caring and inclusive. As one goes through this report, it will be evident that the person with disabilities is at the centre of all that is being planned. As the Committee worked through the recommendations, we were mindful of the need to enable persons with disabilities to transition through the various life stages with the appropriate support and guidance. The appreciation of the role of technology and assistive devices in enhancing their quality of life and independence was certainly not lost on the Committee, and neither was the value of access to support, community-based rehabilitation and integration services.

The prevalence rate of persons with disabilities in Singapore is as follows:

Population group	Approximate prevalence rate
Student population	2.1% of student population[1]
18–49 years	3.4% of resident population[2]
50 years and above	13.3% of resident population[3]

The Steering Committee was of the view that a detailed profiling of persons with disabilities in the country along with the collection of relevant and internationally comparable data on disability, and information from research on disability and related services was necessary for the effective planning and delivery of needed services in the disability sector today and in the future.

It is therefore the Committee's hope that the adoption of the recommendations and implementation of the strategies and action plan proposed in the 3rd Enabling Masterplan will better enable persons with disabilities in Singapore to fulfil their aspirations in all aspects of life.

Anita Fam
Chairman,
3rd Enabling Masterplan Steering Committee

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[1] Source: Ministry of Education. This is based on the number of reported cases of students with sensory impairment, physical impairment, autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disability. The total student population is put at approximately 460,000.

[2] Source: National Council of Social Service. Based on a random sampling of 2,000 Singapore citizens and permanent residents aged 18 and above done by NCSS in 2015, the self-reported disability prevalence rate was 3.4% for those aged 18–49 years old. This includes those who acquired disabilities due to accidents and illness.

[3] Source: National Council of Social Service. Based on a random sampling of 2,000 Singapore citizens and permanent residents aged 18 and above done by NCSS in 2015, the self-reported disability prevalence rate was 13.3% for those aged 50 years and above. This includes those who acquired disabilities due to accidents, illness and old age.

3ʳᴰ ENABLING MASTERPLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Ms Anita Fam
Chairperson
Vice President,
National Council of Social Service

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Mr Ang Wei Neng
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Ms Denise Phua
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Seow Bei Yi

Greater inclusiveness for people with disabilities and more support for their caregivers.

These will be part of the focus of the third Enabling Masterplan – a blueprint to guide the development of policies, programmes, services and other support for those with disabilities. A 22-member committee to develop the five-year plan was announced yesterday by Minister for Social and Family Development Tan Chuan-Jin at the Enabling Village in Lengkok Bahru.

Chaired by Ms Anita Fam, a board member of the National Council of Social Service, it comprises people from the public and private sectors, including people with disabilities and caregivers. They include Ms Chia Yong Yong, president of voluntary welfare organisation SPD, which supports people with disabilities, and Ms Denise Phua, president of the Autism Resource Centre.

The third masterplan will look into a more seamless transition through stages in life – within the education system and towards employment – for people with disabilities. It will also look into support for caregivers.

"Even if you help with employment, that makes a lot of difference (to families)," said Mr Tan. Individuals may be left without a job after completing school, leaving families "stretched", he added.

Ms Fam believes more can be done to ensure caregivers know of the avenues of help available, by having resources that are more easily obtainable.

There is also a need to alleviate their worry that no one will be around to care for their loved ones if they are no longer around.

Mr Keh Eng Song, chief executive officer of the Movement for the Intellectually Disabled Singapore, said: "Caregiver support will be increasingly important because we want them to be empowered, and not be dependent on service providers all the time."

Mr Tan also reiterated the need to incorporate national policies and schemes, such as SkillsFuture and Smart Nation, into the new plan.

For example, under SkillsFuture – a movement to boost skill levels and promote lifelong learning – new modules will be developed for people with disabilities.

"Some of the employers have specific needs, therefore we develop specific training modules so that those with disabilities are trained and can move in quite seamlessly to their jobs as well," Mr Tan said.

The masterplan will build on the progress made by previous plans.

This includes making more community facilities and public transport services more friendly for those with disabilities, and improving their career prospects.

byseow@sph.com.sg

Minister for Social and Family Development Tan Chuan-Jin with Ms Anita Fam, who chairs the 22-member committee for the third Enabling Masterplan. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

Panel members

Ms Anita Fam (chairman), board member, National Council of Social Service; Mr Abdul Majeed Abdul Khader, director, senior consultant psychologist, Singapore Police Force; Mr Andrew Buay, vice-president, group corporate social responsibility, Singtel; Mr Ang Wei Neng, senior vice-president, SBS Transit; Mr Ang Wei Tech, associate chair (research), School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Nanyang Technological University; Mr Ardi S. Hardjoe, chief executive officer, Thye Hua Kwan Nursing Home; Ms Chia Yong Yong, president, SPD; Mr Chong Kwek Bin, IT programme executive, Singapore Association for the Visually Handicapped; Professor Chong Siow Ann, vice-chairman, medical board (research), senior consultant, Institute of Mental Health; Mr Daniel Tan, board member, Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore; Ms Denise Phua, president, Autism Resource Centre; Mr Hao Chun T, programme manager; Mr Lam Yi Young, deputy secretary, Ministry of Education; Dr Lee Tung Jean, deputy secretary, Ministry of Social and Family Development; Mr Karthikeyan J.R., director, disability support, education and development, family and caregiver support, AWWA; Ms Ku Geok Boon, CEO, SG Enable; Ms Margaret Heng, CEO, Shatec; Mr Raja Singh, founder and owner, DNR Wheels; Ms Tan Ping Ling, deputy director, human resource, NTUC FairPrice; Ms Teoh Zsin Woon, deputy secretary, Ministry of Health; Ms Tina Hung, deputy CEO, National Council of Social Service; Dr Winnie Goh, senior consultant, department of paediatrics, neurology service, KK Women's and Children's Hospital.

> "We have made significant progress over the last few years under the current Enabling Masterplan. We should build on this momentum and develop a new and bolder roadmap.
>
> The goal is to build a more inclusive Singapore where more persons with disabilities can realise their potential and become integral members of our society. All Singaporeans have a role to play. I am confident that the committee, with its diverse expertise and experience, will come up with exciting ideas."
>
> — Minister for Social and Family Development, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, April 2016, 1st Public Consultation for 3rd Enabling Masterplan at the Enabling Village

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2016, Minister for Social and Family Development, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, announced the setting up of a Steering Committee to develop the 3rd Enabling Masterplan. The Committee, led by Ms Anita Fam, comprised 22 members from the people, public and private sectors, including persons with disabilities and caregivers.

The Enabling Masterplan is a roadmap for Singapore to build a more inclusive society where persons with disabilities are empowered and enabled to realise their true potential.

The 3rd Enabling Masterplan (2017–2021) will build on the efforts of the past two Enabling Masterplans[4]. Its strategies complement Singapore's efforts to progressively realise her obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) which Singapore ratified in 2013[5].

The Committee envisions Singapore to be **"a caring and inclusive society where persons with disabilities are empowered to achieve their fullest potential and participate fully as integral and contributing members of society."**

The Steering Committee has drawn up 20 recommendations based on nine strategic directions that support efforts along the lines of these four key thrusts:

Key Thrust 1:
Improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities

Key Thrust 2:
Supporting caregivers

Key Thrust 3:
Building the community

Key Thrust 4:
Building an inclusive society

The Steering Committee calls for the support and action of the community at large, employers, the public sector, VWOs as well as persons with disabilities and their caregivers in enabling the realisation of the vision for building a caring and truly inclusive society where persons with disabilities are able to realise their full potential and participate fully as integral and contributing members of our society.

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[4] First Enabling Masterplan (2007–2011); Second Enabling Masterplan (2012–2016)

[5] https://app.msf.gov.sg/Press-Room/Singapore-Ratifies-UNCRPD

Key Thrust	Strategic Directions & Recommendations (R)	
IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	**1** Responsive and adaptable services throughout the different life stages to support and care for persons with disabilities	**2** Timely and effective detection of disabilities
	R1 *To develop flexible service models for persons with disabilities*	**R4** *To ensure timely and effective detection of developmental needs in children by enhancing the existing network of touchpoints*
	R2 *To meaningfully engage and support persons with disabilities requiring care to be as independent as possible*	
	R3 *To improve transition management*	
	3 Access to opportunities for development and quality education	**4** Improved access to enhanced pathways for employment and lifelong learning opportunities
	R5 *To ensure access to quality education in mainstream or government-funded SPED schools through the Compulsory Education Act*	**R7** *To develop and enhance vocational preparation pathways to better cater to persons with disabilities with diverse support needs*
		R8 *To develop a spectrum of open, supported and customised employment models to provide more pathways to employment*
	R6 *To enhance integration and inclusion of children with special needs within the context of our education system*	**R9** *To strengthen efforts to provide lifelong learning opportunities for persons with disabilities*
		R10 *To scale up efforts to build employers' capabilities in hiring and managing employees with disabilities*
	5 Holistic and quality support across services	
	R11 *To synergise partnerships within and across health, education and social service to better support persons with disabilities and their caregivers*	**R12** *To study the need for the establishment of a disability office*

Key Thrust	Strategic Directions & Recommendations (R)	
SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS	**6** Recognition that caregivers play a critical role in caring for persons with disabilities	
	R13 *To improve caregivers' well-being and enhance their caregiving capabilities*	**R14** *To support caregivers in their future care planning*
BUILDING THE COMMUNITY	**7** Capacity and capability building of the disability sector	
	R15 *To build the capacity and capability of disability service providers to enhance service quality*	**R17** *To improve data collection and analytics to enable better navigation, coordination and planning of services for persons with disabilities*
	R16 *To mobilise volunteers to support and promote inclusiveness of persons with disabilities in the community*	
	8 Technology is made a priority to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities	
	R18 *To include persons with disabilities in the Smart Nation initiative*	
BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY	**9** Support and empower persons with disabilities to live within and participate actively in the community	
	R19 *To build positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities and improve knowledge on how to interact with them*	**R20** *To include persons with disabilities in all settings*

INTRODUCTION

DISABILITY TODAY

Three key identified trends affecting disability today are:

A. Increasing longevity of Singaporeans, including persons with disabilities
With medical advancements, many persons with disabilities will outlive their parents. Considerations have to be made to enable them to live independently.

Life Expectancy at Birth

Age (Years)

Male
Female
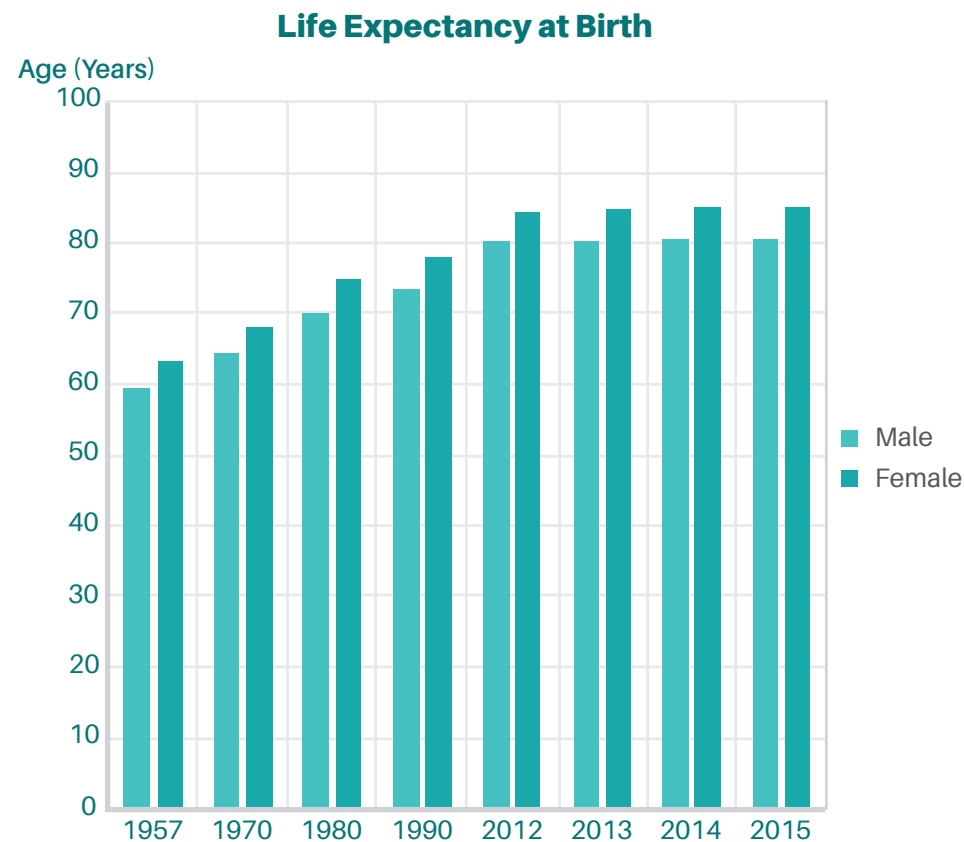
Data from 1980 onwards refer to the resident population.
Data for 2015 are preliminary.

Source: Singapore Department of Statistics

B. Growing number of persons with autism
While the actual cause of autism is unknown, there is better awareness and detection. With a growing number of persons diagnosed with autism, our strategies must address the spectrum of needs (i.e. mild to severe).

Increase in Number of Children Diagnosed with Developmental Issues

2010   2500

2014   +76%   4400

ASD Incidence amongst Children

in **160**
World Health Organization

in **150**
Singapore
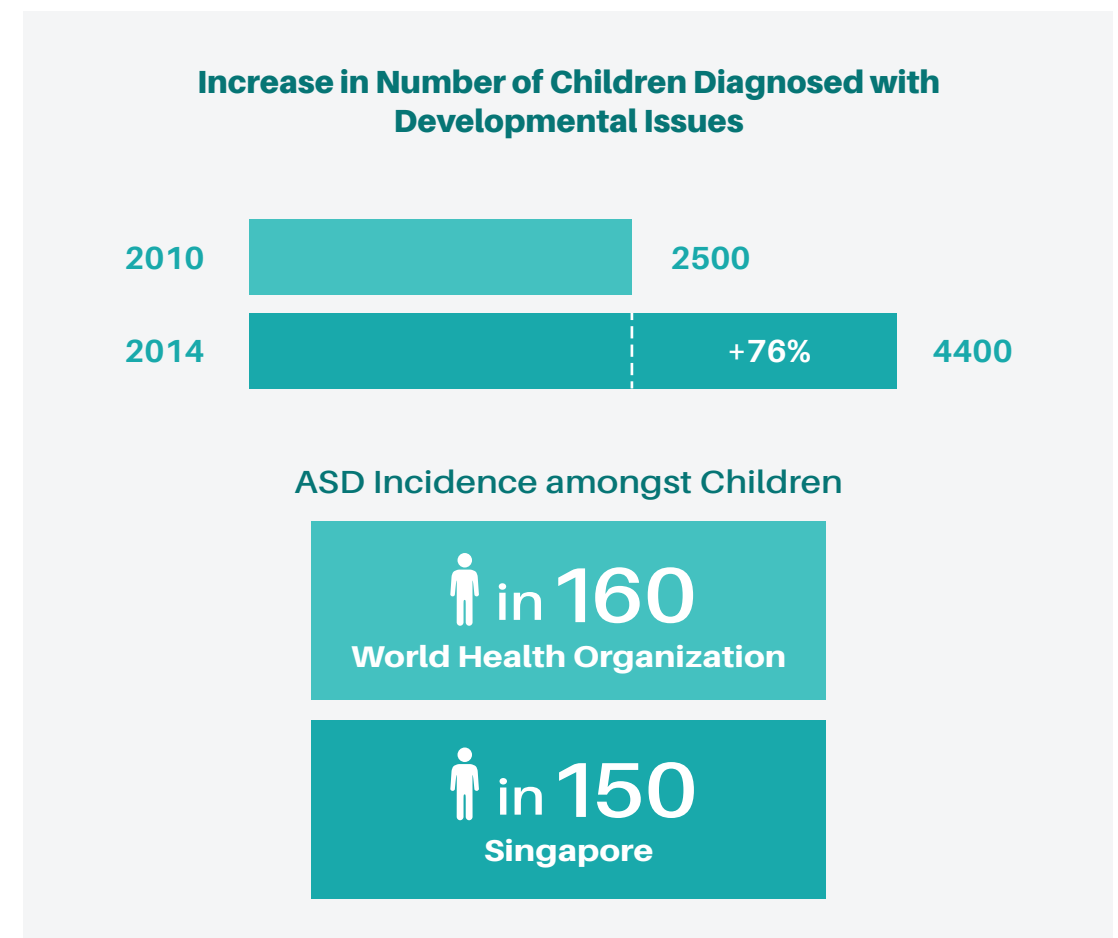
Sources: KK Women's and Children's Hospital, National University Hospital

C. An ageing population

Parents who are caregivers are ageing and find it difficult to care for their own children with disabilities. With a declining natural population, families are getting smaller and there will be less familial support for persons with disabilities.

Number of Working-Age Citizens Has Peaked

Citizens aged 20–64 | Citizens aged 65 and older

2010 — 1.9M : 220K
2015 — 2.2M : 440K
2030 — 1.9M : 900K
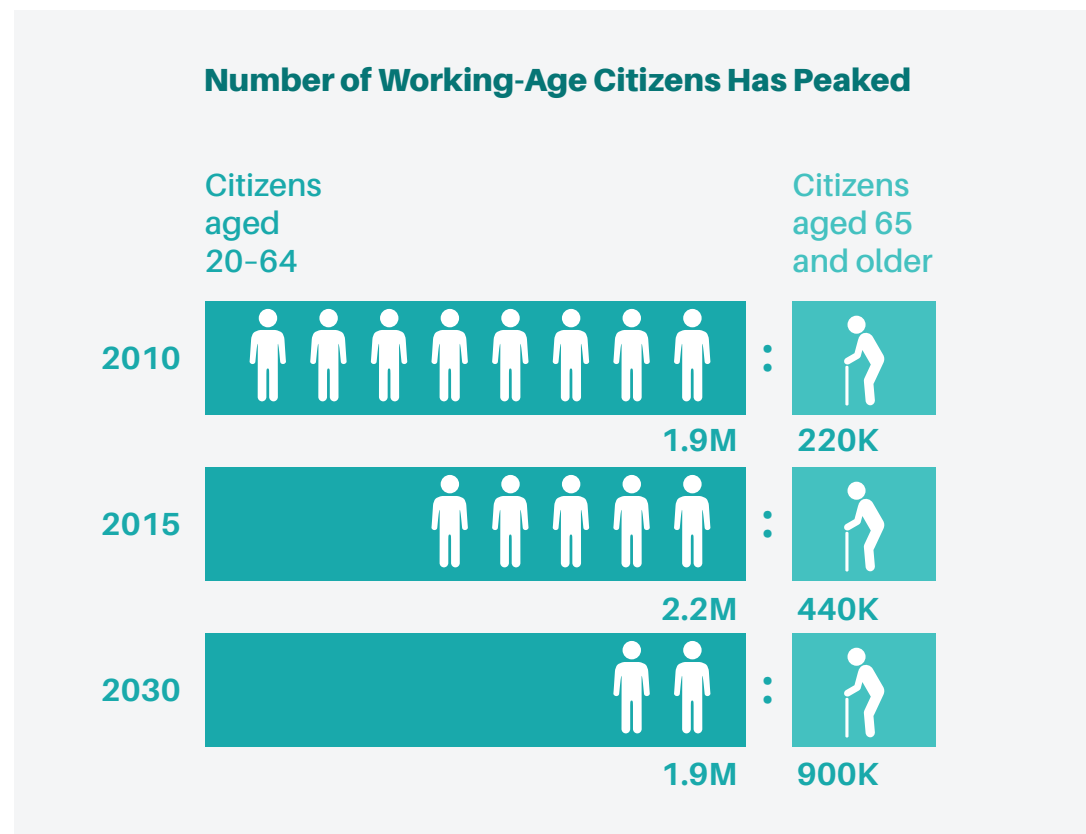
Source: National Population and Talent Division

The current disability landscape will need to prepare itself for changes that arise from growing trends. First, persons with disabilities are living longer and it is critical for us to enable them to live independently as they age. Secondly, the number of persons diagnosed with autism is growing and services to support this group need to be enhanced. Thirdly, as the population ages and family size shrinks, ageing caregivers will find it harder to take care of their grown-up children and themselves. Our support for older persons in caregiving roles has to expand. Our support and strategies must also evolve to meet the needs of persons across a spectrum of disabilities.

ATTITUDES OF SINGAPOREANS TOWARDS PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Findings from studies conducted by the National Council of Social Service (NCSS)[6] and Lien Foundation[7] on the attitudes of Singaporeans towards persons with disabilities revealed that Singaporeans were still unsure about interaction etiquette. It was cited that many employers were unwilling to employ persons with disabilities. Societal attitudes have to evolve too. Persons with disabilities and their families felt that more support can be provided to help persons with disabilities integrate into society and participate in social activities.

[6] In 2015, NCSS conducted a study of close to 1,000 persons with disabilities and 1,400 members of the general public on their attitudes towards disability.

[7] In May 2016, Lien Foundation released findings from its Inclusive Attitudes Survey, which examined the views and attitudes of Singaporeans towards children with special needs. It had surveyed over 1,000 members of the public and 835 parents of children with special needs. Please visit: http://www.todayonline.com/singapore/survey-finds-conflicting-attitudes-towards-children-special-needs

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION QUALITY OF LIFE (WHOQOL) FRAMEWORK

The WHOQOL is a quality of life assessment developed by the World Health Organization (WHO). The study examines the quality of life of a person across six domains.

- Financial resources
- Freedom, physical safety and security
- Health and social care: accessibility and quality
- Home environment
- Opportunities for acquiring new information and skills
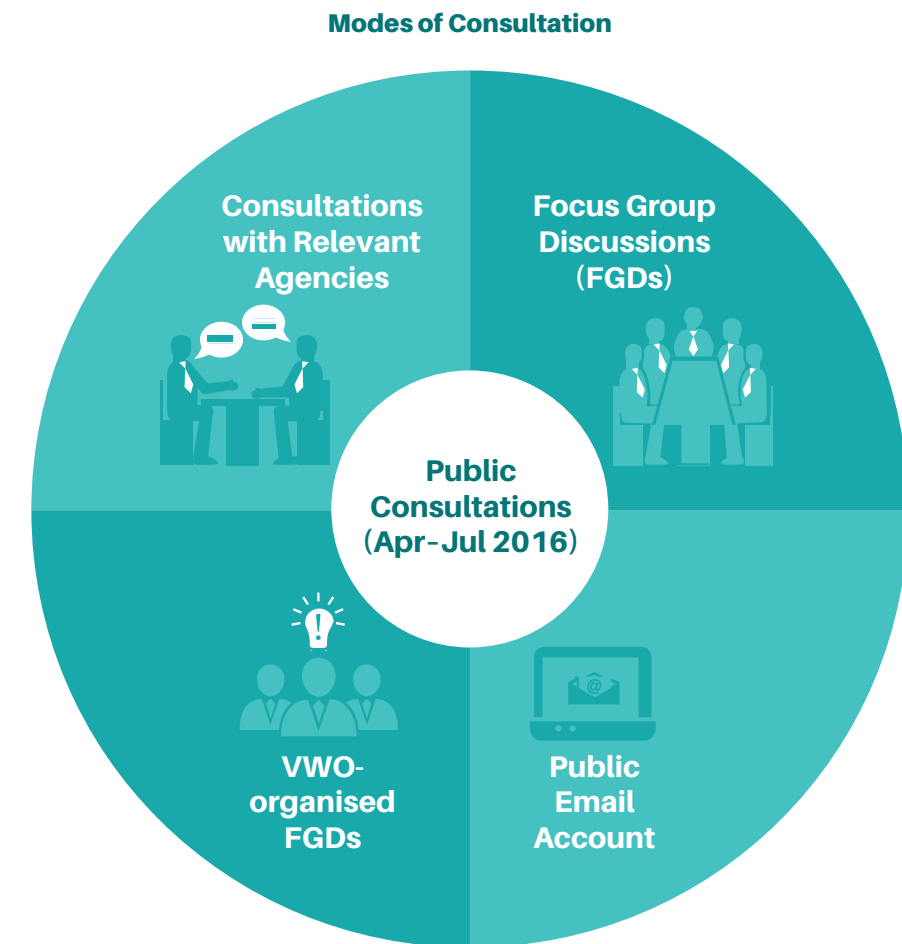- Participation in and opportunities for recreation/leisure
- Physical environment (pollution/noise/traffic/climate)
- Transport

Environment

Physical health

- Energy and fatigue
- Pain and discomfort
- Sleep and rest

Persons with Disabilities

Personal beliefs

- Personal beliefs

Psychological

- Body image and appearance
- Negative feelings
- Positive feelings
- Self-esteem
- Thinking, learning, memory and concentration

Level of independence

- Mobility
- Activities of daily living
- Dependence on medicinal substances and medical aids
- Work capacity

Social relationships

- Personal relationships
- Social support
- Sexual activity

In 2015, the NCSS conducted a Quality of Life Study using the WHOQOL assessment to better understand the needs of vulnerable adults, including persons with disabilities. 1,000 persons with disabilities aged 18 and above were surveyed. Findings of the study revealed that persons with disabilities want to be enabled to live independently, access information and relevant services easily, receive social support and have the confidence to participate in society.

PEOPLE WE SPOKE TO

Modes of Consultation

Consultations with Relevant Agencies

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Public Consultations (Apr–Jul 2016)

VWO-organised FGDs

Public Email Account

"It was great sharing our ideas and inputs. The focus was very much on the reality of life and the challenges for a person with special needs."

— *Participant of Focus Group Discussion,*
   3 April 2016

A series of consultation sessions and focus group discussions (FGDs) were organised for persons with disabilities, caregivers, VWOs and employers to share their aspirations, feedback and ideas for the 3rd Enabling Masterplan. VWOs and disability-related organisations were also encouraged to conduct their own FGDs and consultation sessions to share their thoughts with the Steering Committee. An email feedback channel (enablingmasterplan3@msf.gov.sg)

was also made available to members of the public to allow them to provide feedback at any time, outside of the FGDs.

More than 400 participants gave their views and feedback through the various channels. The sessions were organised as part of the SGfuture[8] consultation exercise, to help Singaporeans envision a more caring and inclusive society.

The feedback and ideas gathered at the FGD sessions provided useful insights for the Committee members and were fed into the recommendations and strategies of the 3rd Enabling Masterplan.

Source: Facebook, Tan Chuan-Jin

Ecosystem for Persons with Disabilities

Caregivers
VWOs
Public
Government
Employers

Environment
Personal beliefs
Physical health
Persons with Disabilities
Level of independence
Psychological
Social relationships

Enablers	Systems	Inclusive Mindsets	Technology
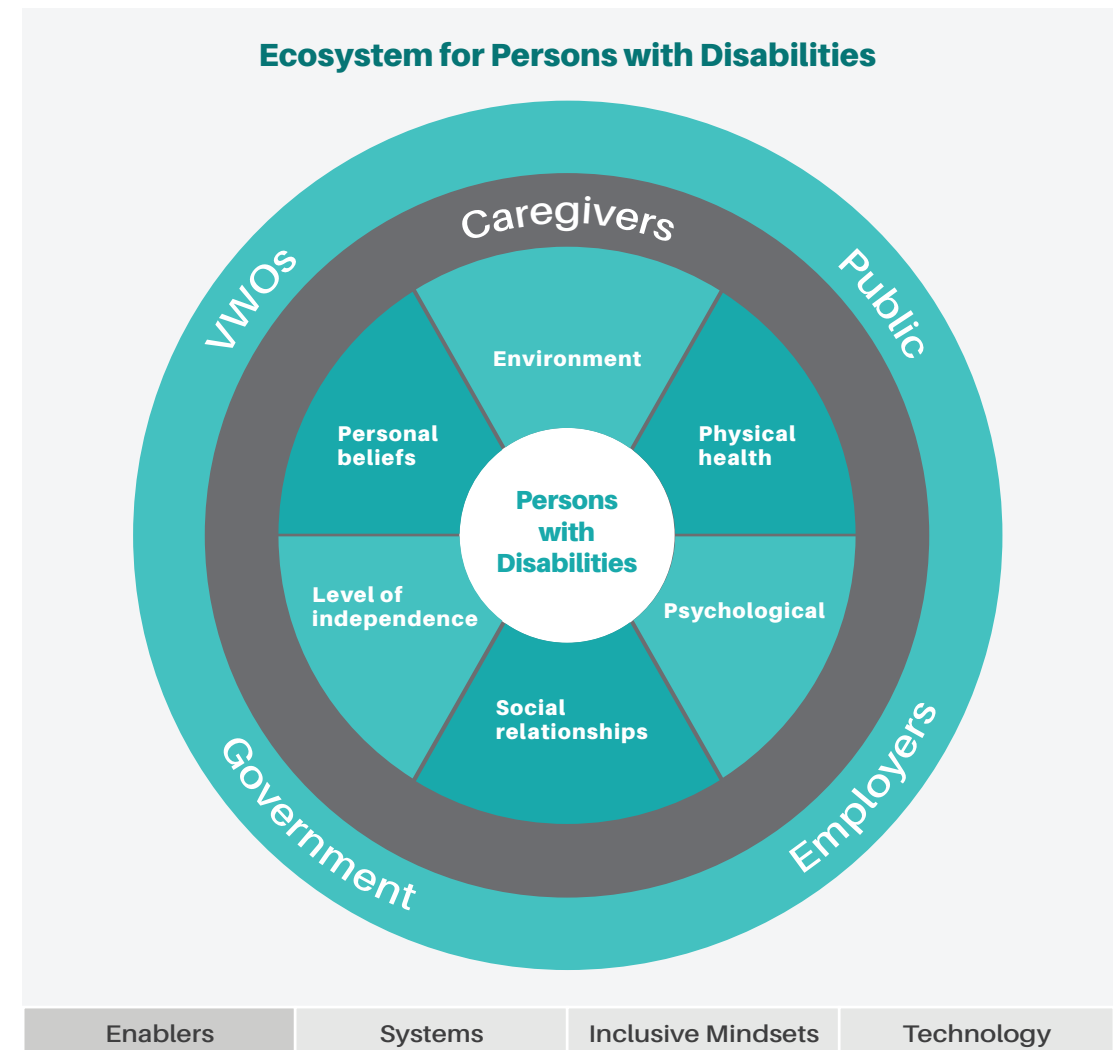
Based on the key trends, concerns, feedback and opportunities identified within the ecosystem of persons with disabilities, the Steering Committee was of the view that efforts should focus around four key thrusts:

| Vision: |
| A caring and inclusive society where persons with disabilities are empowered to achieve their fullest potential and participate fully as integral and contributing members of society |

| Key Thrust 1: Improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities | Key Thrust 2: Supporting caregivers |
| Key Thrust 3: Building the community | Key Thrust 4: Building an inclusive society |

The Committee also drew up nine strategic directions and formulated 20 recommendations to meet the outcomes envisaged in the 3rd Enabling Masterplan.

FORMULATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations made by the Steering Committee in this report are intended to improve the quality of life (QOL) of persons with disabilities by impacting the QOL domains, and to focus on creating an ecosystem of support for persons with disabilities. The process was guided by key trends, concerns highlighted through ground feedback, and the interactions with persons with disabilities and the sector. Evidence-based practices, coupled with international research and literature, provided guidance in formulating these recommendations.

KEY THRUST 1: IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The first thrust focuses on improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities as they journey through the different life stages. The key strategic directions and recommendations are as follows:

Strategic Direction 1 | RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTABLE SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE DIFFERENT LIFE STAGES TO SUPPORT AND CARE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Each person's needs are unique and their needs will evolve as they journey through their life. The Committee views that the key step towards improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities is to design services that are capable of meeting the varying needs across the spectrum of users in a holistic manner. Persons with disabilities and their caregivers will also benefit from improved transition management as they move across services.

The recommendations are:

Recommendation 1: To develop flexible service models for persons with disabilities.

Recommendation 2: To meaningfully engage and support persons with disabilities requiring care to be as independent as possible.

Recommendation 3: To improve transition management.

Strategic Direction 2 | TIMELY AND EFFECTIVE DETECTION OF DISABILITIES

The Committee is of the view that the ability to identify children with disabilities early is a key priority. Earlier detection of a child's needs coupled with appropriate timely intervention can help the child to develop competencies to maximise the child's potential.

The recommendation is:

Recommendation 4: To ensure timely and effective detection of developmental needs in children by enhancing the existing network of touchpoints.

Strategic Direction 3 | ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY EDUCATION

Education plays a significant role in helping persons with disabilities fulfil their aspirations and potential by developing their abilities and strengths. Besides providing holistic educational support, the learning environment should facilitate interaction and better understanding between persons with disabilities and their peers to promote inclusiveness.

The recommendations are:

Recommendation 5: To ensure access to quality education in mainstream or government-funded SPED schools through the Compulsory Education Act.

Recommendation 6: To enhance integration and inclusion of children with special needs within the context of our education system.

Strategic Direction 4 | IMPROVED ACCESS TO ENHANCED PATHWAYS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Research has shown that persons with disabilities who are employed lead more fulfilling and enriching lives. The Committee is of the view that there is a need to expand employment opportunities and job support programmes, and provide better support to employers of persons with disabilities. In enabling persons with disabilities to remain employable and participate actively in the workforce, there is also a need to look into efforts to support lifelong learning.

The recommendations are:

Recommendation 7: To develop and enhance vocational preparation pathways to better cater to persons with disabilities with diverse support needs.

Recommendation 8: To develop a spectrum of open, supported and customised employment models to provide more pathways to employment.

Recommendation 9: To strengthen efforts to provide lifelong learning opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Recommendation 10: To scale up efforts to build employers' capabilities in hiring and managing employees with disabilities.

Strategic Direction **5** | **HOLISTIC AND QUALITY SUPPORT ACROSS SERVICES**

Steps should be taken to improve service coordination across the sectors, so that persons with disabilities can experience smoother and more seamless support for the services offered in the different sectors. Collaborations and partnerships between adult disability and eldercare services should be promoted to reap economies of scale. This can be in areas such as home care services and manpower training.

The recommendations are:

Recommendation 11: To synergise partnerships within and across health, education and social service to better support persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

Recommendation 12: To study the need for the establishment of a disability office.

KEY THRUST 2: SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS

The second thrust seeks to provide support to caregivers as they journey through life caring for persons with disabilities.

Strategic Direction **6** | **RECOGNITION THAT CAREGIVERS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN CARING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Caregivers are recognised as the main care coordinators for the persons with disabilities whom they are caring for, and are a crucial link between persons with disabilities and the community. The Committee is of the view that persons

with disabilities will experience better care, when we help caregivers to be more effective in their caregiving and care planning roles.

The recommendations are:

Recommendation 13: To improve caregivers' well-being and enhance their caregiving capabilities.

Recommendation 14: To support caregivers in their future care planning.

KEY THRUST 3: BUILDING THE COMMUNITY

Strategic Direction **7** | **CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY BUILDING OF THE DISABILITY SECTOR**

An integrated system and structure to enable and empower the community to better support persons with disabilities is key to building an inclusive society.

It is crucial to invest in developing the capabilities of the disability sector so that services delivered to persons with disabilities are effective and of good quality. The Committee is of the view that more can be done in building the sector's capacity and capability in supporting persons with disabilities and their caregivers. Data analytics and research should be adopted to support service planning and innovation in meeting the needs of persons with disabilities.

The recommendations are:

Recommendation 15: To build the capacity and capability of disability service providers to enhance service quality.

Recommendation 16: To mobilise volunteers to support and promote inclusiveness of persons with disabilities in the community.

Recommendation 17: To improve data collection and analytics to enable better navigation, coordination and planning of services for persons with disabilities.

Strategic Direction 8 | TECHNOLOGY IS MADE A PRIORITY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Technology is recognised as an enabler that can help lower barriers faced by persons with disabilities in their daily living, education, employment and communications. More resources should be channelled towards training on the use of technological support for persons with disabilities. This will increase the use of Assistive Technology (AT) and Information Technology (IT) by persons with disabilities so that they can maximise their full potential and have a better quality of life.

The recommendation is:

Recommendation 18: To include persons with disabilities in the Smart Nation initiative.

KEY THRUST 4: BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

Beyond persons with disabilities and caregivers, community involvement is the cornerstone for building an inclusive society.

Strategic Direction 9 | SUPPORT AND EMPOWER PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO LIVE WITHIN AND PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE COMMUNITY

It is important for persons with disabilities to feel that they are part of society as this builds their confidence and encourages them to step out to participate in the community. The Committee hopes to see persons with disabilities participate actively in social and cultural activities, and for the needs of persons with disabilities to be taken into consideration whenever national initiatives are being planned.

The recommendations are:

Recommendation 19: To build positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities and improve knowledge on how to interact with them.
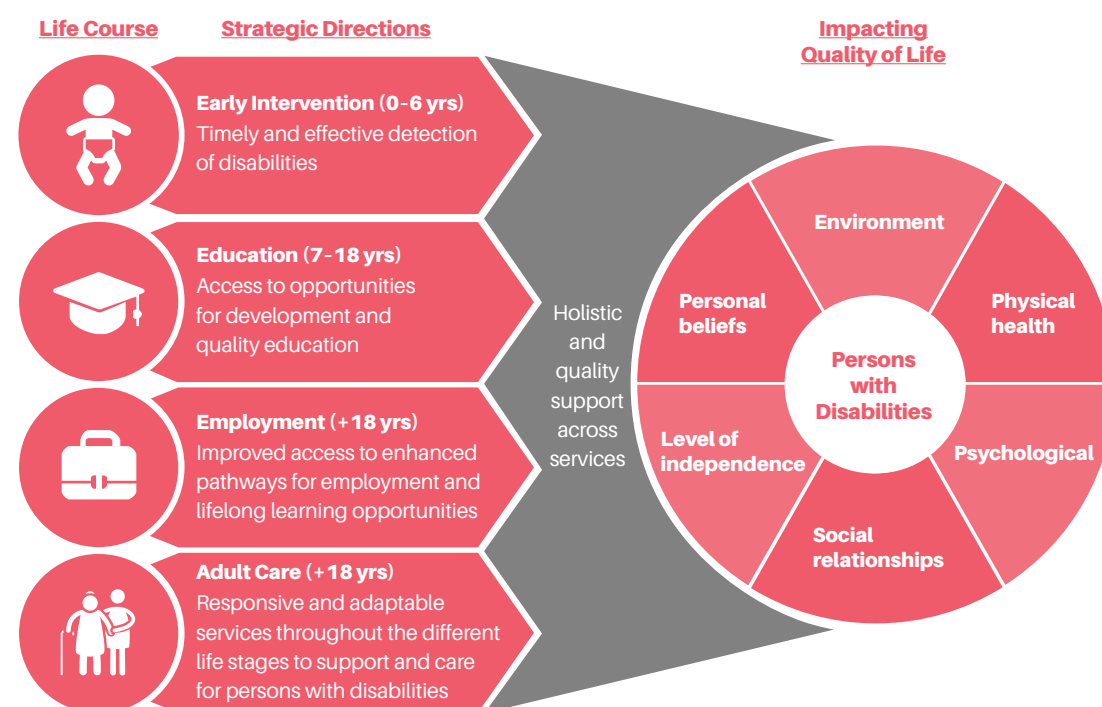
Recommendation 20: To include persons with disabilities in all settings.

Through the recommendations that have been drawn up for the 3rd Enabling Masterplan, the Committee hopes to enable persons with disabilities and their caregivers to lead more fulfilled lives and feel a greater sense of belonging in Singapore.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Under the past two Enabling Masterplans, significant progress has been made in identifying service gaps, improving services, and making them accessible and affordable to persons with disabilities and their families.

The 3rd Enabling Masterplan takes a holistic and person-centred approach to improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities. It builds on the foundations laid by the previous two Enabling Masterplans to address emerging needs and gaps.

Life Course **Strategic Directions** **Impacting Quality of Life**

Early Intervention (0-6 yrs)
Timely and effective detection of disabilities

Education (7-18 yrs)
Access to opportunities for development and quality education

Employment (+18 yrs)
Improved access to enhanced pathways for employment and lifelong learning opportunities

Adult Care (+18 yrs)
Responsive and adaptable services throughout the different life stages to support and care for persons with disabilities

Holistic and quality support across services

Persons with Disabilities
Environment
Physical health
Psychological
Social relationships
Level of independence
Personal beliefs

A person-centred approach places the person with disability at the centre of decision-making and services; it examines the needs of that person in a holistic manner.

Strategic Direction 1

RESPONSIVE AND ADAPTABLE SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE DIFFERENT LIFE STAGES TO SUPPORT AND CARE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Each person's needs are unique and different. As a child grows and ages, his needs too will evolve. Services need to be holistic, flexible and relevant to cater to the varying needs of a person with disability across his life course, so that a person with disability will be appropriately supported as he moves from one life stage to the next. In the past five years, improvements have been made to the accessibility, affordability and quality of services in the areas of early intervention, education, employment and adult care.
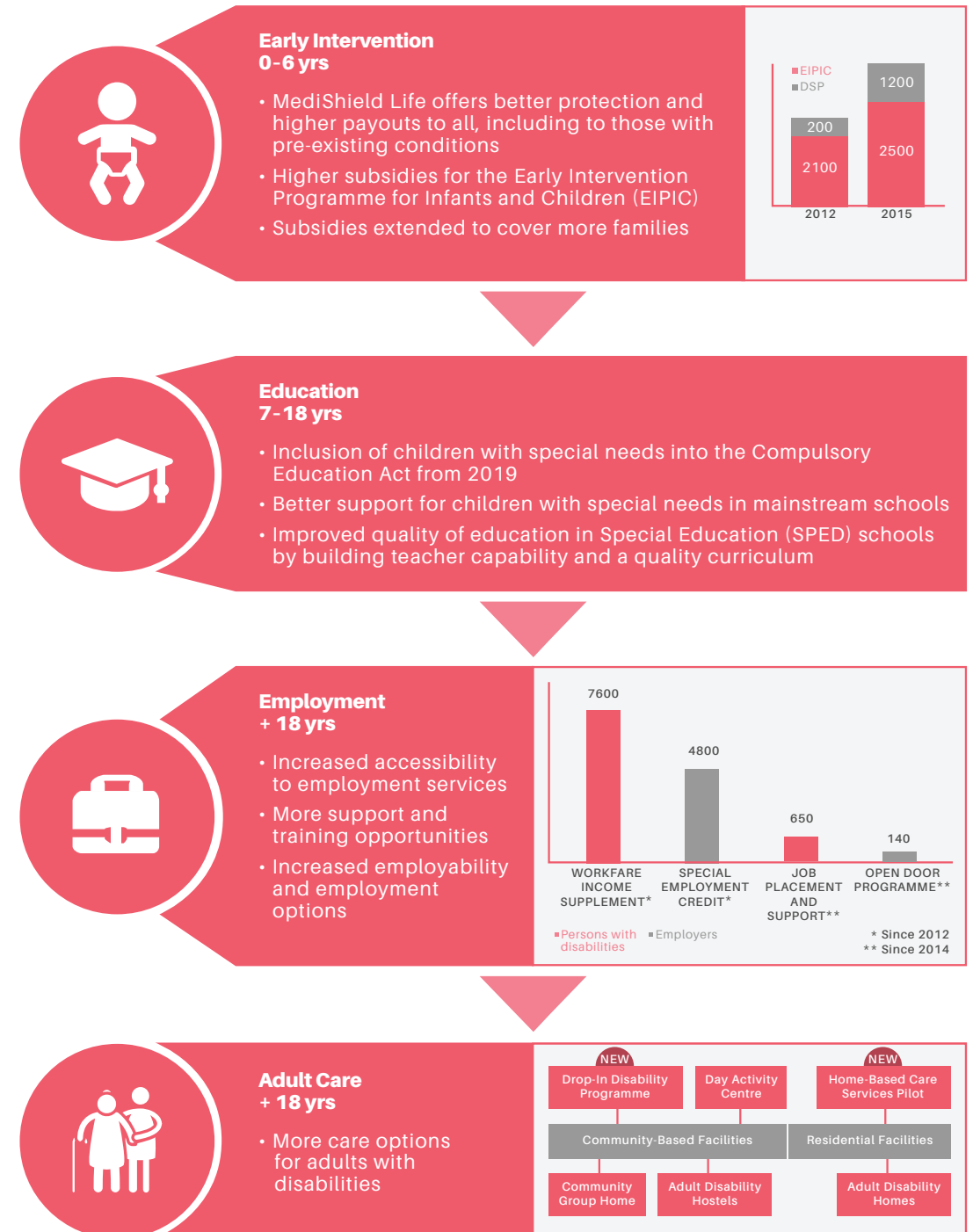
The Enabling Village is an inclusive community space which is also home to several social businesses and community services. It has a special focus on training and employment of persons with disabilities and provides a first-stop information centre on disability services.

(Photo: Information and Career Centre at Enabling Village)

Source: SG Enable

Key Achievements under the past Masterplans

Early Intervention
0-6 yrs

- MediShield Life offers better protection and higher payouts to all, including to those with pre-existing conditions
- Higher subsidies for the Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC)
- Subsidies extended to cover more families

■ EIPIC
■ DSP

2012: 2100, 200
2015: 2500, 1200

Education
7-18 yrs

- Inclusion of children with special needs into the Compulsory Education Act from 2019
- Better support for children with special needs in mainstream schools
- Improved quality of education in Special Education (SPED) schools by building teacher capability and a quality curriculum

Employment
+ 18 yrs

- Increased accessibility to employment services
- More support and training opportunities
- Increased employability and employment options

WORKFARE INCOME SUPPLEMENT*: 7600
SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT CREDIT*: 4800
JOB PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT**: 650
OPEN DOOR PROGRAMME**: 140

■ Persons with disabilities   ■ Employers

* Since 2012
** Since 2014

Adult Care
+ 18 yrs

- More care options for adults with disabilities

NEW — Drop-In Disability Programme
Day Activity Centre
NEW — Home-Based Care Services Pilot

Community-Based Facilities   Residential Facilities

Community Group Home
Adult Disability Hostels
Adult Disability Homes

Although much progress has been made, regular reviews of services and the disability sector should continue to ensure that services remain relevant and responsive to the changing needs of persons with disabilities. Not all the needs of persons with disabilities may be fully met by existing programmes. Unlinked and isolated service delivery may make it difficult for persons with disabilities to easily access and fully benefit from these programmes. Current funding support and service models can be enhanced to provide service providers sufficient flexibility and needed resources to try out new ideas to meet the varying needs of the spectrum of users.

There is also room to improve existing care services for adults with disabilities. Today, most programmes focus on improving their clients' level of independence by developing skills that will help them with their Activities of Daily Living (ADL). Service models of care services should be reviewed with a view to taking a more holistic approach towards improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities. Adults with moderate to severe disabilities also have other needs beyond their ADL that are often neglected. More targeted support and care options should also be put in place for adults with higher needs.

Recommendation 1

To develop flexible service models for persons with disabilities (QOL Domains: Level of Independence and Environment)

ENSURE A SPECTRUM OF SERVICES IS AVAILABLE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AT EACH LIFE STAGE

Willis, 20, has autism spectrum disorder. He lives with his parents and a brother, and attends the Day Activity Centre at St. Andrew's Autism Centre. Willis enjoys using the iPad. His parents want him to learn more self-help skills and live independently.

Source: DesignSingapore Council

Appropriate research and studies should also be conducted to study the needs of the different groups of persons with disabilities at each life stage, as well as the level and type of support required to adequately meet the needs of different disability groups and profiles. These studies will help identify service gaps and inform the Government and service providers on the types of services and support required by persons with disabilities in Singapore.

Where necessary, standardised assessment tools should also be developed to enable persons with disabilities to be matched to the appropriate services and as an indicator of the kind of support that may be required by the individual.

ENSURE AFFORDABILITY AND QUALITY OF SERVICES IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF USERS

It is commendable to note that through the last Enabling Masterplan, early intervention, employment and care services have been expanded and new programmes introduced. While these have been done, there should be clear and measurable client and family outcomes for funded services to ensure the efficacy and impact of service in meeting clients' needs. These outcomes will also reflect the effectiveness of the use of resources in realising the intended objectives of the services and programmes.

As quality improvements are made to enhance efficacy, services should continue to remain affordable. The funding structures should also reflect the level of support needed based on the severity of needs of persons with disabilities in the services.

Recommendation 2

To meaningfully engage and support persons with disabilities requiring care to be as independent as possible
(QOL Domains: Level of Independence, Social Relationships, Environment and Psychological)

ENHANCE SUPPORT FOR ADULT PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN DIFFERENT FACETS OF LIFE

Huiqun, 32, was born with an intellectual disability and suffers from speech impairment. When Huiqun was first referred to TOUCH Centre for Independent Living (TCIL) in 2012, she was afraid and would throw tantrums. Gradually, with constant encouragement from the coaches at TCIL, including TOUCH social worker, Ms Chloe Liew, she soon opened up and became receptive to learning new skills, which included how to manage her time and money, personal hygiene, proper decorum and cooking simple meals. It was a significant breakthrough for Huiqun as she started to enjoy attending classes at TCIL.

Source: TOUCH Community Services

Care services should ensure that the programming has breadth to support the different facets of life, and improve the overall quality of life of persons with disabilities. The needs of persons with disabilities will grow beyond daily living aspects in the course of their lifetime as they mature from childhood into adulthood.

Likewise, **programmes will need to evolve with greater emphasis on social participation, recreation, as well as community living skills, especially for higher functioning persons with disabilities.**

ENSURE ADULT DISABILITY SERVICES ARE ACCESSIBLE AND AVAILABLE, IN PARTICULAR TO THOSE WITH HIGHER CARE NEEDS

Some adults with disabilities, especially those with higher care needs, face difficulties in accessing care services. Barriers to access such as transportation, proximity of services and availability of services should be lowered. Persons with severe disabilities may require dedicated transport services. Such dedicated transport options must be sufficient and affordable to enable access to community services.

Service planning by the various authorities such as the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and Ministry of Health (MOH) must ensure sufficient spaces in their services and also locate them centrally for ease of access by persons with disabilities. Persons with severe disabilities will require better access to home-based services to meet their needs.

Recommendation 3

To improve transition management (QOL Domain: Environment)

EXPLORE THE INTRODUCTION OF A STANDARDISED CASE MANAGEMENT, CARE PLANNING AND COORDINATION SYSTEM WITH A VIEW TO IMPLEMENTATION

Persons with disabilities and their families face greater levels of stress whenever they move across different life stages or when transitioning from one service to another. For example, persons with disabilities and their families are often not aware of the community support services that are available to them and do not know where to go in times of crisis. Stressors are also felt by persons with disabilities and their families when they transition from early intervention services to schools, graduate from schools into employment or other care services as they age. Persons with disabilities should be better supported with enhanced signposting and case management as they transition from one service to another across their life stages. Persons with disabilities need care planning advice as they and their caregivers age.

The Committee proposes that a **standardised case management, care planning and coordination system be explored with a view to implementation.** This system should ensure continued access and smooth transition to appropriate services and care planning advice for persons with disabilities and their caregivers as required.

Clear guidelines to ensure smooth transition from one service to another across life stages should be established with service providers. The Committee recognises that there are two broad groups of persons with disabilities where a more targeted approach needs to be adopted as reflected in the table below:

Target Group	Suggested Approach
Persons with disabilities known to and receiving services from a primary agency	'Hub-and-Spoke' Model A primary agency can carry out: 1) In-house services 2) Case coordination 3) Transition management and proper handover to another agency when clients need to access another service beyond the primary agency
Newly diagnosed persons with disabilities who are not accessing any services, or have been discharged from disability services for some time	Central, Single Touchpoint An agency to oversee persons with disabilities who are not under the care of a primary agency, to provide case referral, care planning and advisory services

As we empower persons with disabilities to make choices on services, a case coordinator of the primary agency from which the person with disability is receiving services may be assigned to help families navigate the system at different milestones. The case coordinator's role will be to advise the person with disability and his family of the service choices and options, as well as the means of support available based on the needs of that family. Similarly for those who are not receiving any services currently, they may be assisted by a central referral and advisory agency to ensure that they are referred to appropriate services based on their needs. Stronger partnerships amongst agencies must therefore be established to ensure that there is proper and smooth handover.

This model envisions persons with disabilities receiving services from their primary agency to be supported during the transition phase. In adopting a person-centric approach, it is important that the primary agency and other service providers use a standardised case management tool in ensuring that the person with disability receives holistic support at each phase of his life. These efforts will also provide greater reassurance to persons with congenital or acquired disabilities to be able to weather changes to their condition and environment.

ENHANCE PARTNERSHIPS AMONGST SERVICE PROVIDERS TO SUPPORT TRANSITION BETWEEN SERVICES

As part of effective transition management, it is also important for service providers to collaborate and coordinate services closely with each other. It may not be possible for service providers to be able to provide all the needed services to the users due to capability and capacity constraints. In such instances, collaboration between service providers to provide the required services in a holistic manner will benefit both clients and service providers.

This will also enable service providers to build on their core competencies. When the time comes for persons with disabilities to transition to another phase of life, this collaboration will enable smoother transition and support as clients move from one service to the next. To encourage and accelerate this practice amongst service providers, service standards and funding agreements should also be reviewed to ensure adequate resourcing and capability to better support clients during transition between services.

Strategic Direction 2 | TIMELY AND EFFECTIVE DETECTION OF DISABILITIES

George and Lynn's three-year-old child, Ken, was diagnosed with Global Developmental Delay at age one. His speech and motor skills lagged behind that of his peers.

"We were actually very relieved when we received the diagnosis for Ken; we knew exactly what the issue with him was. It gave us hope that something could be done to help him with regard to his condition."

Parents and caregivers are likely to be the first to notice their child's developmental progress or delays. The second Enabling Masterplan's efforts focused on helping parents monitor their child's growth and development. The health booklet, which is presented to all parents when a child is born in Singapore, provides information on the child's developmental milestones. Complementary resource kits from the Health Promotion Board (HPB) on child development are also available for parents, healthcare professionals and early childhood educators to monitor a child's development.

Besides parents, caregivers and healthcare professionals, other key first touchpoints such as preschool teachers can also be equipped to identify developmental needs and ensure that the child is assisted through timely support.

Early detection of a child's needs, coupled with appropriate timely intervention, will help the child to maximise his or her potential.

Recommendation 4

To ensure timely and effective detection of developmental needs in children by enhancing the existing network of touchpoints (QOL Domains: Physical and Environment)

ENHANCE EXISTING NETWORK OF TOUCHPOINTS FOR EARLY DETECTION AND SUPPORT

There is an existing network of touchpoints for early detection comprising the family, healthcare agencies as well as other community partners. These include hospitals, polyclinics, family medicine practitioners and community partners, such as preschools and family service centres. To improve early detection, relevant information and training should be made more widely available to these touchpoints to better support them in the care of children with developmental issues.
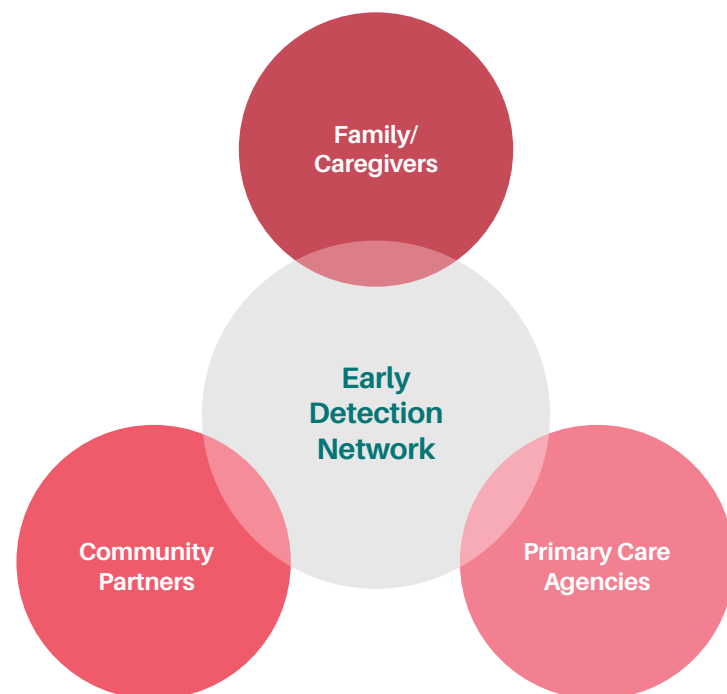
MAKE INFORMATION ON KEY DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES MORE EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

To complement the existing early detection network, information on developmental milestones should be made more accessible for parents to play a proactive role in monitoring their child's development and growth. For example, the information can be made available through electronic platforms for parents' ease of use.

ENHANCE TRAINING OF PRIMARY CARE DOCTORS IN AREAS SUCH AS DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Training of primary care practitioners should be enhanced to assist them in identifying developmental delays early in young children.

Family/Caregivers

Early Detection Network

Community Partners

Primary Care Agencies

Strategic Direction 3

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY EDUCATION

Aaron was diagnosed with autism at four years old. He attended an EIPIC Centre for three years before entering Pathlight School. He was transformed from a lost and shy boy into a chatty and confident child, one who enjoys sharing his adventures and secrets with his family, teachers and friends. He is now a sociable and active boy, always greeting someone with his cheeky grin. He loves football and his favourite football club is Arsenal!

(Photo: Aaron with his sister)
Source: Mr & Mrs Oh

Education plays a big part in the development of young persons and prepares them for life as an adult. Education is key to helping persons with disabilities fulfil their aspirations and potential by developing their abilities and strengths.

Schools support the holistic development of children during their formative years in preparation for adult life. This support is all the more crucial for children with special needs. In the last five years, more support has been introduced in SPED and mainstream schools for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The curriculum in SPED schools has been reviewed and updated so that students can benefit from skills and knowledge that are more relevant to them after graduation from school.

Given the importance of education, children with SEN who are able to participate in formal education settings should be given access to a school setting that can best meet their learning needs. The educational support for children with SEN should be reviewed regularly to ensure that the needs of these children are being met and their strengths and abilities are further developed.

Learning should not stop when persons with disabilities leave school. It should continue so that they can upgrade their skills and knowledge beyond the school setting. This is in line with our nation's push towards promoting lifelong learning through initiatives such as the SkillsFuture movement. Since 2015, SG Enable, through the SG Enable Training Grant for Training Providers, has encouraged training providers to develop and run accessible and affordable work-related courses for persons with disabilities. In addition, SkillsFuture Credit funding support is now available for training courses catering to persons with disabilities. This has greatly helped to reduce the out-of-pocket portion of the course fees that trainees would have to pay and thus helps keep training affordable for persons with disabilities.

Recommendation 5

To ensure access to quality education in mainstream or government-funded SPED schools through the Compulsory Education Act
(QOL Domain: Environment)

PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AT THE SCHOOL-GOING AGE WITH APPROPRIATE SUPPORT IN MAINSTREAM OR GOVERNMENT-FUNDED SPED SCHOOLS

The Ministry of Education (MOE) has recently announced the inclusion of children with SEN under its compulsory education framework, starting with the 2019 Primary One cohort. Compulsory primary education for children with SEN is necessary to ensure that all children with SEN who are able to benefit from education are able to access quality education in an appropriate school setting that can best serve their needs. This could either be in a mainstream or government-funded SPED school. School fees across SPED schools should also be kept affordable for children with SEN and their families.

BUILD UP CAPABILITY OF MAINSTREAM AND SPED SCHOOL SYSTEM TO APPROPRIATELY SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The capability of the professional staff within the mainstream and SPED school systems should be further enhanced so that they will be able to appropriately support students with SEN.

PLACE GREATER FOCUS ON LIFE SKILLS THAT WILL BETTER PREPARE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES FOR ADULT LIFE

While many young people with disabilities receive an academic education and vocational preparation, they also need to be better prepared for adulthood with life and work skills. These skills are necessary, especially for young people with more severe disabilities.

The SPED curriculum should therefore have a greater focus on imparting skills and knowledge that will better prepare students for transition to post-school and adult life. This curriculum should place greater emphasis on life skills such as social skills, employment and independent living, as these skills will help the students to function safely and effectively and allow them to be better engaged in the community. Some persons with disabilities may be more vulnerable and will need to be educated and supported so that they can have safe and healthy social relationships.

THE SPED CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK—LIVING, LEARNING AND WORKING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The SPED Curriculum Framework, launched in 2012, is key to raising the quality of education in SPED schools. It sets a common direction for excellence in teaching and learning across the 20 SPED schools, and guides schools in delivering a quality and holistic education. At the same time, the Framework provides the flexibility and space for SPED schools to customise their curriculum to the unique needs of their student profiles.

Source: Ministry of Education

Recommendation 6

To enhance integration and inclusion of children with special needs within the context of our education system
(QOL Domains: Social Relationships, Environment and Psychological)

STRENGTHEN AND ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PURPOSEFUL AND APPROPRIATE INTERACTION BETWEEN STUDENTS IN MAINSTREAM AND SPED SCHOOLS

NCSS pioneered Children in Action to promote interaction between children with and without special needs through play. Through this initiative, VWOs and SPED schools organise play trips and activities that are suitable and appropriate in meeting the children's needs and interests.

NCSS piloted Buddy'IN in 2014 to provide opportunities for graduating students from SPED schools to interact with their peers from Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) and develop close friendships through activities such as camps, experiences from volunteering and excursions. Through this programme, the SPED students have been observed to improve in initiating conversations and social responsiveness, while their IHL peers have gained awareness, knowledge and understanding of disability.

While progress has been made in this area, Lien Foundation's Inclusive Attitudes Study in 2016 reported that 40% of parents of children with special needs surveyed felt that their children spent too little time in public spaces. The study also found that almost half of the parents of children with special needs indicated that their children did not have typically developing friends due to the lack of a conducive environment to enable interaction and play.

The values of inclusion are best inculcated from a young age. Such early exposure benefits both children with and without disabilities. Children without disabilities can benefit from positive developmental, social and attitudinal outcomes through such experiences. They will be able to demonstrate greater compassion, empathy and better understanding on how to interact with peers with disabilities, and accept diversity.

The Committee therefore recommends that current opportunities for interaction between students in mainstream schools and SPED schools as well as between mainstream preschools and EIPIC[9] Centres be strengthened and enhanced, with new opportunities to be explored and implemented. This should include studying approaches that work towards a balance between meaningful integration and having specialised services to meet the needs of students with moderate to severe disabilities, within the context of Singapore's education system.

[9] The EIPIC provides developmental and therapy services for children with moderate to severe disabilities.

Riding on the success of satellite partnerships[10] between mainstream and SPED schools, the Committee suggests that MOE looks into studying models that provide more opportunities for interaction between students from mainstream and SPED schools.

Strategic Direction 4

IMPROVED ACCESS TO ENHANCED PATHWAYS FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Azizah, 42, works in the canteen at a sheltered workshop in Woodlands and lives in a hostel for persons with intellectual disability. She has moderate intellectual disability.

Azizah dreams of being employed in open employment market as a cook to earn more money. The supervisor at the canteen said that it only took one year to train Azizah to be adept in her tasks around the canteen.

Source: DesignSingapore Council

Employment contributes to one's physical, mental and personal well-being as well as a sense of identity. Income from employment enhances financial independence and raises living standards.

For persons with disabilities, employment is valued for many reasons—social inclusion, physical, mental and psychological well-being, personal development and application of learned skills, and financial well-being are but some of the reasons. Research has shown that persons with disabilities who are employed lead more fulfilling and enriching lives.

Persons with disabilities face greater challenges when it comes to employment, job retention and career development than able-bodied persons. For some, these barriers can be lowered in part through adequate preparation for employment and the adoption of appropriate Assistive Technology (AT) that is compatible from training through to employment.

The first Enabling Masterplan built a value-chain employment framework in industries such as cleaning, food and beverage, hospitality and landscaping. It also supported persons with disabilities by introducing dedicated job placement, support systems and the Open Door Fund to encourage employers to hire more persons with disabilities. The second Enabling Masterplan developed more employment and training opportunities and built on the initiatives started in the first.

Significant progress has been made in enabling persons with disabilities to secure employment. With better training and job support services, the number of persons with disabilities placed in open employment by government-funded job placement and job support agencies and SG Enable rose from about 200 persons prior to 2014 to 500 in 2015.

More help was also given to employers to better support their employees with disabilities through initiatives such as the Open Door Programme and the Special Employment Credit (SEC).

[10] Satellite partnerships between mainstream and SPED schools aim to increase opportunities for interaction between children with and without special needs. Please visit: https://www.moe.gov.sg/media/press/2007/pr20070307b.htm

Even though more support has been put in place to help persons with disabilities secure jobs and remain in employment, the employment rate of persons with disabilities remains low. Persons with disabilities only form 0.1% of the private sector workforce. Those with complex or higher support needs still struggle to sustain or even find employment.

Recognising that not all persons with disabilities will be able to participate in or secure employment opportunities in the open market, alternative employment models should be explored and created for those who are work capable. Some may require a longer runway to prepare for employment so vocational preparation programmes should be made more flexible to take into account the varying abilities.

Students with disabilities who are in mainstream schools may also require assistance in areas ranging from internship programmes to gain work experience, to enhancing their resumes to better their chances for a job interview.

Employers too need to be ready and willing to hire, develop and manage employees with disabilities. Employers often voice concerns about the lack of knowledge and skills in managing employees with disabilities in the workplace, and the impact of their hiring on work processes, productivity and workplace dynamics. A change in mindset through public education and equipping employers with the requisite knowledge and skills is key to building a more inclusive workforce in the future.

Recommendation 7

To develop and enhance vocational preparation pathways to better cater to persons with disabilities with diverse support needs (QOL Domains: Level of Independence and Environment)

EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING PATHWAYS AND JOB PLACEMENT FOR WORK-CAPABLE SPED STUDENTS IN AND BEYOND SPED SCHOOLS

While SPED schools generally have some form of vocational preparation in place, the level of vocational skill training across these schools is uneven. Studies also show that the participation in job development activities by students with disabilities during their school-going years increases their chances for employment post-graduation[11].

To enhance work readiness, MOE should work with SPED schools to further strengthen vocational preparation for SPED students, including those with more complex or higher support needs to help them better understand the world of work, discover their capabilities and career interests, and receive the needed training for them to acquire the necessary skills. To provide SPED students with a real taste of vocational training and work experience, SG Enable, MSF and MOE should also work with the community to strengthen and expand opportunities for vocational training and job placement for persons with disabilities who are work capable, in and beyond SPED schools.

[11] Karpur, A., Brewer, D. and Golden, T. (2014). Critical Program Elements in Transition to Adulthood: Comparative Analysis of New York State and the NLTS2. Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals.

SCALE UP TRANSITION-TO-WORK PROGRAMMES TO BENEFIT MORE SPED STUDENTS OF DIVERSE DISABILITY PROFILES

In 2014, SG Enable, MOE and MSF prototyped the School-to-Work (S2W) transition programme for SPED students. The programme aimed to offer more customised training pathways for students with diverse disability profiles who may not benefit from the vocational certification programmes, but who are work capable to successfully bridge the transition from school to work. Moving forward, this programme should be scaled up so that more SPED schools will be able to prepare their students through the S2W programme.

Students with disabilities who progress to IHLs may also require support to allow them to transition smoothly from school to employment. For example, IHLs can explore ways to support these students in sourcing and preparing for their internships by leveraging peer student support and career programmes as well as VWO-run vocational preparation services. With a successful internship experience, students with disabilities will be better prepared for employment. Tie-ups with employers' network are possible opportunities which create more internship and mentoring opportunities for special needs students to be further explored.

Another group of individuals that face significant barriers to being employed are persons with acquired disabilities, for example, victims of serious motor or industrial accidents. Currently, return-to-work vocational support is limited. Given that these individuals may have been economically active prior to acquiring a disability and are still able to work in some capacity, more resources should be put into developing and/or scaling up return-to-work programmes such as the iEnable pilot run by SG Enable and the Transition Programme to Employment (TPE) by SPD.

Recommendation 8

To develop a spectrum of open, supported and customised employment models to provide more pathways to employment (QOL Domains: Level of Independence and Environment)

EXPLORE NEW SERVICE MODELS FOR JOB PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT FOR THE DIFFERENT DISABILITY GROUPS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH MORE COMPLEX NEEDS

Current employment models fall largely into open employment and supported employment models. Both are characterised by competitive work undertaken in integrated work settings, but differ in the level of accommodation and job support received by the employee with disability. The intent is to enable a person with disability to perform as near on par as possible to other colleagues without disabilities in the same job.

There have been many initiatives such as the Open Door Programme, Workfare Training Support and Workfare Income Supplement that have enabled open employment for persons with disabilities. This arrangement works for some persons with disabilities, but others—in particular those with more complex or higher support needs—struggle to sustain or even find employment.

There is a need to explore employment options for this group as they may not be suited for open employment. A more 'controlled' setting with the support of job coaches and training officers will enable the productive engagement of those that are work capable in a structured environment tailored for persons with disabilities.

Differentiated post-school employment models and options should be developed to cater to the differing abilities and needs of persons with disabilities. Some VWOs and employers are already exploring different ways to design and organise work. These efforts include customising jobs by redesigning a piece of work into smaller processes or tasks, and setting up supported work settings where persons with disabilities undertake paid competitive work, with job coaches on hand to provide on-going supervision and support.

Such efforts should be encouraged and adequately resourced, with successful pilots replicated and scaled up to create diverse employment options for persons with disabilities.

Eng Chwee, 43, has moderate intellectual disability. He lives with his parents and three siblings, and works in a sheltered workshop. His siblings have intellectual disabilities as well.

He has a keen interest and patience for going into the stock room and systematically comparing and picking out products. He wants to make more money to help out his family.

Source: DesignSingapore Council

With the increasing diversity in employment options for persons with disabilities, the current models of job placement and job support should also be strengthened to provide more differentiated support for persons with disabilities, especially those with complex needs but are work capable.

Recommendation 9

To strengthen efforts to provide lifelong learning opportunities for persons with disabilities (QOL Domains: Level of Independence and Environment)

PROMOTE THE PROVISION OF ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE CONTINUED EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CET) OPTIONS TO FACILITATE LIFELONG LEARNING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Post graduation, persons with disabilities need to have access to continuing professional education and skills training to keep themselves current with developments in their field of work and changing job demands. They should therefore continue to have access to affordable lifelong learning and training options to enable them to remain current and relevant to the job market.

The range of training options as well as the number of inclusive training providers should be increased through initiatives such as the SG Enable Training Grant.

Currently, SkillsFuture Credit is extended to individuals who are 25 years or older. To keep courses affordable for younger persons with disabilities, it is proposed that the use of the Post-Secondary Edusave Account be expanded to cover more training courses that improve employability of persons with disabilities.

Recommendation 10

To scale up efforts to build employers' capabilities in hiring and managing employees with disabilities (QOL Domains: Level of Independence and Environment)

DEVELOP MORE TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES ON DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND SKILLS

Employers have cited the lack of skills and knowledge to effectively manage employees with disabilities as well as the lack of awareness regarding their capabilities. There are also concerns and misconceptions about the possible impact of an employee with disability on work process, productivity, on their co-workers and that the organisation would need to make extensive adjustments to accommodate an employee with disability.

There is a need to increase awareness amongst employers on the employment of persons with disabilities so that a more inclusive workforce can be built. Additional initiatives should include professional education and networking opportunities for Human Resource (HR) personnel, as well as the creation of HR toolkits on workplace accessibility and inclusive practices.

Misconceptions on the impact of employing persons with disabilities should also be addressed. One way of doing so is in sharing exemplary success stories by way of public education, which will focus positive attention on the possibilities and value of disability-inclusive hiring practices.

WORK WITH AGENCIES LIKE WORKFORCE SINGAPORE (WSG) AND TAFEP TO INCREASE AWARENESS ON INCLUSIVE HIRING

The employment of persons with disabilities is but one facet of the larger issue of inclusive employment and workplace diversity. A more conscious effort should be made to include persons with disabilities as part of our nation's movement to promote fair employment practices under the Tripartite Alliance for Fair & Progressive Employment Practices (TAFEP).

ENABLE THE PUBLIC SECTOR TO TAKE THE LEAD IN BECOMING AN INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER

The public sector should take the lead in being an inclusive employer and set the example for businesses in adopting inclusive hiring practices. In doing so, the public sector will also be able to share with other employers on disability-inclusive practices that have enabled persons with disabilities to be included as integral members of the public sector workforce.

Mr Norrizwan Rasip, 35, uses a wheelchair after sustaining a spinal cord injury 15 years ago. He is currently a manager for Knowledge Management at the Ministry of National Development (MND).

The selection panel initially had some concerns about possible challenges Rizwan might face in the work environment. However, after speaking to him at the job interview, they were confident in his abilities and found him suitable. His supervisor has described Rizwan to be an independent and resourceful person, and has not excluded him from any duties in the past two years. His condition has not been a barrier for him to take on new assignments.

All it took for MND to welcome Rizwan was to make small adjustments to the office space to ensure that it was wheelchair-friendly, and the belief that persons with physical challenges are no different from the rest.

(Photo: Mr Norrizwan Rasip (right) and his supervisor, Mr Lam Kwok Leong, at MND's office)

Source: Ministry of National Development

Ms Koh Huimin, 31, is currently an Assistant Public Prosecutor (APP) with the Criminal Justice Division of the Attorney-General's Chambers (AGC) since 2011. Ms Koh has a mild congenital hearing disability.

As a legal advisor, Ms Koh gives legal advice primarily to enforcement agencies such as the Singapore Police Force (SPF) and the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB). In addition, as an advocate, Ms Koh also engages in court work, primarily in the State Courts, by conducting pre-trial conferences, court mentions, coroner's inquiries and trials. Ms Koh was initially employed as a legal research assistant and later promoted to her current role in 2012.

Whilst her disability has less impact on her advisory role, her superiors initially had concerns about the challenges that she would have to overcome in her role as an advocate, which places her in a hearing intensive environment. However, with the use of hearing aids in the course of her court work, Ms Koh has not been excluded from any court-related duties in the course of her employment as a result of her condition.

Source: Attorney-General's Chambers

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIRING ORGANISATIONS TO BE INVOLVED EARLIER IN THE TRAINING AND TRANSITIONING OF POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES INTO THE WORKPLACE

Today, the training for persons with disabilities is done by training providers. Employers are generally only involved when the employee is job-matched. In the adoption of "train-place-train", there is potential for greater involvement of employers to co-develop the training curriculum and delivery to ease the transition of persons with disabilities into the workplace and allow for better adjustment to its organisational culture. For the person with disability, it also reduces the need to 'relearn' or 'retool' over again based on what is adopted by the hiring company.
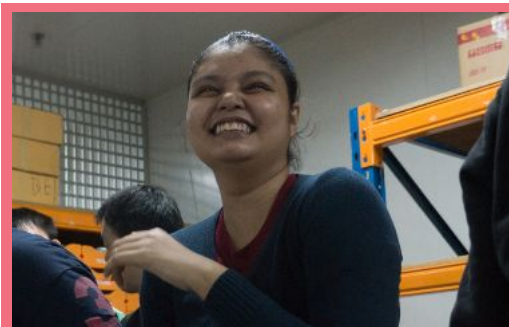
A'zimiee, 26, has moderate intellectual disability. She is employed in the open market and continues to be supported by her job support officer.

Her mother says that she is quite smart and is capable of doing many things.

Source: DesignSingapore Council

Strategic Direction 5 | HOLISTIC AND QUALITY SUPPORT ACROSS SERVICES

In the past five years, the capacity of services has been expanded to serve more persons with disabilities and new programmes have been introduced to better meet their needs.

As more persons with disabilities are supported, the quality and timeliness of services should not be affected. Our service providers sometimes find themselves with insufficient resources and manpower to provide timely and quality services that are effective. There is therefore a need to develop innovative and sustainable manpower and resourcing models.

Capacity of disability services in 2012 and 2015

Legend:
- Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children
- Development Support Programme
- Adult Disability Homes
- Day Activity Centres

2012
- 2100
- 200
- 700
- 950

2015
- 2500
- 1200
- 850
- 1200

In 2013, MSF piloted the Drop-in Disability scheme for adults with mild to moderate disabilities to access social and recreational activities regularly for a few hours each day at selected Senior Activity Centres. This is an example of how services can be synergised to optimise resources and capabilities while retaining the flexibility of meeting the needs of persons with disabilities. The programme has been able to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community through activities taking place beyond the centre and in the neighbourhood. The programme is currently available in four Senior Activity Centres.

There is scope to further synergise the adult disability and eldercare services to benefit from economies of scale, such as in the area of home care services and manpower training. Partnerships between service providers within and across the health, education and social service sectors should be strengthened so that clients can enjoy services that meet their needs holistically, as well as a smooth and seamless transition between services when required.

Recommendation 11

To synergise partnerships within and across health, education and social service to better support persons with disabilities and their caregivers
(QOL Domain: Environment)

PROMOTE COLLABORATION AMONG THE HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICE AND EDUCATION SECTORS TO DEVELOP CAPABILITY, SHARE RESOURCES AND COORDINATE SERVICES

There is potential to cross-tap on services across the health, education and disability sectors, especially where the needs of users are similar. For example, home care service providers can provide home-based care to both the elderly and persons with disabilities based on location rather than clientele group (i.e. elderly, disabled) as is the current situation. Professional competency framework and practice standards for allied health professionals in these sectors should be aligned to build up the capability of the professionals to provide services across the health, education and social service sectors. This will position these sectors as attractive career choices with ample development opportunities and in turn enable better retention of personnel.

SUPPORT AND ENABLE COLLABORATION AMONG VWOS FOR INNOVATIVE/NEW PROJECTS AND GROUND-UP INITIATIVES

Community agencies and social service providers (i.e. VWOs) delivering services and support to persons with disabilities and their caregivers are able to identify the needs of their clients and community through their services. Service providers should be encouraged and supported to share ideas and best practices, as well as collaborate in new and innovative pilot projects to bridge service gaps for persons with disabilities.

TOTE BOARD-ENABLING LIVES INITIATIVE GRANT

Tote Board-Enabling Lives Initiative Grant aims to improve the well-being of persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

The grant supports new, innovative and evidence-based projects in the cross-cutting disability areas of Data and Technology, Caregiver and Natural Support and Transition Management.

There will be a total of eight uniquely themed grant calls from 2015 till 2018.

Collaborative efforts among VWOs to transform services or address service gaps are currently supported with seed funding through the VWO Capability Fund (VCF) and the Tote Board-Enabling Lives Initiative Grant made available to service providers in the sector. These funds should continue to build on the momentum of the spirit of innovation and in addition, promote collaboration in innovation for the next phase.

Pilot programmes that are implemented successfully can be scaled up and mainstreamed if proven successful in making a difference to persons with disabilities and their families.

Recommendation 12

To study the need for the establishment of a disability office (QOL Domain: Environment)

EXPLORE THE SETTING UP OF A DEDICATED OFFICE TO STRENGTHEN COORDINATION ACROSS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Matters pertaining to persons with disabilities cut across the health, education and social service sectors. To address the concerns of persons with disabilities holistically, the Standing Committee on Disability (SCD) was set up to coordinate disability-related policy issues at the government level. It also serves as the national mechanism for coordinating policies and monitoring the implementation of the United Nations Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

While there is increasing coordination among agencies, there are still issues that persist. The Committee recommends that MSF study the efficacy of establishing a disability office comprising relevant government agencies to coordinate and address the responsibility and accountability of disability initiatives and cross-cutting issues. Besides enhancing coordination with service provision, there are many cross-agency strategies that can be encouraged by having a dedicated disability office. Existing platforms such as the SCD should also be reviewed and enhanced accordingly if required.

SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS

Dear Caregivers
We know you.
We've talked to you
We've listened to you
We've followed you.
Thank you for giving us your care.
You care for someone else.
*Do remember to care for yourself too.*

— Extracted from "Who Cares? Transforming the Caregiving Experience in Singapore",
  a publication by National Council of Social Service & fuelfor

Strategic Direction 6 | RECOGNITION THAT CAREGIVERS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN CARING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Caregivers are persons who provide care[12] to a person requiring support due to age, disability, illness or special needs. While caregivers are usually family members, some persons with disabilities also receive care from others, such as friends or foreign domestic workers. As the first line of support for persons with disabilities, caregivers play many important roles— as family, friend, confidante, teacher, nurturer, supporter, and advocate.

Caregivers are a crucial link between persons with disabilities and the community. They are often the main care coordinator for the person with disability, the 'red thread' that ties together the different touchpoints and access to services. Caregivers are a key focus under this Enabling Masterplan so that their needs can be addressed more holistically.
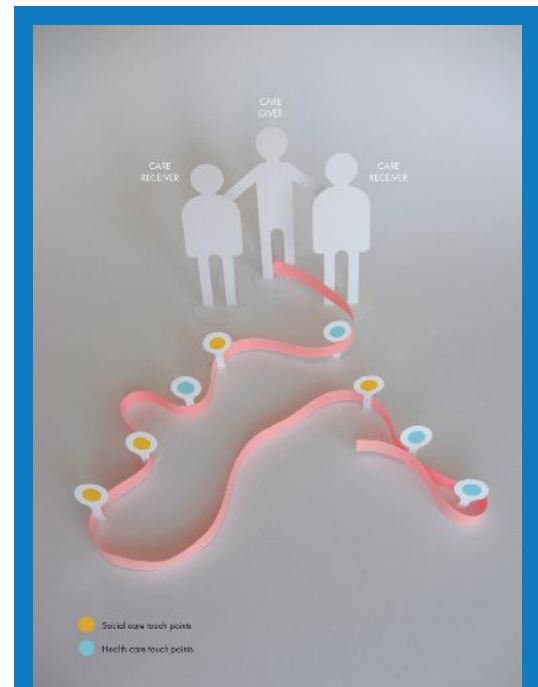
Caregivers, the red thread for persons with disabilities

Source: "Who Cares? Transforming the Caregiving Experience in Singapore", design ethnography by NCSS & fuelfor.

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[12] Caregiving is defined as the process of helping in a holistic (physically, mentally, emotionally and socially) manner for another person who is unable to do those things for himself. Caregiving is facilitated by certain character traits, emotions, skills, knowledge, time spent and an emotional connection with the care recipient. Source: Caregiving, A Qualitative Concept Analysis, Melinda Hermanns and Beth Mastel-Smith, The University of Texas, in 'The Qualitative Report 2012 Volume 17, Article 75 I-18'. Please visit: http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ989821.pdfEJ989821.pdf

Some of the key initiatives introduced to support caregivers include:

The introduction of foreign domestic worker levy concessions and grants, and caregiver training grant

Home-Based Care Services and Drop-in Disability Programme for more flexible care services and respite care options

The establishment of the Special Needs Trust Company designated to assist caregivers in providing financial security for persons with disabilities

The streamlining of admission and screening processes for Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC) and Special Education (SPED) schools for more efficient placement of children and to reduce anxiety of caregivers

Improving access to information and services for persons with disabilities and caregivers through SG Enable

The establishment of the Tote Board-Enabling Lives Initiative Grant which encourages ground-up initiatives by funding new service models or scaling up successful pilots, including those supporting caregivers

However, there are areas that continue to pose challenges for caregivers of persons with disabilities. During the focus group discussions conducted to gather feedback for this Masterplan, caregivers expressed three key concerns.

They were:

- **Preparing for the future when they were no longer able to care for the person with disability**

- **Being able to perform their caregiving role well**

- **A need for self-care and respite**

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

The greatest worry voiced by caregivers was about what would happen to the person with disability when they were no longer able to care for them. This concern was particularly heightened for caregivers of persons with disabilities who required a higher level of support. While caregivers acknowledged that the Special Needs Trust Company (SNTC)[13] was a good start to help ensure the financial security of persons with disabilities, they expressed deep concern about the lack of options for the provision of support for the future care planning and care of their loved ones with disabilities. Some caregivers felt that the only option was to place their loved ones in adult disability homes.

[13] SNTC case managers work with caregivers to develop a care plan to care for the person with disability when the caregiver is no longer around. SNTC will review the care plan with the caregivers. Case Managers will make home visits to review the feasibility and relevance of the care plan based on the condition of the person with disability during the period of review. For more information on SNTC, please visit https://www.sntc.org.sg/Pages/Home.aspx

Akhbar, 46, and Ashraf, 43, are brothers who have Muscular Dystrophy. They live with their parents, and are cared for full-time by their ageing mother. As grown men, Akhbar and Ashraf feel that they should be the ones caring for their mother, not the other way round.

When their mother is not able to care for them any more, the plan is to send them to an Adult Disability Home. Their mother feels it is her obligation to care for them as long as she can, but she is getting old and her body aches.

Source: DesignSingapore Council

Some caregivers were not aware of the resources and information available for care planning and did not know who to approach for help. Those who had gone through the process of making future care arrangements found the experience to be tedious, complicated and costly.

Caregivers who participated in the focus group discussions were divided on the issue of deciding to whom they could pass the caregiving role to. Some believed that other family members such as siblings should be the primary source of support for the person with disability while others were apprehensive about how other family members would view the caregiving role and whether this would affect their personal aspirations.

PERFORMING THE ROLE OF A CAREGIVER WELL

As the main care providers, caregivers were keen to improve their skills and knowledge to manage the biological, cognitive and psychological needs of the person with disability under their care across the different life stages. Though there are existing training courses for caregivers, some caregivers wanted to acquire a deeper knowledge to what is currently provided. In some instances, the courses that caregivers were interested in attending were only open to social service professionals. Caregivers were also concerned with the cost of such training.

Caregivers also shared that they were stressed by having to care for multiple care recipients, such as elderly family members or young children, in addition to the person with disability in their care. Moreover, caregivers of persons who were recently diagnosed with disabilities often struggled with accepting the condition and their expanded caregiving role. Such situations could also affect relationships within the family and weaken the support network for both the caregiver and the person with disability.

Caregivers of family members with disabilities may face challenges in carrying out their caregiving functions alongside full-time employment. If caregivers do not have additional support to provide care or are unable to switch to part-time jobs or flexi-work hours, they are likely to give up their employment to focus on their caregiving role. The family may be reliant on the caregiver's income to meet the household's financial needs and this will pose a strain on the family finances. In some cases, the person with disability whom they look after may require a higher level of support (e.g., assistance with daily living activities, medical conditions) and this will in turn place an even greater economic strain on the caregiver.

SELF-CARE & RESPITE

For some, coming to terms with being the primary caregiver of a person with disability is the first psychological barrier to their caregiving journey. Caregivers shared that the initial reaction to the diagnosis was often shock, self-blame and denial. This could result in them delaying seeking support and intervention for the person with disability in a timely manner. Fear and social stigma also contributed to these delays.

Another observation was that caregivers had varied perceptions of their caregiving responsibilities. Some caregivers believed that their time and resources should be used to care for the person with disability and that their own personal pursuits should be secondary, while others expressed a strong need for personal time. Caregivers found it difficult to

have anyone else take their place as caregiver even if it was for a very short time due to either a limited support network or a lack of trust in others to care for the person with disability well.

It has been noted that the stress faced by caregivers of persons with disabilities affects their personal health in multiple ways—physical, mental, and emotional. This is due to the increased time spent on caring for the person with disability, possible increase in household duties, sleep disruption, emotional impact, isolation and loneliness.

It is important to acknowledge that the needs of caregivers do not solely revolve around the needs of the person with disability whom they are caring for, as they too have their own needs, aspirations, interests, and feelings.

"A balance must be found, so that each person [the caregiver and the person with disability they are providing care for] has independence, dignity, and quality of life."

— *WHO World Disability Report, 2011*

Caregivers need to have a high level of well-being; physically healthy, psychologically strong, socially and emotionally supported, and financially secure to perform their caregiving role effectively. Many caregivers desire to continue to care for their care recipients for as long as they are able to. The Committee sees a need to ensure that caregivers are well supported so that they can be effective and resilient as they continue to care for persons with disabilities.

Recommendation 13

To improve caregivers' well-being and enhance their caregiving capabilities (QOL Domains: Social Relationships, Environment and Psychological)

## EXPAND SUPPORT OPTIONS FOR CAREGIVERS TO MANAGE CAREGIVING NEEDS AND THEIR OWN WELL-BEING

A study conducted by NCSS on caregivers of persons with disabilities found that these caregivers had poor mental health[14]. There is a need to support caregivers to balance their caregiving role and caring for themselves.

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[14] NCSS Respite Care Study (2014). The study also looked into the factors which caregivers considered important in respite care services, their receptiveness to different modes of respite care, and situations in which these caregivers needed respite.

A **greater continuum of support and respite options** should be developed such as access to trained foreign domestic workers, caregiving leave and formal respite services. NCSS could also work with service providers to address the concerns raised by caregivers in their Respite Care study, one of which is availability of **trusted respite options** for caregivers. Formal respite services are needed to provide sufficient assurance to caregivers that the safety and well-being of the person with disability will not be compromised.
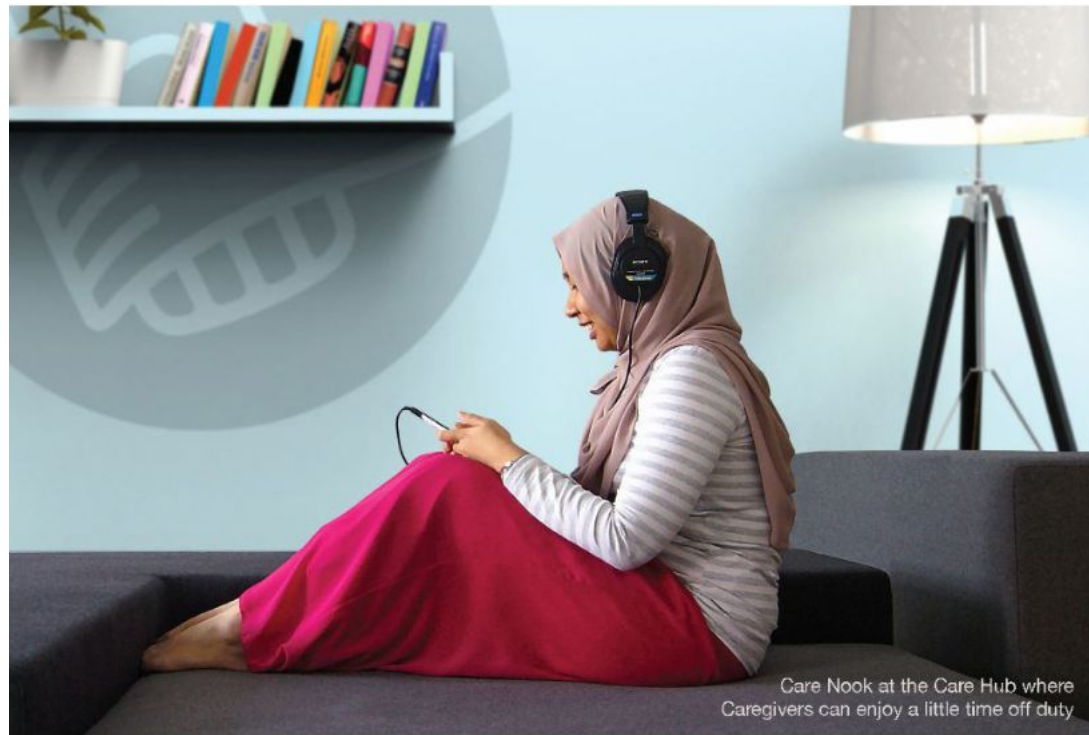
Source: "Who Cares? Transforming the caregiving experience in Singapore", design ethnography by NCSS & fuelfor

There were also calls to expand the existing criteria for the Foreign Domestic Worker Grant to better cater to persons with disabilities who may be physically able to perform daily living routines, but may not have the cognitive ability to perform these functions on their own, or have behavioural challenges that require additional support to manage.

PROVIDE RESOURCES TO CAREGIVERS TO INCREASE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCY TO MANAGE THE NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THEIR CARE

Information empowers families to better care for persons with disabilities. At present, there is a myriad of resource materials available for caregivers of persons with disabilities. However, these resource materials tend to reside with their author agencies and cover different areas of information separately. There is a need for these **resources to be collected and curated** such that caregivers can freely access the needed information online at all times with expediency.

The Committee suggests that steps should be taken to **improve access to information on disability-related social support and services.** This can be in the form of a **one-stop information portal** for caregivers designed to meet their information needs on service, caregiving, self-care, Assistive Technology (AT) and well-being. **Resource materials should also be developed** to meet information gaps, such as educating caregivers on the changes that persons with disabilities experience as they transition through life stages.

Ideas on how caregivers can be resourced and supported through the use of IT

After the diagnosis of her mum, the hospital put Yiwen in contact with a Family Manager. Their assigned Family Manager visits them to assess their care needs and help them to agree on the primary caregiver role.

DAD
YIWEN
MUM
FAMILY MANAGER

YIWEN'S BROTHER VIA SKYPE
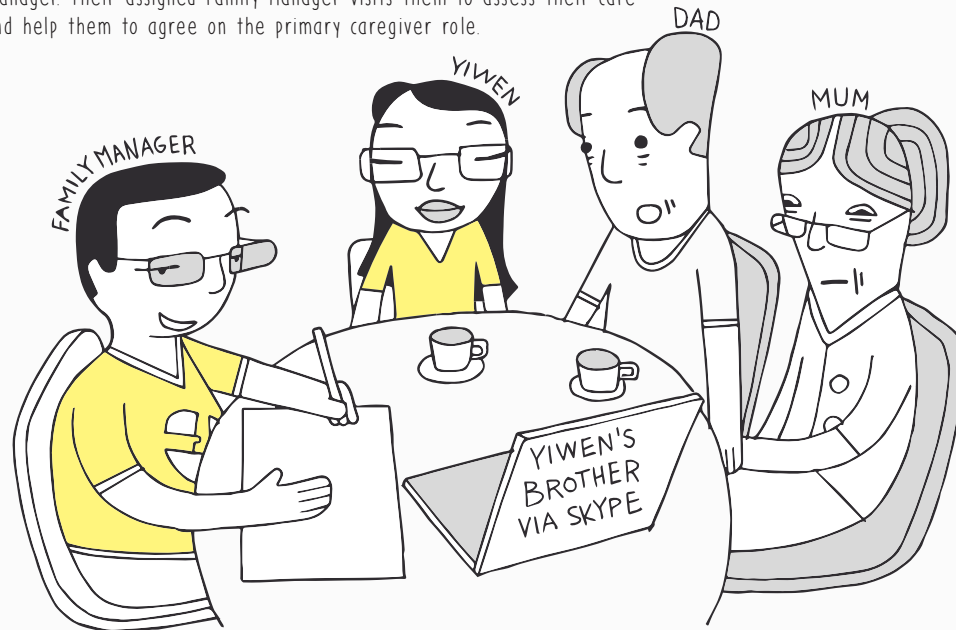
All members of the family gather including Yiwen's brother via Skype. They use the CARE ROLE PLAY tool to find out the best caregiving plan for mum.

caregiver STARTING PACK

SET UP

CAREGIVER CARD
LIM

After the family assessment meeting it became clear that Yiwen is the only one who can take the primary caregiver role. She receives a Starter Pack and a Caregiver Card from the Family Manager...

...and he introduces her to the Care Cope platform which she can use for coordinating family communications, appointments, accessing self-care services etc.

CARE DIARY
CARE LIBRARY
CARE COMMUNITY
VENTILATOR
CRISIS APP
DIRECT LINK TO FAMILY MANAGER
YOUR DASHBOARD

The Care Cope digital platform facilitates Yiwen to plan tasks, overview appointments, connect to the care community, share and save important moments and care about her own wellbeing.

SO, HOW CAN I SEE THE APPOINTMENTS AND THE MEDICATION LIST?

IT IS EASY! YOU CAN VIEW THEM HERE...

DOWN LOADING
CARE COPE
CRISIS APP
START

After one year of caring for her mom, Yiwen is about to leave abroad to continue her studies. She needs to pass the caregiving role to her younger brother. This is made easy with the share and transfer caregiving functionality of the Care Cope app.

Source: "Who Cares? Transforming the caregiving experience in Singapore",
*   design ethnography by NCSS & fuelfor*

As the main provider of care to persons with disabilities, it is imperative that caregivers are equipped with the right skills and knowledge to perform their role effectively. With a higher level of competency, caregivers can better support persons with disabilities to live more independently within the community and have the confidence to be able to improve the quality of life of the person with disability in their care.

Jason, 37, has severe cerebral palsy. Jason currently spends most of his time on the floor at home, as he might slide down on the floor when seated on a chair. Jason's family lacks the knowledge to take care of him properly. His family can be better supported in ways to cope with Jason's condition and challenges faced with physiological changes.

Source: DesignSingapore Council

The Committee suggests providing a **greater variety of courses and mode of training options** to caregivers of persons with disabilities. As it is difficult for some caregivers to be away from the person with disability to attend training, these training options must be provided creatively and flexibly so that caregivers are able to access them. There are some caregivers who may wish to pursue higher level training beyond what is available currently. Caregivers with enriched knowledge will not only be able to use their expertise to meet their needs but can also be resource persons to train or support other caregivers, or may even be able to provide direct services.

Many service providers currently run their own caregiver training independently. NCSS and MSF should work together with relevant agencies and organisations to study how the provision of such **training options** for caregivers can be enhanced through better coordination and outreach. The Social Service Institute (SSI)[15] can facilitate partnerships between training providers and disability service providers to understand caregivers' training needs. SSI can also develop a training framework to support caregivers with appropriate knowledge and competencies to better support the person with disability in their care. Service providers can also reach out to caregivers so that they can be made aware of the **training options** available to them. Effective in-house training programmes should be expanded and made available to caregivers in other agencies so that more caregivers are able to benefit. These training programmes and courses should be affordable to caregivers.

STRENGTHEN CAREGIVERS' RESILIENCE THROUGH SUPPORT NETWORKS

From the focus group discussions and other studies involving caregivers, it was noted that caregivers value the presence of socio-emotional support throughout their caregiving journey. Caregivers feel assured knowing that there is a source of support they can turn to even if they did not require it at that point in time.

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[15] The SSI is part of the NCSS, and is appointed by SkillsFuture Singapore as the Continuing Education and Training (CET) centre for social services.

Provide Caregivers Access to Counselling Support

The Committee recommends helping caregivers improve their coping skills, especially at points of transition or decision making, by providing them **ease of access to counselling services** to talk through their concerns. This can be delivered by a counsellor, social worker or volunteer, such as an experienced caregiver who can empathise with the new caregiver. For example, at the point of diagnosis, the hospital or service provider should have a person trained in basic counselling to attend to the caregiver and the person with disability who may have difficulty in coming to terms with the diagnosis.

Although not all persons with disabilities and their caregivers may need to access direct services, or they may be on a wait list to enrol into such services, they may still need socio-emotional support especially if they are coming to terms with the diagnosis, or they may be worried about finding an appropriate service for the person with disability. Appropriate support should therefore be made available to them and their families.

Caregivers and their families may also require support in other areas beyond those that pertain to the person with disability in their care. They may require assistance with job placement, social assistance, and marriage counselling among others. Social service agencies must have an understanding of various community resources available for appropriate advisory and referrals to be made so that they can assist the caregiver and their family more holistically.

Informal Support—Caregiver Support and Resource Networks

Research has shown that **informal networks** function as a source of emotional support or respite for caregivers, and foster social relationships. However, these networks may be difficult to form due to the lack of opportunities to meet other caregivers.

The Committee recommends **creating more opportunities for caregivers to meet and appointing experienced caregivers as befrienders or mentors.** Existing caregiver support networks can be leveraged to reach out to and impact a larger spectrum of caregivers providing care for persons with different types of disabilities. Caregivers can also share resources, tips and advice through inspiring examples and success stories.

Strengthening Family Relationships

The Committee also recognises the importance of **building up strong family relationships** for caregivers of persons with disabilities.

Having a person with disability in the family can affect the family's dynamics[16]. There may be rejection of the person with disability, strain on marriage, or sibling rivalry. Thus agencies involved in service planning for caregivers as well as disability service providers should take into consideration the needs of the other family members in the planning of programmes. Services and activities designed for the person with disability should be designed more holistically to encourage family involvement and strengthen the family support for both the caregiver and the family member with disability.

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[16] Nealy, O'Hare, Pwers, & Swick. (2012). The Impact of Autism Spectrum Disorders on the Family: A Qualitative Study of Mothers' Perspectives.

Me Too! Club is a programme that arranges regular leisure activities and outings for adults with moderate to severe disabilities to enhance their well-being. Family members and caregivers are welcome to join in the outings for family bonding and to form informal support networks. The programme also has volunteer befrienders to visit persons with disabilities who are socially isolated.

*Source: National Council of Social Service and Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore*

PILOT A HUB-AND-SPOKE MODEL FOR MORE EFFECTIVE CAREGIVER SUPPORT

While there are caregivers who are currently being supported through the services accessed by the person with disability, others such as new caregivers, or caregivers of persons with disabilities who are not accessing services, may not have an "entry point" to support services.

For caregivers in this situation, it is recommended that they have a centralised platform that can assist them with various concerns pertaining to the care of their person with disability. This platform can mirror a 'hub-and-spoke' model, where the platform (the hub) connects the caregiver to a network of caregiver services (the spokes) to render assistance. To serve the needs of caregivers who otherwise may not have access to tangible support and valued initiatives, NCSS can pilot the 'hub-and-spoke' model together with other social service providers. This will complement existing caregiver services and allow the different needs of caregivers to be met more effectively. In addition, the approach will lend support to piloting new caregiver support initiatives and provide a springboard to share as well as replicate good practices across the sector.

Ideas on how a support network of caregivers might look like in future
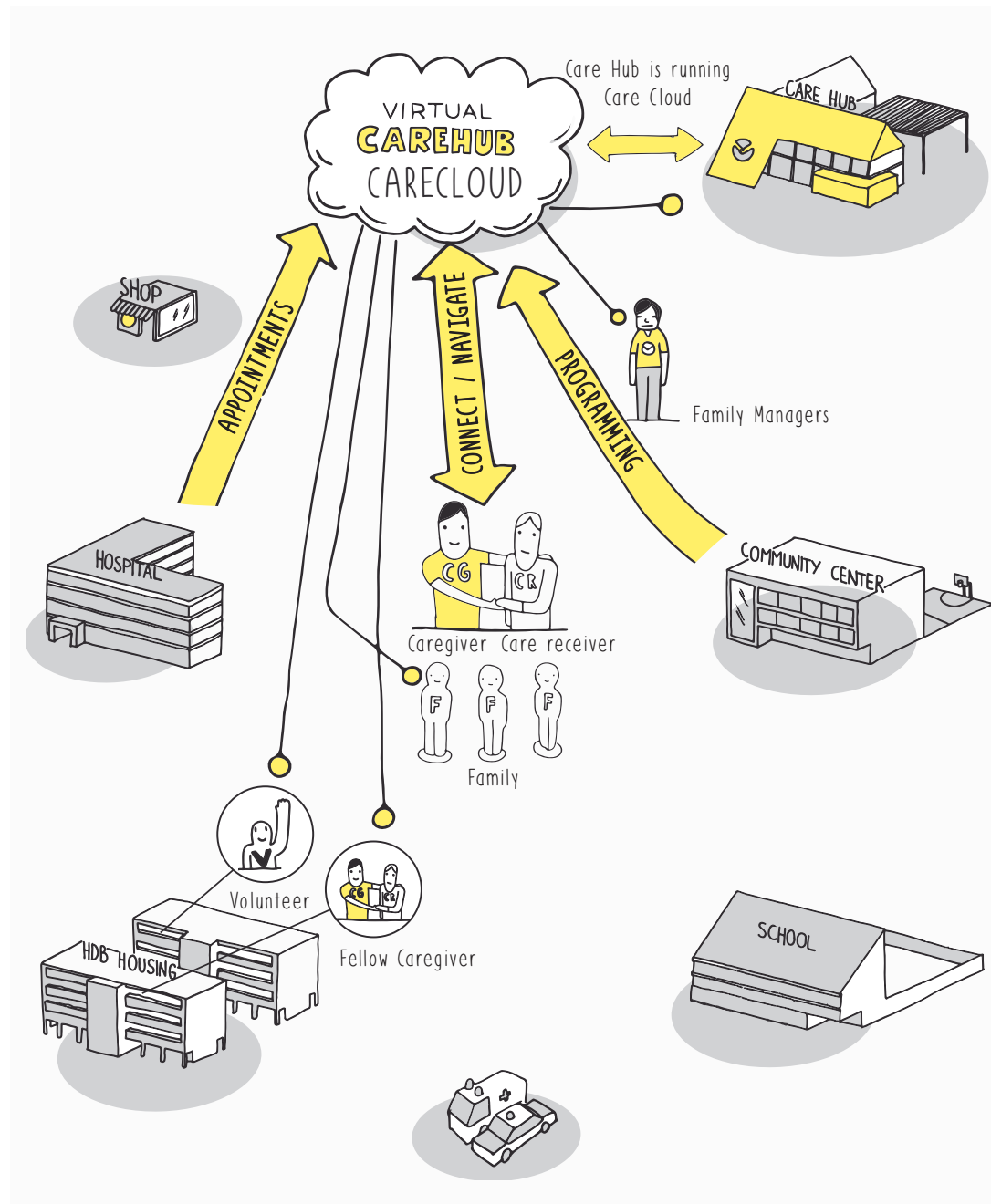
Source: "Who Cares? Transforming the caregiving experience in Singapore",
     design ethnography by NCSS & fuelfor

Recommendation 14

To support caregivers in their future care planning
(QOL Domains: Social Relationships and Environment)

SUPPORT CAREGIVERS IN THEIR FINANCIAL AND CARE PLANNING FOR THEIR CARE RECIPIENT FOR WHEN THEY ARE NO LONGER ABLE TO PROVIDE CARE AND SUPPORT

"The more we want to take care of our child's future, the more we are penalised."

— Focus Group Discussion participant, on bearing more costs for
    trying to depend less on others

Many caregivers are deeply concerned about how the person with disability in their care will continue to be supported when they are no longer around or able to be the primary caregiver. It is critical to ensure the continued well-being and smooth transition of persons with disabilities beyond the lifetime of their primary caregivers. Currently, the SNTC provides services to help caregivers with financial and care planning for persons with disabilities in their care.

Greater awareness of such financial and care planning services is required to help caregivers plan for the future of persons with disabilities. Caregivers perceived the setting up of trust accounts to be tedious, costly and having limitations. Caregivers also wanted assurance on how the funds would be used.

The Committee acknowledges the need to **raise awareness on the importance of financial and care planning and the availability of such services** to prepare for when the caregiver passes on or is no longer able to provide care. SNTC should continue expanding its outreach to caregivers to educate them on the financial mechanisms available for future financial and care planning. They should also consider partnering agencies providing direct services to persons with disabilities for a more integrated and holistic support package for caregivers in this aspect.

Disability service providers working with persons with disabilities aged 16 years and above, as well as agencies such as the Office of the Public Guardian and the Law Society, should also **educate caregivers on the importance of ensuring that legal and financial matters are in order**—such as in the case of applying for deputyship. This is especially critical if the person with disability lacks the capacity to make decisions when he/she reaches 21 years of age. Caregivers also perceive current processes to apply for deputyship and Lasting Power of Attorney to be complicated, costly and may not take into account disability-related issues. The Committee therefore recommends **simplifying the deputyship and Lasting Power of Attorney processes** for caregivers of persons with disabilities. This may include assessing the effectiveness of the existing pilot at the Movement for the Intellectually Disabled in Singapore (MINDS), which has simplified the process for deputyship applications for caregivers of graduating SPED students, and expanding the initiative to more caregivers.

While the general objective of disability services and intervention is to support persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible, especially in their adult years, some persons with disabilities may still require support in their daily routines throughout their lives. It is therefore of vital importance that proper care planning is in place for the handover of that caregiving role when required.

The Committee recommends to **support caregivers in their care planning journey by creating a system of support at the natural touchpoints for caregivers. The system of support will help them in their care planning journey, including the identification of the next caregiver and the transitioning of the caregiving role[17] when the time comes.**

For those who require support in transitioning their caregiving role, this would include assistance with documenting and passing on caregiving-related knowledge and skills[18] to the next caregiver. The process should be iterative and requires clear communication to the next caregiver (for example, a family member or formal services) on their roles and the needs of the person with disability.

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[17] This also includes understanding the needs of the care recipient and how they are likely to change over time, assessing the suitability of potential caregivers, deciding on an appropriate care arrangement for the person with disability, and preparing for the person with disability's transition to a new care arrangement.

[18] E.g. information on the condition, needs, habits and behaviour of persons with disabilities, hands-on learning to interact with and care for the persons with disabilities.

BUILDING THE COMMUNITY

"We want to catalyse and enable the community and the partners to come forward to look for sustainable solutions and most importantly, develop local solutions for local community challenges."

— Extracted from Minister Chan Chun Sing's speech at the Social Service Partner Conference, May 2014

In the earlier chapters, we put forth recommendations to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities and to better support their caregivers. This will enable persons with disabilities to live and participate actively amongst us. In tandem with these efforts, we need to enhance the capabilities of the community, comprising members of the public, employers, social service providers and the Government, so that they can better support persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

The community requires good information and understanding of the various profiles of persons with disabilities in the country. This will greatly help in understanding rising trends, gaps in our services and in being pro-active in designing future services that will be required by persons with disabilities. There are data gaps currently within the landscape of persons with disabilities that require further detailed study in piecing together a more complete picture of "what" is required, "who" should be involved and "how" to best serve the needs of persons of disabilities.

As Singapore moves towards the next lap of realising its vision of being a Smart Nation, technology and its supporting infrastructure should be used to empower and enable persons with disabilities to lead meaningful and independent lives.

Enablers such as technology and research are vital in supporting the ecosystem of persons with disabilities and to realise the vision of the Enabling Masterplan.

The Committee has therefore identified two strategic directions that will help enable the community to be an effective partner in this area:

1. **Build capacity and capability of the disability sector** to support persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

2. **Use technology to improve the quality of life and independence of persons with disabilities.**

Strategic Direction 7 | CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY BUILDING OF THE DISABILITY SECTOR

To enhance capacity and capability in the sector, schemes and resources have been made available to help VWOs and professionals in the social service sector to this end. Examples include the VWOs-Charities Capability Fund (VCF) which provides resource support for building professional expertise and the expansion of professional hubs such as therapy hubs and the setting up of the Community Psychology Hub.

The recently introduced Sun Ray scheme aims to attract and retain talent and expertise in the social service sector by developing the experience of a core group of social service professionals with the potential to lead organisations or professional practice.

The Social Service Institute (SSI) aims to provide an ecosystem for sector professionals and social service organisations to convene, collaborate and share best practices in the area of human capital development. This is done by providing capability development initiatives, sharing of local and international expertise, research and evaluation, and adopting blended learning.

Recommendation 15

*To build the capacity and capability of disability service providers to enhance service quality
(QOL Domain: Environment)*

DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN SKILLED MANPOWER

Noting the various efforts under the previous Enabling Masterplans, the Committee recognises the importance of **continuing to build capability and expertise of disability service providers** to deliver better service and care. This includes the ability to **attract, recognise and retain skilled manpower with the right training and qualifications**, especially expertise that is required to support persons with moderate to severe disabilities which is currently lacking in the sector.

With a national shortage of skilled manpower such as allied health

professionals (AHPs) in both the social service and healthcare sectors, the Committee recommends that AHPs, especially therapists, be treated as a national talent pool to be cross-deployed between the government-funded organisations in social service and healthcare sectors so as to better attract and reduce competing needs and attrition in both sectors.

Such **cross-sector manpower deployment** will benefit the staff in terms of professional development and career advancement. VWOs in both sectors will also benefit from the cross-learning expertise that results.

DEVELOP EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES AND RESEARCH

Beyond building the professional capability and capacity of the sector, the Committee recommends that the sector moves towards more **evidence-based practices** in ensuring the quality and efficacy of services. **Research on intervention** **methodology, potential gaps in services as well as client impact studies** will ensure that resources are better channelled to benefit persons with disabilities and their supporting organisations.

BUILD CAPABILITY OF VOLUNTARY WELFARE ORGANISATIONS IN THE USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MAINSTREAM TECHNOLOGICAL PRODUCTS

It is important that the use of technology is encouraged and assimilated into our delivery of services to persons with disabilities.

VWOs should be aware of and adopt relevant new technologies that improve processes and services, reap productive gains and address manpower shortages. Assistance on the adoption of relevant technologies can be sought from the People Sector Infocomm Resource Centre (PSIRC)[19].

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[19] The People Sector Infocomm Resource Centre (PSIRC) was set up in 2012 to build the capability of VWOs, grassroots organisations and community groups to enhance their public outreach efforts as well as raise organisational productivity through the use of infocomm technologies.

Ideas on how technology can enhance caregiver's experience and capability

Source: "Who Cares? Transforming the caregiving experience in Singapore",
design ethnography by NCSS & fuelfor
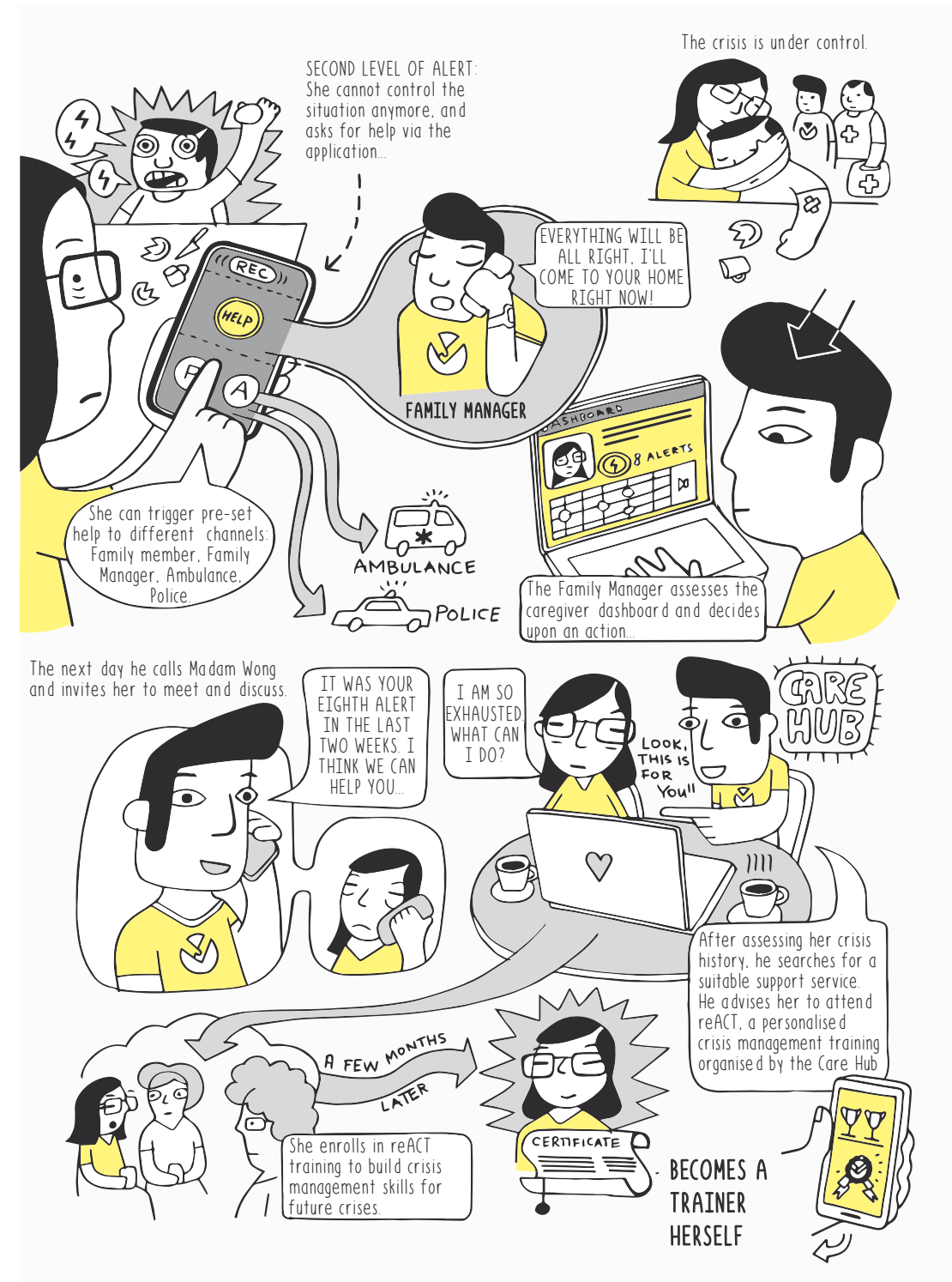
The Committee recognises that technology and mobile information and communications technology (ICT) can be leveraged to support service delivery of VWOs and independence of persons with disabilities by encouraging them to participate in the community. One such example is JeeNee Mobile from Australia, which provides a 24/7 help service through a mobile application that connects those in need to specially trained teams who will provide assistance. The Committee encourages **commercial players and various stakeholders to work on solutions that will make a difference** in the lives of persons with disabilities and others who face challenges in their activities of daily living such as the elderly.

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Recommendation 16

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To mobilise volunteers to support and promote inclusiveness of persons with disabilities in the community (QOL Domain: Social Relationships)

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ENHANCE INDIVIDUAL AND CORPORATE VOLUNTEERISM ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS IN THE SECTOR

Manpower and resources are necessary for service quality and delivery to improve. Recognising that there may be labour constraints and limited resources, volunteers are a valuable resource to supplement and support service provision.

Volunteers are also important stakeholders in encouraging the community spirit and promoting inclusion. Volunteerism helps shape our society into one that is more caring and inclusive.

The 2012 President's Challenge Volunteer drive was started with the aim of building Singapore to be a more compassionate and caring society. As more Singaporeans become keen to volunteer, VWOs need to understand how to be prepared and equipped to tap on this valuable resource.

The Committee is of the view that individual and corporate volunteerism engagement efforts should be enhanced beyond the current approach of corporate social responsibility. Volunteers are also natural advocates for persons with disabilities. Having a more flexible training approach may encourage more volunteers to build capability and be able to contribute more effectively. NCSS could work with National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) to develop different modes of learning for volunteers including online platforms through technology.

The development of a service-based volunteering framework to encourage regular volunteerism among individuals, including corporate employees, should therefore be encouraged and supported to sustain volunteering efforts. This should also be actively driven through the SG Cares[20] movement as part of the national initiative to build a caring and inclusive society.

Corporate volunteers can be a rich resource of support for VWOs. Beyond sponsorship of resources at events and fundraising, corporates can also pave the way to ease access to products and services, educate and help spread awareness, contribute to skills building of persons with disabilities, and promote inclusiveness at corporate and public events. Some corporations even have an internal team dedicated to work with the community to support persons with disabilities.

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[20] SG Cares is a movement dedicated to involving and inspiring more Singaporeans to help one another, so as to grow a strong volunteering culture in the nation. It is coordinated and co-led by NVPC and NCSS.

VWOs should therefore be better equipped and have their capability built so that they can develop, deploy and manage volunteers to augment[21] service delivery. VWOs should be supported in developing their own dedicated and robust volunteer management process. For example, support for VWOs through the hiring of dedicated volunteer managers could be a strategy to develop capabilities for more efficient and effective volunteer management and deployment.

Recommendation 17

To improve data collection and analytics to enable better navigation, coordination and planning of services for persons with disabilities (QOL Domain: Environment)

DEVELOP A CENTRAL DATABASE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO FACILITATE SERVICE PLANNING AND TRANSITION

Statistical data and information are critical to helping stakeholders plan and provide better support to persons with disabilities and their caregivers. The Committee therefore recommends data collection be improved. **A shared portal for service providers providing services for persons with disabilities or a shared network in which service providers are enabled to deliver their services—ranging from information, referral services, case management, service provision, social assistance and application to schemes and subsidy support— can be used to capture valuable information to understand the needs of persons with disabilities and plan services.**

The Committee is also of the view that **more data should be aggregated across the government agencies and the social service sector for more effective planning of services, managing service transitions and monitoring trends to identify potential service gaps.** The Social Service Net (SSNet) that is available for social support management could potentially be a rich source of data to facilitate planning, transition, and better service delivery for persons with disabilities. Consent and data privacy issues will have to be addressed with users of the system. These strategies will facilitate service planning, coordination and transition management in the sector. Investment in better analytics and data capturing tools that enable the measurement of efficiency and efficacy of our services should be added features in systems such as SSNet.

CONDUCT STUDIES TO UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND IDENTIFY SERVICE GAPS

While most of the data currently collected has been administrative in nature, research studies such as the NCSS Quality of Life Study (2015), Attitude Study (2015) and Respite Care Study (2014) have contributed insights into the needs of persons with disabilities and their caregivers. The Committee suggests that more targeted research studies on the quality of life of children, youth and adults with disabilities should be conducted to continue efforts in gaining more in-depth understanding of persons with disabilities and analysing the trend of disability incidence rates in Singapore.

This will continue to provide insights to whether current services are meeting needs or should be redesigned, or whether new services are required to address emerging needs. Such profile studies can be extended to the support systems for persons with disabilities, such as their caregivers in establishing their needs, as well as the community in determining their level of acceptance of persons with disabilities. A central repository for research studies and data collected on persons with disabilities would further facilitate and encourage researchers to conduct studies on issues faced by persons with disabilities.

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[21] MINDS MYG is a volunteer arm of MINDS (www.myg.org.sg). MYG is completely volunteer-run whose span of activities include holding weekly programs for clients, organising activities that help to promote inclusion, providing training sessions for the volunteers and recruiting volunteers directly.

Strategic Direction 8 | TECHNOLOGY IS MADE A PRIORITY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

"We want to transform our lives for the better, and we have what it takes to achieve this vision— the capabilities and the daring to pull it all together and make a quantum leap forward…"

— Extracted from Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's speech at the launch of Smart Nation in November 2014

Technology can be an enabler to help lower barriers that persons with disabilities face in their daily lives and help them become more independent. This will benefit them in the area of daily living, education, employment, security and communications. It can also be used to help VWOs better serve their clients as well as further support caregivers in providing care to their care recipients.

Tech Able (an assistive technology and innovation centre) was set up to help drive the awareness and adoption of Assistive Technology (AT) by persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are enabled to adopt AT with assistance from the Assistive Technology Fund.

This fund enables more persons with disabilities to use AT by defraying the costs of acquiring such devices. Persons with disabilities who are eligible to tap on this fund are entitled up to $40,000 of subsidies over their lifetime to pay for AT devices.

To encourage ground-up initiatives in improving the lives of persons with disabilities, resources such as the Tote Board-Enabling Lives Initiative Grant fund VWOs and other organisations to innovate or scale successful pilots in transition management, caregiver and natural support and AT. The Committee recommends that more resources be invested for proliferation and promotion in the use of technology more pervasively by persons with disabilities in enabling them to realise their full potential.

As Singapore is a relatively small market for AT and IT and as such costs could be high, it is recommended that global partnerships or alliances for AT are explored for the sourcing of a wider range of AT and at a lower cost.

Recommendation 18

To include persons with disabilities in the Smart Nation initiative (QOL Domains: Level of Independence, Social Relationships, Environment and Psychological)

PROMOTE THE USE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY/ INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AS ENABLERS FOR EMPLOYMENT

AT can be enablers to improve the employability of persons with disabilities. The technology can be simple, for example modified keyboards, or specialised adaptations or software, to enable access and use of computers. These can be funded under the Assistive Technology Fund to defray the costs of procuring AT devices.

The Open Door Programme subsidises job redesign, including the purchase of equipment that helps employees with disabilities to perform better at work. The Committee recommends raising the awareness of AT for employment and the available support.

VWOs providing training for employment should also understand what AT and IT are potentially used by employers so that the training they provide on these technologies remain consistent and relevant to what is being used by potential employers.

Yazid, 46, has cerebral palsy. He can walk, but not for long distances. Yazid works in a sheltered workshop. He uses a motorised wheelchair and takes the public bus to travel from his workplace to his home.

Source: DesignSingapore Council

FIT HOMES WITH TECHNOLOGY TO ENABLE INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE COMMUNITY

Technology can help improve the lives of persons with disabilities and provide more opportunities for active and independent living. The Committee believes that there is much potential for technology to be harnessed in this area. **Smart Homes** can enable independent living for persons with disabilities in the community. For example, the use of one touch control, robotic homes, tracking of food, intelligent personal assistants, and automated replenishment of home essentials through online orders, home monitoring and sensors enabled video monitoring can be useful to help persons with disabilities live independently in the community. To achieve this vision, it is important that Singapore builds an ecosystem and infrastructure that encourage the development and adoption of technology for independent daily living by persons with disabilities, the elderly and those who are challenged in other ways. Technology product developers should be encouraged to work with the disability sector and persons with disabilities, to develop products that meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

STRENGTHEN THE USE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY/INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Education plays an important role in moulding the future of our nation, and technology can enable students, especially those with disabilities, to learn more effectively. Both mainstream schools and Special Education (SPED) schools can **strengthen their use of ICT and AT/IT to enhance learning outcomes.** Students with disabilities, who face challenges in listening, reading, and writing, can benefit from the use of AT for enabling development and acquiring education.

With the pervasiveness of the Internet and in view of the additional vulnerabilities of persons with disabilities, schools should **promote the safe and responsible use of technology.**
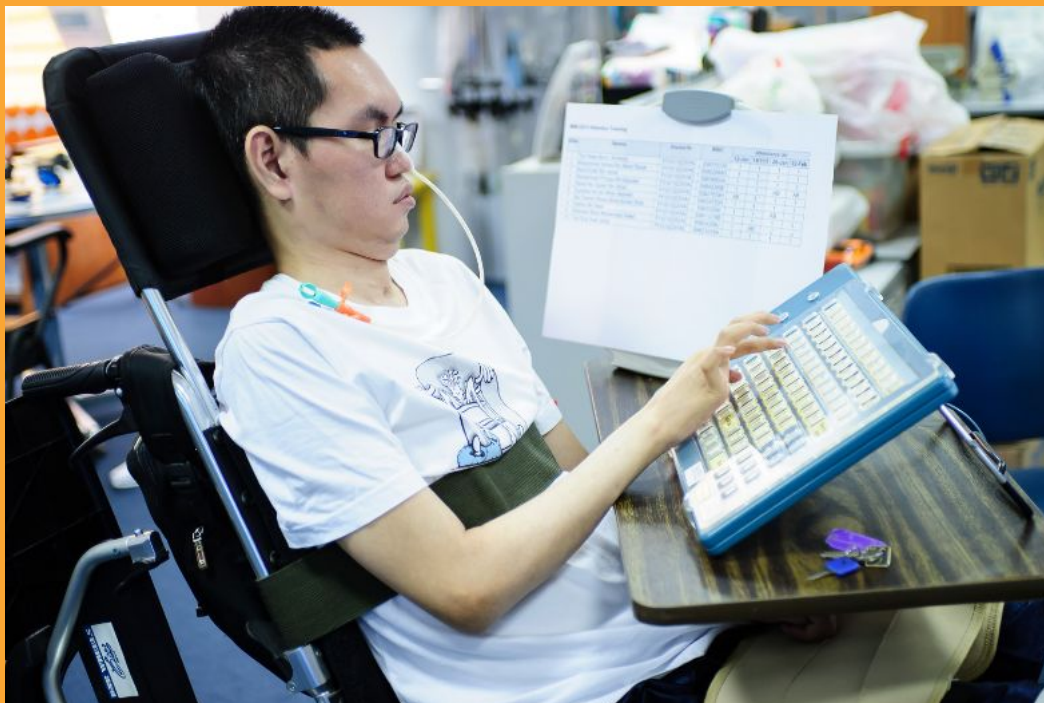
Training on use of AT devices.

Source: SPD

Tech Able is an integrated AT space that aims to help persons with disabilities live and work independently through the use of AT. Specialists are on site to assess users' needs, recommend and facilitate the trying out of suitable assistive devices, as well as provide advice on subsidies and purchase of equipment. Users are also able to loan from the AT library which currently houses over 100 different types of AT devices.

Source: SG Enable

ENSURE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT FOR ADOPTION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGICAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

There should be **sufficient resourcing to facilitate learning, training and adoption of AT and technological accommodations**, at social service agencies serving persons with disabilities.

VWOs should also include the use of technology in their programmes, for example, monitoring health data, wearables, tele-rehabilitation and virtual care delivery. This will help increase the reception and awareness of technology for use by persons with disabilities.

Financial assistance schemes such as the Assistive Technology Fund should be continually reviewed to ensure that they support new technologies that benefit persons with disabilities.

For persons with disabilities, technology is life-changing, in particular technology that enhances accessibility. It is therefore an imperative that the adoption and affordability of AT for persons with disabilities are facilitated so that their quality of life can be enhanced.

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

Nazar, 48, works in a supermarket, keeping the space around the garbage containers clean. He was assigned to take care of the areas outside the supermarket to avoid being seen by customers, because children were afraid of his appearance. He has an intellectual disability and also a syndrome which affects his gums, hands and feet. Nazar is conscious of his looks and often receives nasty remarks about his appearance.

He shares a 1-room rental flat with a friend whom he met at work. It takes a long time for Nazar to make new friends and he often gives up as he deems it too difficult. He wants an operation on his hands and mouth to make him feel less afraid of going out in public.
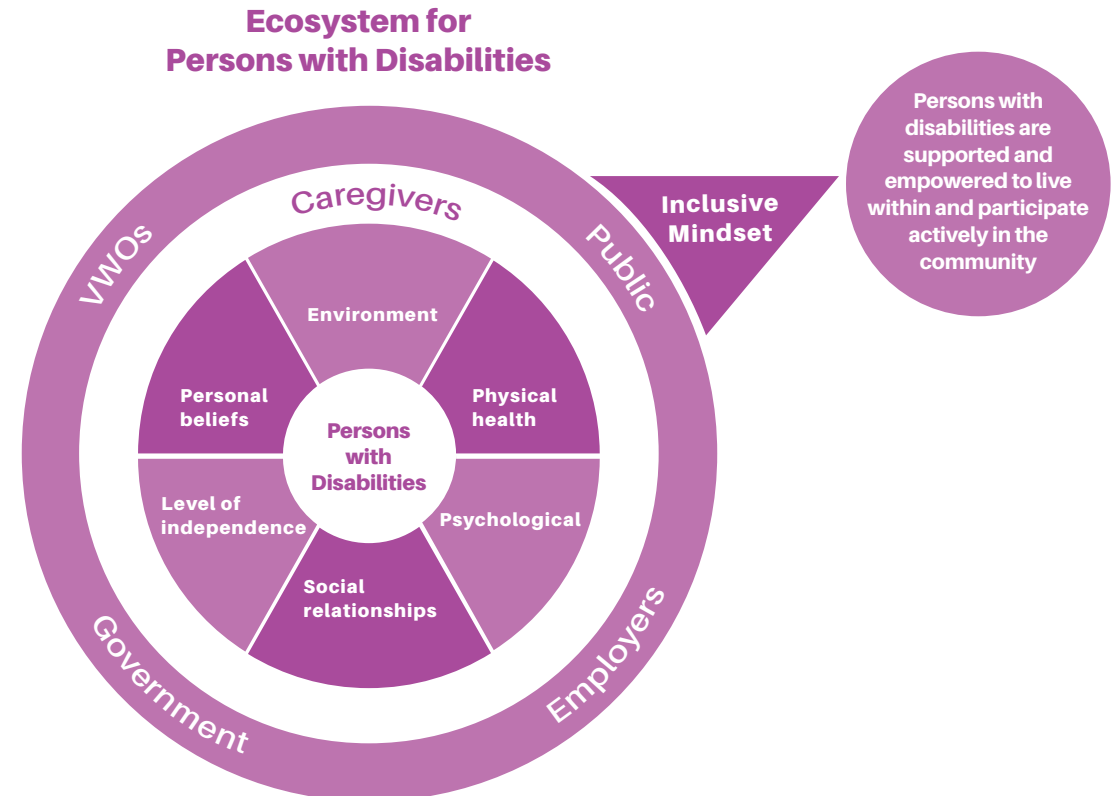
Source: DesignSingapore Council

Strategic Direction 9

SUPPORT AND EMPOWER PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO LIVE WITHIN AND PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE COMMUNITY

In building an inclusive society that is accepting of persons with disabilities, the community and society play an important role—whether they are neighbours, service providers, employers, the general public including persons with disabilities themselves—in understanding and acknowledging that they form the ecosystem of mutual support which will allow one and all, including persons with disabilities such as Nazar, to live independently and be included in the community. Only when this happens will persons with disabilities find greater confidence in interacting with others and impactful inclusion possibilities realised.

Ecosystem for Persons with Disabilities

Persons with Disabilities

Environment
Physical health
Psychological
Social relationships
Level of independence
Personal beliefs

Caregivers
Public
VWOs
Government
Employers

Inclusive Mindset

Persons with disabilities are supported and empowered to live within and participate actively in the community

Ideas of how a community network can support caregivers and persons with disabilities in the future

Kind Eyes is a service that helps to spot people in the community who need support. Local shops are encouraged to use their direct social links to channel caregivers to social services.

HOW ARE YOU ZORIADA? I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE

The shop assistant is a voluntary Kind Eyes mediator

MY SON IS ILL SO I HAVE TO STAY AT HOME WITH HIM FROM NOW ON

The mediator offers him a copy of an EASY GUIDE which is published by the Care Hub with the intention to help caregivers seek help more effectively.

EASY GUIDE

KIND EYES
How to ask the right question?

Training tips

Feedback to Family Manager

Shop assistants can be trained to better recognise families that need special support

Care Exchange is a programme initiated by social services to activate HDB communities. The Resident Community leader, supported by FSC staff, introduces and manages the way residents can exchange services...

CARE EXCHANGE
I offer
Shopping
Cooking
Cleaning
Transportation

I need
Can somebody fetch my son from school next Friday?
SEND

The residents can offer and ask for help from one another by means of Exchange Cards. Each HDB building will have its own board to display and facilitate matching of needs and offers.

I NEED   I OFFER

I need someone to help me shop

EXCHANGE CARD
I offer:

I need:

My contact:

Care Exchange has a digital platform as well. Help can be offered and searched via the caregiver application, the Care Cope App.

Source: "Who Cares? Transforming the caregiving experience in Singapore",
      design ethnography by NCSS & fuelfor

While many efforts such as the 'See the True Me' campaign have heightened awareness of disability issues to date, much of the community still lacks understanding and is not accepting of persons with disabilities. This discourages persons with disabilities from participating and living independently in the community, which in turn may result in social isolation and an erosion of the quality of life of these individuals.

The NCSS QOL study found that inclusion through active participation in society contributed strongly to a good quality of life for persons with disabilities. However, surveys done with persons with disabilities showed that they perceived having limited opportunities for leisure and recreation. Some cited the lack of accommodations for persons with disabilities as a limiting factor to their participation in these activities. Improving opportunities for interaction in the community between persons with and without disabilities is therefore crucial.

Participants at the focus group discussions for the 3rd Enabling Masterplan expressed five main barriers to greater inclusion in the community:

I. A general lack of effort by organisers in taking into consideration the needs of persons with disabilities in national and community initiatives

II. Limited opportunities for inclusion at a young age for both children with and without disabilities

III. A lack of specific consideration of accessibility and safety issues pertaining to persons with disabilities due to inadequate public understanding and awareness

IV. A lack of confidence in persons with disabilities to participate in the community

V. Barriers to accessing soft infrastructure[22]

Caregivers may also be overly-protective and unknowingly hold back the persons with disabilities whom they are caring for from realising their full potential and participating in the community.

The factors which influence the level of independence and participation of persons with disabilities in mainstream community include the availability of activities that cater to these individuals, physical accessibility, ease of communication and accessibility to information. These factors also influence a person with disability's perception level of feeling safe in the community and his ability to move about independently with confidence.

With these findings and concerns in mind, the Committee recommends that more efforts be made to build positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities, enhance knowledge on how to interact with them and include persons with disabilities in all settings.

Recommendation 19

To build positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities and improve knowledge on how to interact with them (QOL Domains: Social Relationships and Psychological)

PROMOTE INCLUSION AND BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPECTRUM OF ABILITIES AMONG PERSONS WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES

Participants of the focus group discussions shared that while some members of the public have some knowledge of disability and related issues, they did not know how to interact with persons with disabilities. In addition, the frequent portrayal of persons with disabilities needing assistance has resulted in them being stereotyped with having less ability, and is not representative of the spectrum of abilities that persons with disabilities have. The Lien Foundation study also revealed that many parents of children with special needs cited 'pity' as one of the most common emotions observed as adults interacted with their children.

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[22] Soft infrastructure refers to the agencies and organisations which are required to maintain economic, health, cultural and social standards of Singapore. This includes Singapore's financial, education and health care system, the system of government, law enforcement and emergency services.

Such perceptions reveal a lack of understanding and acceptance of persons with disabilities which affects the desire and motivation of persons with disabilities to participate in the community.

A more accurate and better understanding of persons with disabilities will go a long way to building an inclusive society. Members of the public tend to be less judgemental of any atypical behaviour in public when they understand the nature of the disability.

The Committee therefore recommends that the current public awareness efforts by NCSS be leveraged and enhanced by partnering other stakeholders such as public agencies,

community groups and associations to expand public outreach and facilitate activities to encourage interaction between persons with and without disabilities. This will also help build a positive self-identity among persons with disabilities. For example, this can be in the form of carefully curated disability awareness activities to enhance public understanding of disability and persons with disabilities.

The Committee is also of the view that the frontline staff in various public service agencies, for example, hospitals, police and community centres, should be equipped with the knowledge and trained so that they can communicate with customers with disabilities more effectively.

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERACTION BETWEEN PERSON WITH DISABILITIES AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Attitude Study conducted by the NCSS in 2015 found that a higher frequency of contact with persons with disabilities correlated with more favourable attitudes towards these individuals. The Committee therefore recommends increasing the opportunities for the public to interact with persons with disabilities

so that understanding through positive experiences can be built. This can be done in the form of activities and gatherings held at the community or neighbourhood level organised by grassroots organisations, interest groups, associations and other community partners.

Platforms for interaction with the public can also serve to build confidence among persons with disabilities and the belief that they too can play a role in building inclusion in the community. For example, persons with disabilities should be taught when and how to

ask for help and when to turn down help when it is not necessary. This will complement public education efforts to raise awareness of persons with disabilities and their abilities.

EDUCATE THE PUBLIC TO RESPECT THE USE OF ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

While Singapore has made much progress in making our public spaces accessible to persons with disabilities, more can be done to raise awareness among the public that disability-friendly features are meant for persons with disabilities who require additional support for mobility and in other areas of daily living, and that such facilities should not be misused by members of the public. Participants at the public consultation sessions

shared that facilities meant for persons with disabilities, such as accessible toilets, were sometimes used as storerooms or locked, or ramps were blocked by bicycles, thus making it inconvenient or impossible for persons with disabilities to access community settings. In 2015, NCSS ran a public education campaign[23] to remind drivers to be gracious by not parking in accessible parking lots. To reduce the misuse of accessible features, the Committee recommends that **efforts continue to educate the public on their use.**

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[23] The Let's Be Gracious campaign was launched by NCSS with the support of MSF, MND, BCA, HDB, LTA, NParks, SG Enable and URA. It consisted of radio advertisements and island-wide publicity banners and posters.

The Purple Parade is a ground-up movement that supports the inclusion and celebrates the abilities of persons with special needs. It covers a series of awareness-building activities in October and November each year with a campaign, carnival, contingent march-past and concert. The Purple Parade began in 2013 with 4,500 participants and grew to 10,000 in 2016. At the recent Purple Parade, 135 organisations from the public, private and people sectors came together in the city district on 5 November 2016.

Source: The Purple Parade

Recommendation 20

*To include persons with disabilities in all settings
(QOL Domains: Level of Independence, Social Relationships, Environment and Psychological)*

To encourage the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all settings, policies, programmes and solutions should be designed with persons with disabilities and their needs in mind. Feedback and suggestions gathered from the public consultations have highlighted that there are existing national frameworks and resources such as the SkillsFuture and Smart Nation initiatives that should be leveraged to better support persons with disabilities.

The Committee recommends that the Government should always include the needs of persons with disabilities when shaping policies and when designing and implementing national initiatives. By doing so, the Government will be seen as taking the lead in accepting persons with disabilities in the mainstream of life.

DEVELOP AN INCLUSION INDEX FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Studies such as the QOL Study and Attitude Study conducted by NCSS in 2015 provide baseline information on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Singapore.

The Committee recommends developing or leveraging an existing

inclusion index which serves as a tool for evaluating Singapore's progress in inclusion across a broad spectrum of attributes, for example, attitudes, perceptions, accessibility and employment, which gives a sense of how both persons with and without disabilities perceive each other.

NDP 2016 featured a segment where over 150 participants with special needs from across seven VWOs led the 55,000-strong audience in song-signing to favourite National Day songs such as Home and Count on Me, Singapore. This performance was also accompanied by 420 participants from the Singapore Soka Association to create a mass display of images adapted from hand-painted artwork of students with special needs. The specially curated performance portrayed inclusiveness and the importance of building a kind and gracious society in the future by embracing people from all walks of life.

Source: MINDEF

ADOPT THE PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY

Under the second Enabling Masterplan, efforts were made to improve accessibility and participation by persons with disabilities in community, sports and employment.

The Building and Construction Authority (BCA)'s Code of Accessibility in the Built Environment[24] which was revised in 2013 has helped to create more accessible and inclusive buildings for persons with disabilities, seniors and families with young children. Universal Design Guides[25], including the Universal Design Guide for Public Places published in 2016, help designers create more inclusive public buildings and exterior spaces. The BCA Universal Design Award introduced in 2006, subsequently replaced with the BCA Universal Design Mark[26] in 2012, has further encouraged building owners to adopt Universal Design principles for their buildings.

The Committee recommends that the Principles of Universal Design and guidelines be incorporated when designing products, buildings and exterior spaces which will ensure that these can be used by everyone.

Universal Design makes buildings and places such as foodcourts and cafes user-friendly and accessible for all ages and abilities.

Source: BCA

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[24] Please visit BCA's website: http://www.bca.gov.sg/friendlybuilding/contents/Contents.aspx?ContId=439

[25] Please visit BCA's website: http://www.bca.gov.sg/friendlybuilding/Contents/Contents.aspx?Id=66

[26] Please visit BCA's website: http://www.bca.gov.sg/friendlybuilding/contents/Contents.aspx?Id=118

With infrastructure and facilities constantly being upgraded and renovated, persons with disabilities are affected when the temporary physical features or routes do not take into account their needs. A person with visual impairment may have to re-orientate himself to an alternative route, or a person with physical impairment may no longer be able to use the same path due to the lack of ramps.

The Committee therefore recommends that when renovations or changes are made to a physical environment, the parties involved in these renovations or changes (i.e. developers, resident committees, vendors engaged in public works, and other relevant agencies) should ensure that alternative accessible routes for persons with disabilities are considered and made.

IMPROVE PHYSICAL, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Enhancing accessibility

Enhancements to the public transport system have made it possible for persons with disabilities to move around more conveniently and independently.

More than 80%[27] of our bus stops and public buses have been made wheelchair-accessible, with the target for all public buses to be wheelchair-accessible by 2020. The Public Transport Concession scheme was also introduced in July 2014 to make travelling more affordable for persons with disabilities. Dedicated transport services[28] were also introduced for persons with more severe disabilities. The transportation system, which has become more accessible and affordable for those with disabilities with the support of transport subsidy, demonstrates a well-designed and integrated model with persons with disabilities at the heart of it. This allows persons with disabilities to be better integrated into the community.

However, feedback gathered from the focus group discussions revealed that there are still many physical, information and communication barriers for persons with disabilities. For example, lack of signage and inaccessible technology. These barriers not only affect their independence and ability to tap on community resources, activities and facilities, but also have safety implications. For instance, the lack of accessible evacuation routes or visual or aural information in place to help persons with disabilities during times of emergency such as train breakdowns. Communication access is also important to enable persons with disabilities to obtain help. For example, a person with hearing impairment will not be able to use the intercom when trapped in a lift.

Removing barriers to soft infrastructure

There are various processes and legislation available to protect persons who lack mental capacity and are vulnerable. These include persons making a Lasting Power of Attorney under the Mental Capacity Act to voluntarily appoint one or more persons to act or make decisions on their behalf when they lose mental capacity, and appointing through the Court a Deputy who is given authority to make decisions on behalf of a person who lacks capacity in relation to his personal welfare and/or property and affairs under the Mental Capacity Act.

[27] https://www.lta.gov.sg/content/ltaweb/en/public-transport/system-design/enhancing-physical-accessibility-for-all.html

[28] https://app.msf.gov.sg/Press-Room/Dedicated-Transport-Services-for-Persons-with-Disabilities

However, these processes are perceived by the persons with disabilities or their caregivers as complicated, costly and time consuming. Caregivers of adults with intellectual disabilities shared that they faced challenges in opening bank accounts for the persons under their care (including accessing the SNTC Trust and Special Needs Savings Scheme) or in giving consent for non-emergency medical procedures. For persons with disabilities and their caregivers, the navigation through such processes has also proven to be challenging.

The Committee therefore recommends **simplifying the current guidelines and processes for Lasting Power of Attorney and Deputyship as well as making more schemes available** to persons with disabilities and caregivers of persons with disabilities who have diminished mental capacity for the provision of services such as financial and healthcare services.

PROMOTE SOCIAL INTERACTION AND INCLUSION IN PHYSICAL SETTINGS AND ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING SPORTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

As part of its efforts to improve community participation, sports and a healthy lifestyle amongst persons with disabilities, the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) launched the Disability Sports Master Plan which includes improving access and opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in sports amongst its objectives. As part of this Disability Sports Master Plan, the first Centre of Expertise for Disability Sports was launched on 31 May 2016 at ActiveSG Sengkang Sports Centre.

Photo: Sport Singapore

Through the Disability Sports Master Plan, we want to further harness the potential of sport by making it easier for those with disabilities to lead an active lifestyle.

One of the recommendations in the Master Plan is to set up Centres of Expertise for Disability Sports. These Centres will provide sports facilities and programmes for persons with disabilities, making it easier for them to learn a sport.

Sport Singapore introduced the "Yes! I Can" Swim Programme at the ActiveSG Sengkang Swimming Complex. The programme is tailored for persons with disabilities (pictured).

Source: Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth

"*Sport has been a big part of my life and has shaped me into who I am today. It is my hope that sport can also impact the lives of many others with or without a disability. The Disability Sports Master Plan will go a long way in shaping the mindset of Singaporeans towards persons with disabilities. It will also help more people with disabilities lead a more holistic life.*"

— *Yip Pin Xiu*

Yip Pin Xiu, three-time gold medallist at the Paralympic Games and world record holder for 100m backstroke S2 event

Source: Sport Singapore

NCSS has been working with the National Parks Board and Town Councils to build inclusive playgrounds island-wide, with three already built. More inclusive playgrounds will be built across Singapore.

Photo: NCSS

Mr Abhimanyau Pal, Executive Director of SPD, said: "Inclusive playgrounds like this will enable children with special needs to have fun alongside their able-bodied peers. This is a positive step towards helping them integrate into the society early in their lives and encourage them to be 'out there' participating actively with their peers rather than be an observer from the outside. This also creates opportunities for interaction between able-bodied children and those with disabilities which will result in greater understanding and acceptance among the next generation of Singaporeans."

Source: SPD

In tandem with Singapore hosting the 8th ASEAN Para Games for the first time in 2015, the 'Be Socially Enabled' campaign was launched by NCSS to increase the public's awareness and knowledge on how to interact with persons with disabilities. 'We Are Able!' events were also launched in January 2014 and February 2016 to engage persons with disabilities and celebrate their abilities and contributions.

To increase accessibility to arts and heritage offerings, MCCY extended concessions to persons with disabilities from 1 June 2016 at all National Heritage Board (NHB) museums and heritage institutions as well as the Singapore Art Museum and National Gallery Singapore. Persons with disabilities enjoy the lowest concession price for permanent and special exhibitions, and an accompanying caregiver is also given complimentary entry. Singaporeans and Permanent Residents are also able to enjoy free entry to all exhibitions at NHB museums and heritage institutions all year round.

Museums such as the National Museum of Singapore and National Gallery Singapore are also access-friendly, with designated parking and accessible restrooms for visitors with disabilities. In recognition of these efforts, the National Museum of Singapore was awarded the BCA Universal Design Mark Award for wheelchair accessibility.

Beyond physical infrastructure, National Gallery Singapore, National Museum of Singapore, Asian Civilisations Museum and the Peranakan Museum have also initiated programmes for those with disabilities. National Gallery Singapore offers Singapore Sign Language Interpretation tours, while the other museums have launched a 'Quiet Mondays' programme to encourage persons with disabilities to visit the museums on Monday mornings.

In 2015, the National Arts Council (NAC) organised the inaugural Arts & Disability Forum as an annual platform to bring artists and the disability sector together to explore how the arts can play a part in engaging people with disabilities. In 2016, NAC partnered British Council Singapore and Singapore International Foundation to co-organise the Forum, together with support from National Gallery Singapore. It was a three-day Forum with the theme "Shaping Perspectives, Enabling Opportunities" which aimed to raise awareness on how the arts and culture could shape an inclusive society.

The 'Quiet Mondays' programme has been in place since 2013 at Asian Civilisations Museum and the Peranakan Museum, where special needs and elderly groups enjoy priority bookings and tailored programmes. The above photo is from the pilot programme for elderly in long-term care. This programme, a collaboration with the Agency for Integrated Care and Ling Kwang Home for Senior Citizens, was internationally recognised as one of the top 20 best practices in the International Council of Museums—Committee for Education and Cultural Action (ICOM-CECA) Best Practice Book 2016.

Source: Peranakan Museum, 2016

Superhero Me is an inclusive ground-up community arts movement inspiring special needs children and those from low-income communities to build resilience and a stronger sense of self. Superhero Me 2016: The Special Edition was supported by Lien Foundation and the NAC. It involved over 80 children, young artists and youth volunteers from all walks of life who put together a month-long art show and inclusive tours for the public.

Source: Superhero Me

"I want the public to know that I have passion for music and I am not writing and singing just to raise funds for my condition. This also means that I can share my experience and life with the public and express my views on friendship and life."

— *Adelyn Koh*

Unseen: Constellations is a two-year long project initiated by artist Alecia Neo and supported by the NAC which provided seven youths who live with visual impairment to explore their self-identities and dreams through art.

Adelyn dreams of being a professional singer-songwriter. Under the guidance of her mentor Sarah Ismail, Adelyn wrote three original songs focusing on the challenges of integration she faces in school, and how she turns to her close friends and family for support. Her positive and child-like lyrics reveal an inspiration from relationships in her daily life: incidents of misunderstandings; isolation; and possible reconciliatory actions.

Source: Alecia Neo, Unseen: Constellations, 2016

"A life spent making art is not only more honourable, but more useful than a life spent doing nothing and wallowing in self-pity."

— *Eugene Soh Yew Lin*

Very Special Arts (VSA) Singapore Ltd
The mission of VSA is to provide access and opportunities for persons with disabilities to the arts for enjoyment and integration into society.

Source: Very Special Arts Singapore Ltd

While much has been done to encourage the participation of persons with disabilities in sports, cultural and social activities, only a small percentage participate in these activities. The Committee recognises the importance of increasing the participation of persons with disabilities in sports and cultural activities to help them lead active and balanced lifestyles and to encourage their inclusion into the community. More attention should be given to encourage and improve the participation of persons with disabilities in these activities.

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Special thanks to the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) for its involvement in this Masterplan. NCSS, together with DesignSingapore Council and fuelfor[29], also provided insights generated from design research projects, including illustrations and photographs from the "Who Cares? Transforming the Caregiving Experience in Singapore" publication.

Organisations

Association for Persons with Special Needs

Attorney-General's Chambers

Autism Resource Centre

AWWA

Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore

Lien Foundation

Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore

Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth

Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Health

Ministry of National Development

Ministry of Social and Family Development

Muscular Dystrophy Association Singapore

National Arts Council

National Council of Social Service

People's Association

The Purple Parade

Saint Andrew's Autism Centre

SG Enable

Singapore Association of the Visually Handicapped

Singapore Disability Sports Council

Singapore Red Cross Society

SPD

Sport Singapore

The Singapore Association for the Deaf

Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities

TOUCH Community Services

Very Special Arts Singapore Ltd

Individuals

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[29] NCSS had commissioned fuelfor to carry out a strategic design project to design a better caregiving future for Singapore. For more information on the project, please visit http://www.fuelfor.net/ncss