

REPORT BY THE SOCIAL SERVICE SKILLSFUTURE TRIPARTITE TASKFORCE (STT)

Transforming manpower capabilities in the social service sector



May 2022

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

When the Social Service SkillsFuture Tripartite Taskforce (STT) was formed in April 2019, no one foresaw COVID-19 which would present a challenging time for our nation and the social service sector. It was fortuitous that the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and National Council of Social Service (NCSS) had already brought together stakeholders from industry, academia, professional associations, and Government via the STT. The STT was able to work quickly to galvanise the sector to meet the added demands brought about by the pandemic.

The pandemic has accelerated the transformation of the social service sector, led by the STT. The STT implemented key strategies to enhance the resilience of the sector, and looked into ways to empower social service professionals to deliver effective services. The STT's focus on manpower pipelines and talent development also enabled the transference of skills and experiences from outside of the social service sector, which strengthened capabilities of our Social Service Agencies (SSAs).

Through the STT's partnerships and networks, we supported our professionals to strengthen their relevance and be better equipped to uplift those in need. Key achievements include the development of a Learning Support Educator (LSEd) specialist track in the Early Intervention (EI) sector, and collaborations with the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) to develop professional workshops and onboarding courses to support and upskill Associate Psychologists.

As we build up capabilities, it also brings the sector closer to our vision of "SSA 3.0". This is our shared vision for a social service sector that constantly seeks ways to deliver services more effectively; is adaptive to technology and innovation; invests in building up leadership, manpower and organisational capabilities; and able to harness the strengths of the community to deliver effective outcomes for service users.

I am grateful to all the STT members for their commitment and contributions. The STT's work remains vital to the ongoing development of our sector's manpower capabilities. As the STT continues its meaningful work into its second term, I invite everyone to join hands with us to nurture and build lives together.



Mr Masagos Zulkifli
Minister for Social and Family Development,
Second Minister for Health &
Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs

FOREWORD BY CO-CHAIRS

The COVID-19 pandemic, which started midway through the STT's work, shows how easily demand for social services and our approaches to service delivery can quickly change and be disrupted. Social service professionals demonstrated immense resilience in the face of these challenges, and the pandemic has highlighted the importance of providing ongoing development and support to ensure that the competencies and skills of our social service professionals remain strong and relevant.

Since 2019, the STT has provided advice on targeted approaches to uplift the manpower and skillset of the social service sector. This was done through strong partnerships and co-creation between policymakers, SSAs, professionals, and training providers. As evidenced by the progress and achievements, the STT has been a reliable pillar for MSF's and NCSS's engagement, collaboration, and partnerships with our stakeholders. We deeply appreciate the commitment and support of our partners in co-creating initiatives to enable our sector professionals to remain agile, relevant, and open to adapting and adopting transformative solutions. With their guidance, we have made progress in the shaping of:

1. A thriving workforce to meet service demands,
2. A competent and relevant community of professionals that embraces continuing education and training, and
3. A transformed sector for enhanced service delivery.

As we journey on to achieve better support for our sector colleagues and ensure continual improvement of manpower development initiatives, we look forward to further building upon the momentum gained in the current term into the next term. The next term of the STT will continue the tripartite collaboration and we will continue to work together to enable and empower social service professionals to deliver quality services to meet the needs of our social service users.



Ms Ang Bee Lian
Senior Director,
Professional and Corporate
Development Group and Director-
General of Social Welfare, MSF

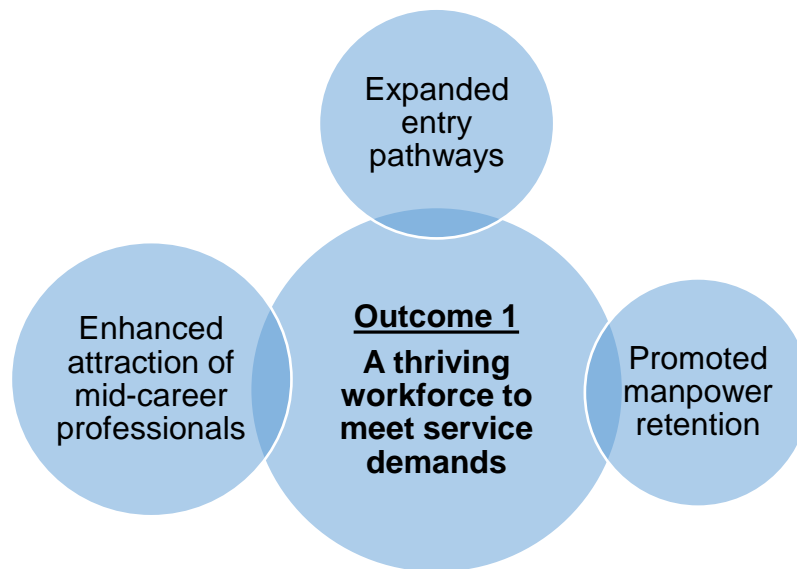


Ms Tan Li San
Chief Executive Officer, NCSS

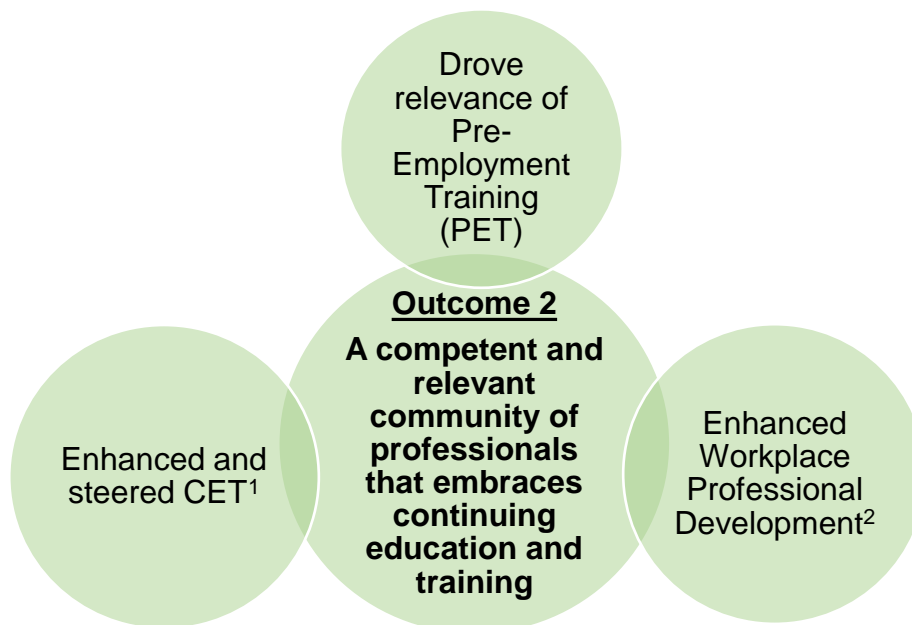
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. STT's formation has brought together policymakers, SSAs, sector professionals and training providers to enhance our collective focus on manpower and skills development for the social service sector. With the onset of COVID-19, social service professionals have faced immense pressures to meet increased demands for social services amidst challenges and constraints to business-as-usual approaches of service delivery. The pandemic highlighted the importance of supporting our social service professionals in enhancing their capabilities and effectiveness and reinforced the impetus and urgency for coordinated manpower development initiatives.
2. Enhancing manpower pipelines, promoting career and professional development, and supporting manpower optimisation through transformation of service delivery are the key tenets of the STT's recommendations. Healthy pipelines of professionals are necessary to ensure a thriving workforce to meet service demands. Hence, the STT has recommended the expansion of entry pathways to enhance the attraction of professionals, including mid-careerists, into the sector. The STT also recognises the importance of **reducing attrition** and **promoting retention** through the **promotion of self-care and validation of professionals' contributions** (see Outcome 1).
3. Social service professionals seek to maintain skills relevance and uphold professional practice standards through continual training and development. The STT supported this by working with partners at Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) to enhance training courses across a range of professions and qualifications to address skills gaps collectively. In addition, initiatives to enhance and steer **Continuing Education and Training (CET)** and **Professional Development** were put in place to mentor and support professionals in refining their skills, competencies, and knowledge (see Outcome 2).
4. Finally, the STT is cognisant that the sector must be supported and encouraged to transform, as reliance on manpower will be increasingly constrained by supply and cross-sector competition. Initiatives were introduced to encourage **technology adoption** and **manpower optimisation**, to allow for a nimbler workforce and encourage innovative service delivery in the sector (see Outcome 3).

OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS



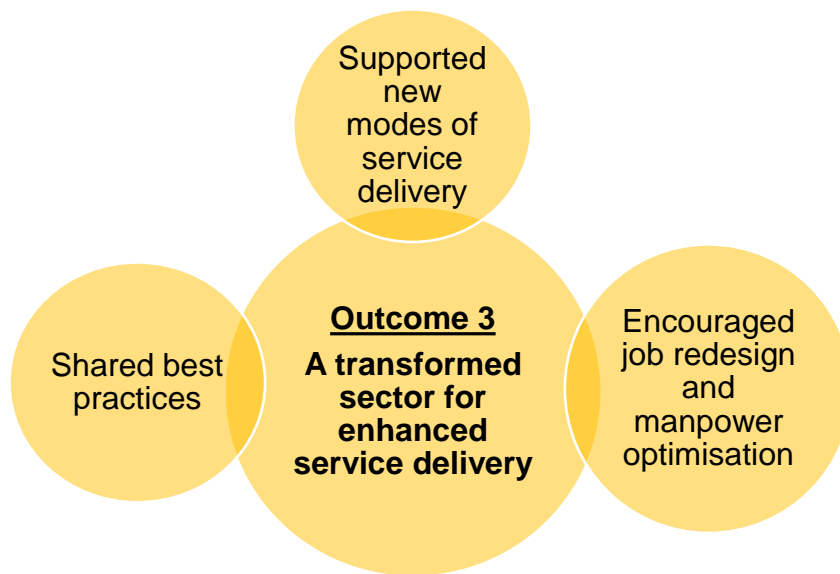
- Developed Learning Support Educator (LSEd) specialist track, benefitting close to 130 individuals in the Early Intervention (EI) sector.
- Articulated skills roadmap for Family Counselling professionals, to encourage an increased proportion of Counselling professionals to enter the sector.
- Supported launch of the Master of Psychology Postgraduate Programme, which was oversubscribed and saw 75 applicants for 20 places in the first run.
- Supported the review of the Career Conversion Programmes (CCPs) (formerly known as Professional Conversion Programmes) for Social Workers and Allied Health Professionals (Therapists), projected to benefit about 30 individuals annually over the next 5 years.
- Developed agency-specific recommendations on retention measures for the estimated 1,000 Therapists within the sector.
- Introduced “Joy@Social Services” self-care movement to strengthen the ecology of support for social service professionals’ well-being.
- Organised inaugural Youth Work Day, attended by close to 300 Youth Workers and stakeholders in the sector.



- Launched the Early Intervention Continuing Professional Development Roadmap, benefitting over 500 EI professionals.
- Collaborated with NUS in the development of professional workshops to support and upskill up to 150 Associate and Junior Psychologists annually, of which 90 places are subsidised for Associate Psychologists in the social service sector.
- Infused social compact module into relevant SSI and IHL courses offered by NUS, SUSS and NYP.
- Engaged IHLs to enhance curricula to plug core skills gaps.
- Engaged social service industry partners to co-deliver/co-assess modules in Diploma in Social Work.
- Completed a comprehensive Training Gaps Analysis and closed all 19 identified priority skills gaps.
- Worked with SUSS to provide onboarding courses for Associate Psychologists.
- Enhanced Social Work supervision and mentorship for mid-career professionals which is expected to benefit an additional 5-10 mid-careerist Social Workers annually.
- Launched Youth Work Supervision and Mentorship Schemes which are expected to benefit an additional 30 Youth Workers annually.

¹ The Youth Work sub-team is currently developing an Onboarding Course for New Entrants to the Youth Work Sector and EPAs for Youth Work Associates.

² The Counselling sub-team will be launching the first series of Communities of Practice (CoPs) for Family Counsellors in 2022. This was developed in consultation with the sub-team members and Counselling professionals at the Strengthening Families Programme@Family Service Centres (FAM@FSCs) and Divorce Support Specialist Agencies (DSSAs).



- Developed professional guidelines for remote counselling, benefitting Counselling professionals that provide remote services.
- Shared Sector Digitalisation plans and roadmap.
- Shared trans-disciplinary practices in Holistic Care Approach in EI Services.
- Adapted Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) for Senior Social Work Associates, which is expected to benefit the sector's close to 300 Social Work Associates.
- Developed Entrustable Therapy Tasks Framework for Therapy Aides/Assistants, which is expected to benefit the sector's estimated 200 Therapy Aides/Assistants.

INTRODUCTION

1. People are at the heart of what we do in the social service sector. A professional and competent workforce ensures that our clients and beneficiaries are well-supported to overcome challenges and achieve their maximum potential. Social service professionals are an integral resource and play an invaluable role in impacting and improving the lives of the clients we serve. When manpower in the sector is strained, exhausted, overwhelmed, or inadequately supported, we risk downstream impact on families, children, youth, and the many individuals we serve in different sub-sectors.
2. The STT was formed in 2019 to harness the collective efforts of leaders representing a diverse mix of stakeholders, to drive collaborations for manpower development initiatives in the social service sector. STT members contributed invaluable advice and guidance on matters relating to curriculum, training pathways and professional practice, to enhance capabilities and effectiveness of manpower in the social service sector, drawing on their extensive involvement and experience in multiple sub-sectors. The STT's work was further supported by two workstreams, one focusing on the Skills Framework and the other on Curriculum & Professional Practice. The latter was supported by six profession-specific³ sub-teams.
3. Over the years, the sector's increased focus and resources dedicated to the training and development of our workforce⁴ were recognised through the inclusion of the Social Service sector in the development of Skills Frameworks by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), and the subsequent launch of the Skills Framework for Social Service (SFwSS) in 2019. The SFwSS provided information on the social service sector, the range of jobs and career pathways available in the sector, the skills required for each occupation, and training programmes that are available to support individuals' skills upgrading and mastery. In addition to an overview of the career prospects in the sector, the SFwSS included detailed occupational and skills information for Social Workers, Psychologists, EI Teachers, Youth Workers and Care and Programme staff.



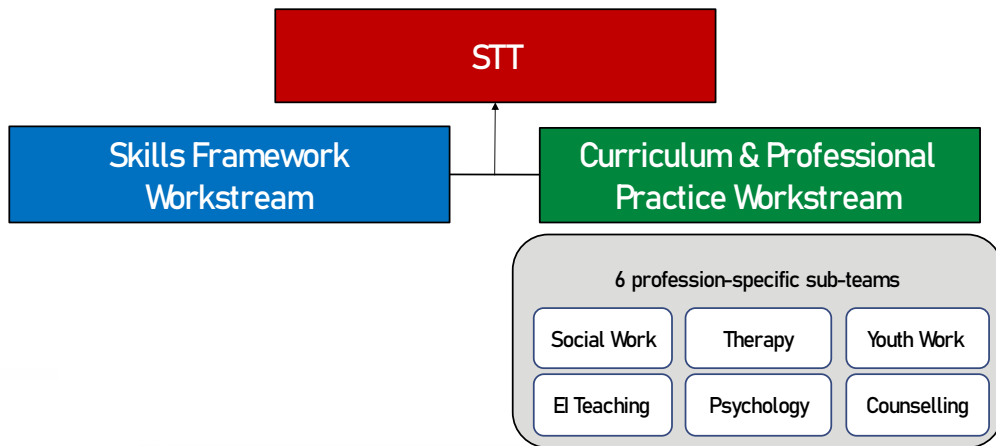
³ The six professions are Social Work, Psychology, Counselling, EI Teaching, Youth Work and Therapy.

⁴ From FY17 to FY21 (as of 31 January 2022), the amount of funds approved to support and develop the sector's professionals through the VWOs-Charities Capability Fund is \$46.3 million.

Table 1: Members of the STT

					
Dr Cherie Chan President, Singapore Psychological Society (SPS)	Dr Michael Fung Deputy Chief Executive (Industry), SSG	Prof Robbie Goh Provost, SUSS	Ms Hazlina Abdul Halim President, Persatuan Pemudi Islam Singapura (PPIS)	Mr J R Karthikeyan Chief Executive Officer, AWWA	Prof Kwok Kian Woon Associate Vice President (Wellbeing), Nanyang Technological University (NTU)
					
Mr Jason Lee Chief Operating Officer, Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities	Prof Susanna Leong Vice Provost (Masters' Programmes and Lifelong Education) and Dean, School of Continuing and Lifelong Education (SCALE), NUS	Ms Jeanne Liew Principal & Chief Executive Officer, Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP)	Mr Lim Kok Kiang Principal & Chief Executive Officer, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP)	Mr Arthur Ling Chief Executive, Fei Yue Community Services	Prof Loh Han Tong Professor, Engineering, Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT)
					
Assoc Prof Frederick Low President, Singapore Association of Counselling (SAC)	Ms Julia Ng Group Director, Enterprise Development Group, Workforce Singapore (WSG)	Dr Vincent Ng Chief Executive Officer, AMKFSC Community Services	Ms Susan Niam Chief Allied Health Officer, Office of the Director of Medical Services, Ministry of Health (MOH)	Ms Tan Sze Wee Executive Director, Rainbow Centre (RC) and President, Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW)	

Figure 1: Structure of the STT



OUTCOME 1: A THRIVING WORKFORCE TO MEET SERVICE DEMANDS

OVERVIEW

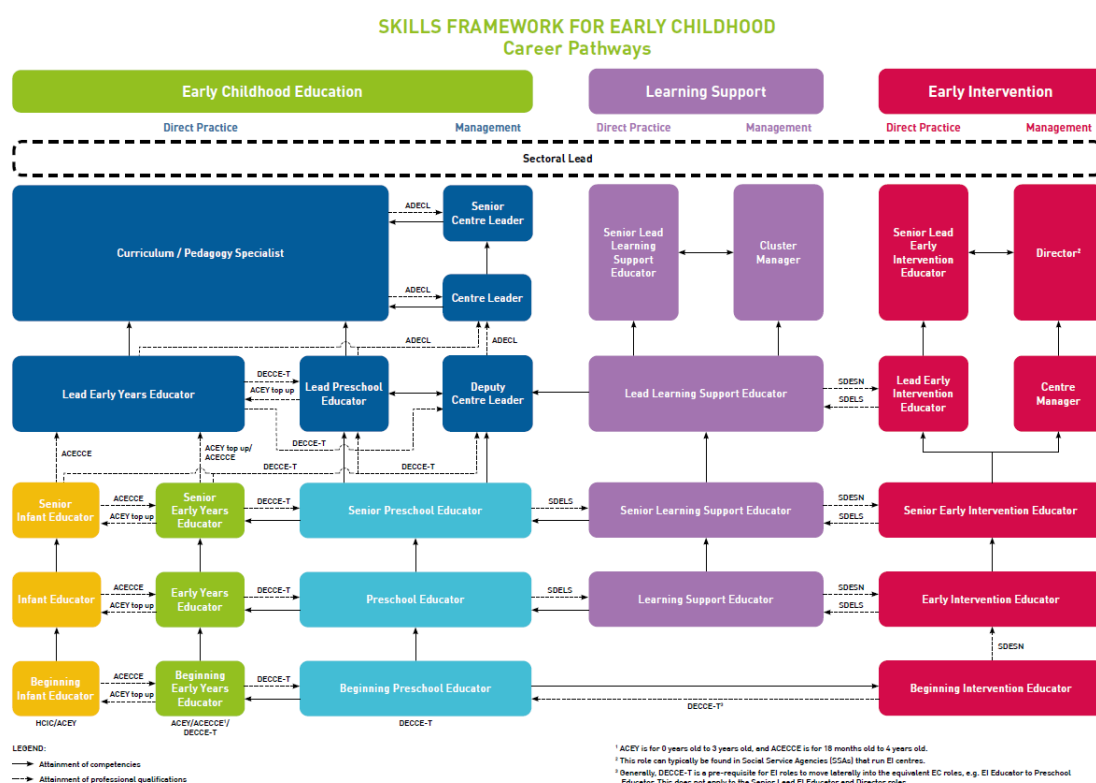
1. In the last 5 years, demand for social services has grown, given demographic changes such as our ageing population and the growing complexity of needs. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to SSAs facing further manpower challenges and uncertainties. Recognising the need to complement existing efforts to strengthen and support SSAs to ensure manpower sufficiency to meet service demands, the STT focused efforts on expanding entry pathways, enhancing attraction into the sector, and improving manpower retention.
2. Achievements include publishing the refreshed Early Childhood Skills Framework which would benefit close to 20,000 Early Childhood educators, 400 EI educators and 130 LSEs; identifying skills and knowledge for family counsellors in training roadmaps to inform modules in the certification programme at SUSS which has benefitted over 20 Family Counsellors since its launch in November 2021; and well-received improvements to the SASW Supervision Service which would expand the quota for mid-careerist social workers.

ACHIEVEMENTS

ACHIEVEMENT 1.1: EXPAND ENTRY PATHWAYS.

3. A new LSE specialist track was developed in the refreshed Early Childhood Skills Framework to (i) recognise LSEs' specialist skills in the Early Childhood sector; (ii) articulate a clear career progression pathway for LSEs; and (iii) encourage manpower movements between the career pathways for Early Childhood, LSEs and EI educators as part of ongoing efforts to advance inclusion in preschools. Comprising preschool operators and SSAs, the EI sub-team guided on the design of the LSE track, including the job descriptions and technical skills and competencies required for each role. Multiple focus group discussions with Development Support and Learning Support (DS-LS) providers were also conducted to validate the design of the track, which was launched as part of the refreshed Early Childhood Skills Framework in October 2021.

Figure 3: Refreshed Early Childhood Skills Framework



Comments on the refreshed Early Childhood Skills Framework

“I’m grateful that the Early Childhood sector is increasingly acknowledging that children have diverse needs. The Skills Framework for Early Childhood can enhance the inclusive education capabilities of Early Childhood educators.”

– A. Susila (Senior LSEd)

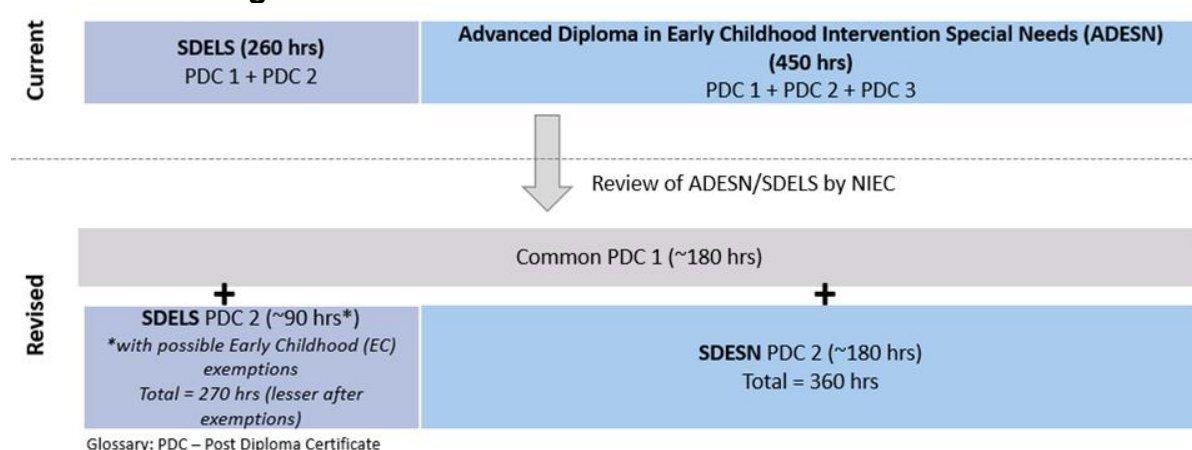
“Paths have been cleared for change to happen and the resources are readily available in the sector to support Early Intervention Educators. The Skills Framework for Early Childhood, which can guide educators on their progression pathways and give them a clear view of the skills and competencies they need, is also a great support.”

– Christina (Sectoral Lead)

- To deepen expertise and facilitate movement between LSEds and EI educators, the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA) also worked with the National Institute of Early Childhood Development (NIEC) to harmonise PET for LSEds (i.e. Specialist Diploma in Early Childhood Learning Support – SDELS) and EI Educators (i.e. Specialist Diploma in Early Childhood Special Needs – SDESN). The EI sub-team provided feedback on the structure and content of the

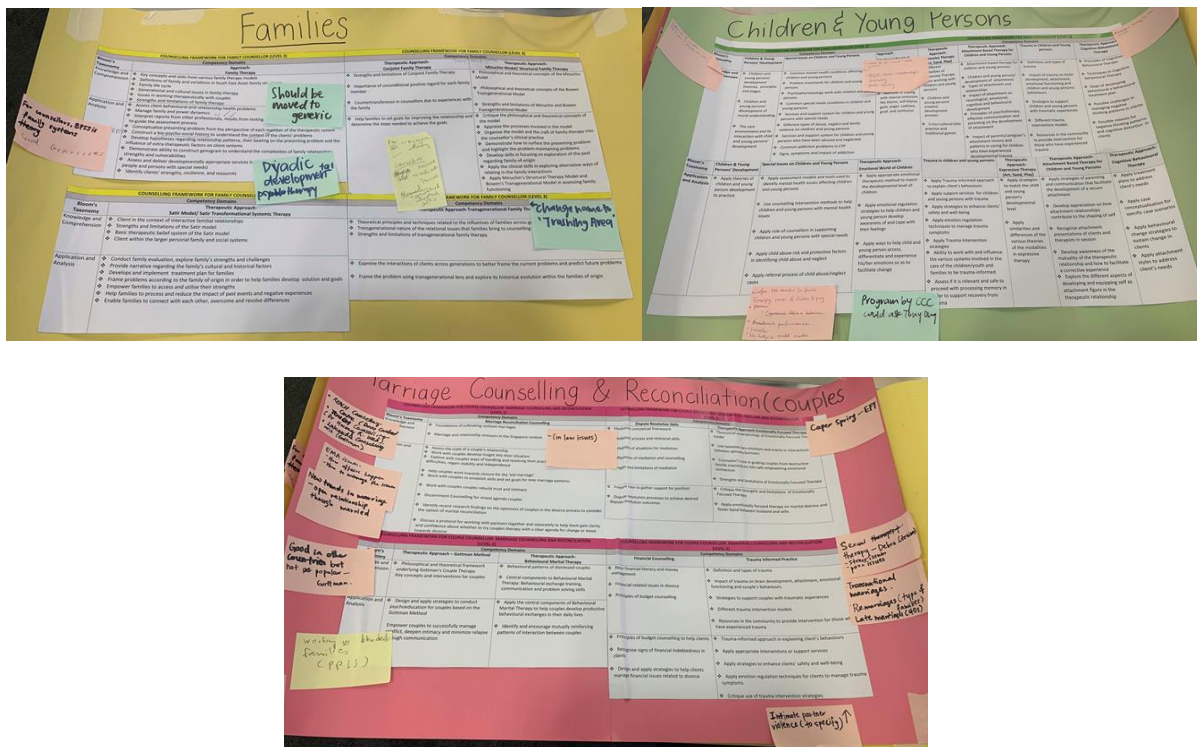
programme to ensure that training met ground demands. The harmonised SDELS and SDESN, launched in September 2021 and April 2021 respectively, consist of common base modules applicable to both LSEds and EI educators, and specialist modules to equip LSEds and EI educators for their respective roles. Through this new design, LSEds and EI educators would only need to ‘top up’ the specialist components should they wish to move across roles.

Figure 4: New Structure for SDELS and SDESN



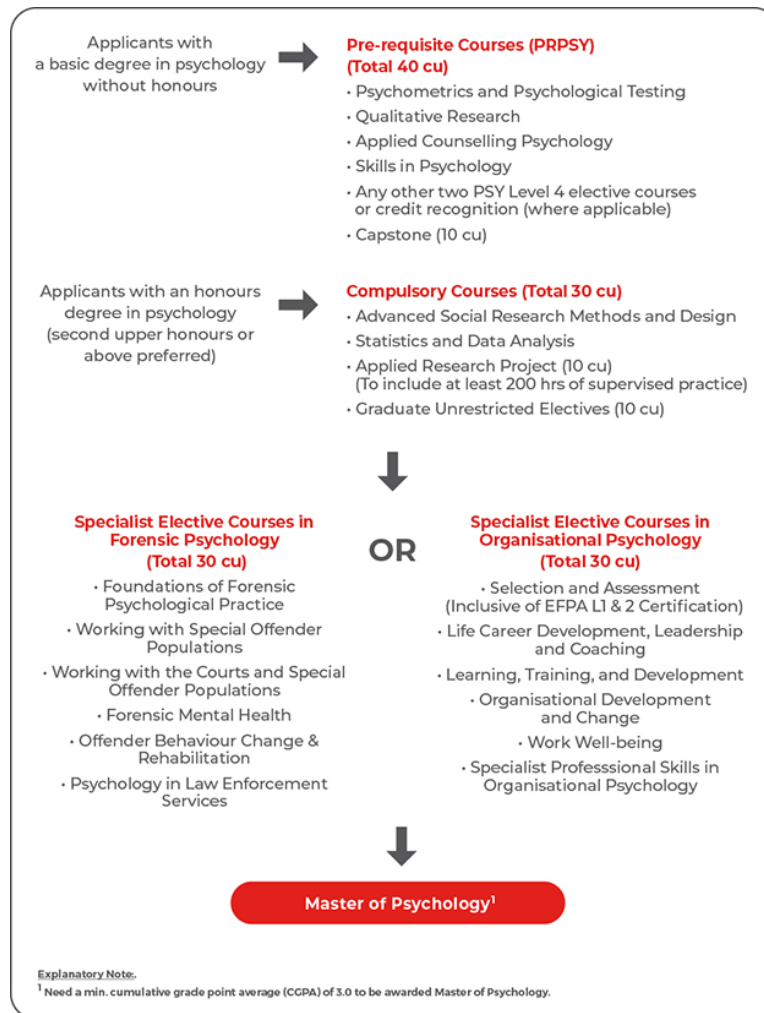
5. In the Counselling sub-sector, there are plans to provide family counselling regionally through the Strengthening Families Programme@Family Service Centres (FAM@FSCs). To support this, the Counselling sub-team proposed key skills and corresponding training that would be needed for general family counselling, marital counselling and working with children and youth. Comprising seasoned counsellors from professional associations, public and private service providers, the sub-team’s work informed the training roadmap for family counselling professionals at FAM@FSC to ensure they are equipped and prepared to work with families that need support.

Figure 5: Competency maps for families, children and young persons, and couples



- For Social Work, the sub-team worked with SSI in their course review of Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) Diploma in Social Services and Higher Diploma in Social Services, providing industry advice on SSI's proposal to recognise graduates of these courses as a pipeline of Social Work Associates. Separately, the Psychology sub-team provided consultation on programming and operational matters for SUSS's new Master of Psychology Postgraduate Programme that offers specialisation in either Forensic or Organisational Psychology, which saw good demand across both specialisations offered. The offerings were in response to the Psychology sub-team's call for more Postgraduate Psychology programmes to meet the increased demand for psychologists. The new programme increased the number of Psychology post graduate programmes offered in Singapore and added entry options for aspiring Psychologists to gain the relevant training and qualification.

Figure 6: Structure of SUSS's new Master of Psychology Postgraduate Programme



ACHIEVEMENT 1.2: ENHANCE ATTRACTION OF MID-CAREER PROFESSIONALS.

- In 2020, MSF and NCSS studied the challenges faced by mid-career entrants into the Social Work and Therapy professions. The review aimed to increase the attractiveness of the CCPs and involved in-depth focus groups with SSAs⁵ (as employers) and CCP trainees⁶. The key findings indicated that the success of CCPs hinged on (i) improving the supervisory and mentorship support provided

⁵ SSAs expressed support for a systematic review of the CCPs as mid-careerists are an important talent pipeline, but structural barriers had limited the in-take of mid-careerists.

⁶ Includes those who were still studying or had graduated. CCP trainees were particularly appreciative that the Government had taken initiative in understanding their challenges and sacrifices as part of the programme and that their wellbeing was being addressed, as burnout and fatigue were common amongst CCP trainees and graduates.

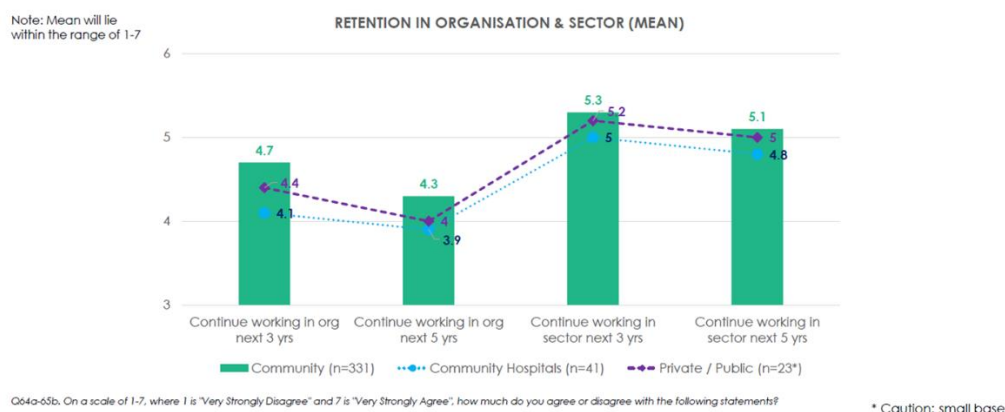
during and post-course [particularly for the CCP-Social Work (CCP-SW) which is a work-study programme]; (ii) standardising the process of expectations-setting between trainees and employers; and (iii) increasing the visibility and awareness of career opportunities and development in the social service sector.

8. Gleaning from these findings, the Social Work and Therapy sub-teams supported the review of WSG's CCPs for Social Workers (CCP-SW) and Therapists (CCP-Allied Health Professionals), advising and shaping the eventual findings and recommendations of the study. Both sub-teams took in the recommendations, and the Social Work sub-team also leveraged the findings and recommendations to develop further initiatives to enhance workplace professional development (See Achievement 2.3).

ACHIEVEMENT 1.3: PROMOTE MANPOWER RETENTION.

9. Through a survey of over 300 practicing professionals from over 30 agencies, the Therapy sub-team designed survey questions and worked with NCSS and consultants from Consulting Group - Asia Insight to further study retention factors specific to Therapists. The study was successful in highlighting the nuances of practice and retention issues, allowing analysis of the different segments of participating agencies (e.g., Therapy Hubs/SSAs/Community Hospitals/Private/Public Sector), leading to the development of retention recommendations tailored to individual agencies.

Figure 7: Sample survey findings



10. To strengthen the ecology of support for Social Workers, the Social Work sub-team proposed the concept of 'Joy at Work', adapted from healthcare settings overseas, to emphasise the importance of self-care. The initiative sought to promote a culture of self-care in SSAs through a sector-wide movement, with the aim to reduce burn-out in Social Workers and promote retention. "Joy@Social Services" (JASS) launched the movement at the Principal Social Workers (PSW) Seminar in 2020 and has approximately 10 ambassadors to-date. JASS also launched its logo at the PSW Seminar 2021 as part of its ongoing efforts to recruit ambassadors and generate interest in the movement and intends to organise regular workshops and seminars to continue promoting the movement across the social service sector.

Figure 8: JASS Logo



11. The Youth Work sub-team in collaboration with Youth Work Association Singapore (YWAS) supported the organisation of the inaugural Youth Work Day on 7 May 2021 to celebrate and recognise the efforts and contributions of Youth Workers to the social service sector. The organising committee⁷ invited speakers to speak on the Past, Present and Future of Youth Work in Singapore.

⁷ The organising committee was led by Mr Wilson Tan, Executive Director, Youth Guidance Outreach Services (YGOS) and supported by key members of Youth Work Association, including Mr Tony Leong (Director of Youth Work, CampusImpact), Dr John K E Tan (Founding President of YWAS and Executive Director of Children-At-Risk Empowerment Association (CARE) Singapore) and Mr Lee Seng Meng (Secretary, YWAS and Executive Director of Targeted Interventions at SHINE Children & Youth Services).

Figure 9: Youth Work Day's Panel of Guest Speakers



Figure 10: Youth Work Day's Organising Committee and Guest of Honour, Parliamentary Secretary, MSF, Mr Eric Chua

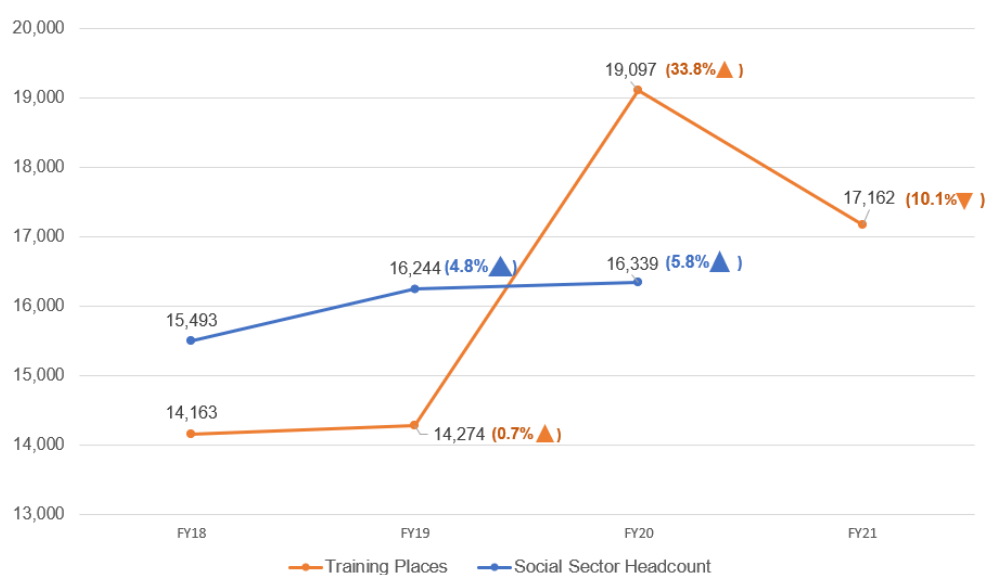


OUTCOME 2: A COMPETENT AND RELEVANT COMMUNITY OF PROFESSIONALS THAT EMBRACES CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

OVERVIEW

12. Since 2003, NCSS/Social Service Institute (SSI) has rolled out a range of training and development support initiatives to encourage sector professionals to upskill and enhance their professional competencies and practice. Over the years, the sector has seen a growing focus on, and a healthy take-up of, training and development initiatives, evidenced by the increase in training places offered by SSI. SSI has also been launching an average of 43 new WSQ and non-WSQ courses annually since 2020.

Figure 11: Number of SSI Training Places Offered vis-à-vis Sector Headcount



13. The SFwSS was jointly developed by MSF, NCSS, SSG and WSG, in partnership with employers, industry associations, education and training providers and sector professionals, and launched in 2019. The SSI-led Skills Framework sub-team undertook a sector-wide Training Gap Analysis (TGA) to understand the differences between the current and desired skills proficiency required by social service professionals. The findings sought to identify key priority training areas and inform refinements to course offerings, to enhance the relevance of training and development support initiatives for more professions within the sector. Considering the many new challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, SSI conducted a dipstick study and virtual focus group discussions to re-examine the training gaps and identified key priorities to upgrade and upskill social service professionals in the sector. With these priorities determined, SSI reconstituted the Skills Framework sub-team, with representatives from various IHLs - a major

step forward in a concerted effort to address the skills gaps in the social service sector collectively.

14. The STT's initiatives have led to curriculum refinements in relevant IHL courses and development of CET programmes that closed all 19 identified priority skills gaps. The launch of the Early Intervention Continuing Professional Development Roadmap would benefit over 500 EI professionals, while ongoing collaborations with NUS and SUSS to develop professional workshops and onboarding courses would enhance the support and upskilling of the sector's Associate and Junior Psychologists.

ACHIEVEMENTS

ACHIEVEMENT 2.1: DRIVE RELEVANCE OF PET.

15. IHL representatives in the STT worked with MSF to infuse a Social Compact module into relevant courses to enhance work readiness across the social service sector. The E-course can be accessed via the respective IHLs' e-portals, and the initial version was rolled out in 2019. Separately, the Psychology sub-team mapped course outlines to the SFwSS's technical skills and competencies for Psychologists and worked with IHLs to enhance undergraduate and postgraduate Psychology modules to plug core skills gaps identified. Through the close collaboration, the National Institute of Education (NIE) revised their course content to include training on crisis intervention and a core module on Psychological Disorders. In addition, NUS launched two additional fourth-year clinical modules in their undergraduate Psychology programme in 2022: Autism Spectrum and Related Conditions and Intellectual Developmental Disorders. NUS also identified areas for further development in their Clinical Psychology Masters Programmes such as enhancing Collaborative Practices Across Disciplines and Sectors and Diversity Awareness and Management.

ACHIEVEMENT 2.2: ENHANCE AND STEER CET.

16. The Skills Framework sub-team completed a comprehensive TGA which identified and addressed 19 skills gaps through 47 courses by IHLs and the SSI. The launch of TGA was timely, coinciding with the start of the pandemic, and highlighted new skills and competency gaps within the sector. Involving more than 1,500 respondents through surveys, focus group discussions and individual interviews, TGA findings were also shared with key stakeholders and STT sub-teams, to align and tighten conclusions and proposed recommendations. To further verify the robustness of the findings, the Skills Framework sub-team worked closely with all sub-teams to re-examine and prioritise identified skills gaps, reconstituting the Skills Framework sub-team to include representatives from five IHLs, in a collective effort to address skills gaps in the sector.

Figure 12: Summary of TGA responses

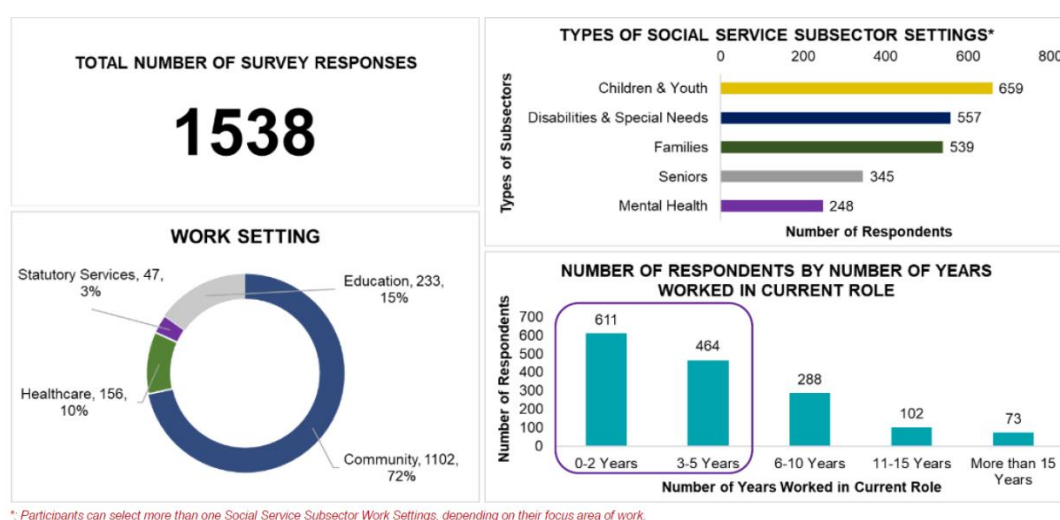
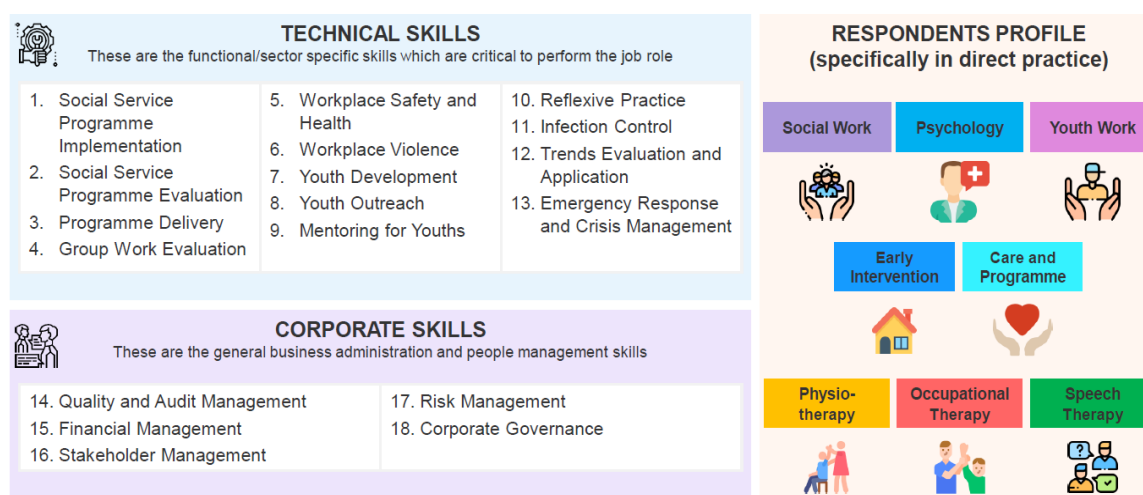


Figure 13: Summary of identified skills gaps



17. To guide EI educators on prioritised skills and knowledge needed to do their job well, as well as the training available to develop these skills, the EI sub-team developed an EI Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Roadmap. Leveraging members' experience and expertise, the EI sub-team worked on the (i) prioritisation of technical skills and competencies (TSCs) for LSEs and EI educators at different stages of their career; and (ii) mapping of existing CPD courses to each prioritised TSC. The inaugural EI CPD Roadmap was launched in December 2021.

Figure 14: EI CPD Roadmap



Figure 15: Sample EI Job Role

JOB ROLE

BEGINNING EARLY INTERVENTION EDUCATOR

As a Beginning Early Intervention Educator, you develop lesson plans and teaching materials, and deliver lessons for children under supervision. You enrich children's learning through implementing curriculum and adopting developmentally appropriate teaching and classroom management strategies. You also create quality natural learning environments and facilitate children's development and learning. You coordinate class-based activities with families, caregivers and other professionals,

and support the delivery of centre initiatives, programmes and services. You also assist in identifying new intervention methods, tools and technologies to improve centre services.

You are patient, thoughtful, calm and you enjoy working with children. You work in varied settings such as in Early Intervention centres and preschools. You also work in a transdisciplinary team in your course of work.

STAGE 1 TSCs

Child Safety & Well-Being

- Interaction & Relationship
- Child Safety & Protection
- Health, Hygiene, and Nutrition for Children

Child Learning & Development

- Child Observation

Early Intervention and Learning Support Development

- Child Functional Needs Assessment
- Early Intervention Principles and Practices

STAGE 2 TSCs

Child Learning & Development

- Diversity and Inclusion
- Classroom Management and Guidance of Children's Behaviour
- Learning Environment Design

Early Intervention and Learning Support Development

- Early Intervention Curriculum Design
- Individualised Intervention Planning and Implementation

Professional Practice and Development

- Collaborative Practices with Stakeholders across Disciplines
- Practitioner Inquiry
- Reflective Practice for Educators

Family & Community Partnership

- Situation Management with Families and Community
- Family and Caregiver Engagement

Operations and Management

- Data and Information Management


Stage 1 TSCs represent the prioritised TSCs that you may want to focus on in the first few years of taking on a new job role.

Stage 2 TSCs represent additional TSCs that are likewise important for your job role, but could be worked on once you have a firm grounding on Stage 1 TSCs.

Figure 16: Sample EI Training Courses

CORE COURSES FOR BEIEs

The table shows the key TSCs covered in each course. Some courses may also cover additional TSCs that are not reflected here. Please check with training provider for the full course description.



COURSE TITLE	COURSE PROVIDER	Child Safety and Protection	Interaction and Relationship	Child Functional Needs Assessment	Early Intervention Principles and Practices
Child First Aid Training	Singapore First Aid Training Centre/Singapore Emergency Responder Academy/Emergencies First Aid & Rescue Pte Ltd	✓			
Sector-Specific Screening Guide (SSSG)	SSI	✓			
Attuning to the Child's World	Academy of Human Development Pte Ltd		✓		
Understanding a Child's Early Development (0-7 years)	Academy of Human Development Pte Ltd		✓		
Communication in Autism	Bridging Talents			✓	
Exploring Needs of Children with Special Needs in an Early Intervention Context	RCTC				✓
Fundamentals of Autism	ARC				✓
Understanding and Supporting Behaviours in Autism	ARC				✓
Early Intervention Principles and Practices with Phonics and Phonetics	Chelsea Academia				✓

RELEVANT COURSES FOR BEIEs

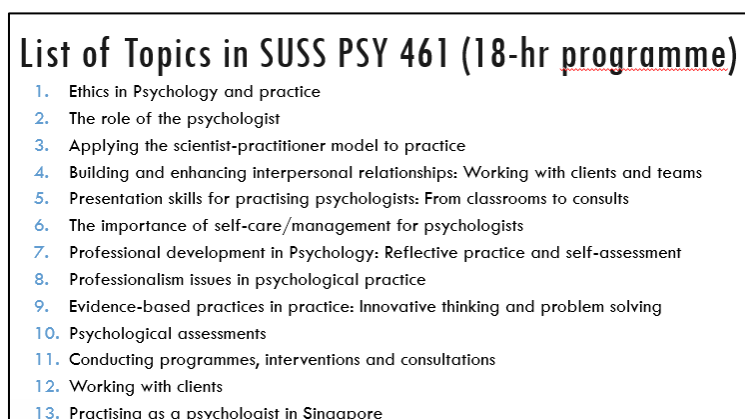
COURSE TITLE	COURSE PROVIDER	Classroom Management and Guidance of Behaviour	Individualised Intervention Planning and Implementation	Early Intervention Curriculum Design	Professional Advice and Engagement	Collaborative Practices with Stakeholders Across Disciplines	Family and Caregiver Engagement
Behaviour Management in the Classroom	Bridging Talents	✓					
Engaging Children with Special Needs in an Early Intervention Context	RCTC	✓					
Individualised Intervention Planning and Implementation Through Speech and Drama Curriculum	Chelsea Academia		✓				
Identification and Classroom Management of Preschoolers with Learning Difficulties	SPD		✓	✓			
Supporting Families and Caregivers	Academy of Human Development Pte Ltd				✓		✓
Empowering Preschool Educators with Effective Communication Skills	KLC International Institute Pte Ltd					✓	✓

18. In response to industry sentiments on the difficulties of deploying Associate Psychologists due to their skill gaps, the Psychology sub-team worked with NUS to develop a series of professional workshops to support and upskill Associate and Junior Psychologists. Sub-team members guided the development of the course structure and content, resulting in NUS's proposed offering of three professional certificates on (i) Professional Practice and Case Formulation; (ii) Special Needs Intervention; and (iii) Child Assessments and Intervention. Attendees would receive course subsidies and obtain a professional certificate upon attending two three-day workshops within the same content category. In addition, the Psychology sub-team worked with SUSS, MSF's Office of the Chief Psychologist (OCP) and the Community Psychology Hub (CPH) to offer an 18-hour onboarding programme for Associate Psychologists. The programme covers topics such as "Collaborative practice across disciplines and sectors", "Overview of social service sector and other organisations that hire psychologists in Singapore" and is supplemented by a Listening Skills Training Workshop.

Figure 17: Overview of Workshops for NUS Associate Psychologist Professional Certificates



Figure 18: List of Topics in SUSS Associate Psychologist Onboarding Course



ACHIEVEMENT 2.3: ENHANCE WORKPLACE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

19. Social Work sub-team partnered SASW to better support mid-career professionals through enhancing the SASW Supervision Service and developing a Social Work Mentorship Programme. Building on the review of the PCP-SW⁸, the sub-team noted that the accelerated Graduate Diploma in Social Work did not meet the required full supervised practice hours for accreditation. With the

⁸ The programme is now known as Career Conversion Programme for Social Work (CCP-SW).

support of NCSS, the sub-team and SASW enhanced the SASW Supervision Service to ensure that PCP-SW participants employed at SSAs that might not have sufficient in-house Social Work-trained supervisors would be able to tap on it. Drawing on feedback from PCP-SW trainees for greater career support and mentorship opportunities, the sub-team also partnered SASW to develop a Social Work Mentorship Programme to match new mid-careerist Social Workers with experienced Social Worker mentors. Since its inception in March 2021, about 20 Social Work mid-careerists have been enrolled on these schemes. In addition, sub-team members also piloted Social Work Leaders Circle (SWLC), a Community of Practice for Principal/Lead Social Workers and those in leadership positions. SWLC seeks to enable Social Work leaders to grow in their potential, increase their confidence, propel them towards greater achievements and prepare them to be future-ready. Since its introduction in 2021, about 60 Social Workers in leadership positions have benefited from the sessions.

Figure 19: Electronic Direct Mailer for first SWLC Session

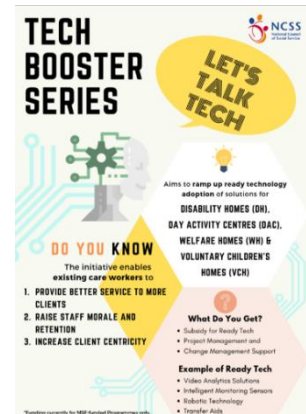


20. To uplift professional standards in the sector and provide a guiding framework for Youth Workers in their training and career development, the Youth Work sub-team partnered with the YWAS to launch Youth Work Supervision and Mentorship Schemes during the inaugural Youth Work Day on 7 May 2021. The schemes aim to support and equip Youth Workers with the necessary competencies and skills to better perform their roles, with YWAS managing the administration of both schemes. YWAS maintains a registry of approved supervisors and mentors on their website that interested supervisees may directly engage with and interested mentees may similarly apply for mentorship through the YWAS website to be paired with a suitable mentor.

OUTCOME 3: A TRANSFORMED SECTOR FOR ENHANCED SERVICE DELIVERY

OVERVIEW

21. As demand for social services grow, manpower efficiency in the sector must improve. This is particularly pressing for rank-and-file direct care roles. These roles tend to be less attractive to locals due to the nature of work such as shift duties and functions being relatively more physically demanding. We need to improve the attractiveness of such roles, while making better use of existing manpower.
22. We have targeted efforts at improving manpower efficiency and enhancing productivity through the Tech Booster⁹ and Back-to-Basics¹⁰ projects to harness the use of technology, such as rehabilitation equipment, video analytics, medicine packing and chatbots to improve service delivery. Over 100 out of 155 MSF-funded homes/centres benefitted from the projects, with a projected reduction in manpower demand of 280, amounting to about \$12.6mil of manpower savings from 2019 to 2023, over 30% productivity gain and 80% client/staff satisfaction.



ACHIEVEMENTS

ACHIEVEMENT 3.1: SUPPORT NEW MODES OF SERVICE DELIVERY.

23. The Counselling sub-team observed that there was a growing demand for remote counselling with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This was evident in the call volume for the National CARE Hotline as well as the CPH's online counselling hotline. With remote counselling becoming more common, the sub-team developed guidelines to support the professionals conducting counselling remotely. This project was co-led by members who oversee remote counselling services. They were thus well-placed to scope and review the content for the guidelines which have since been shared with MSF-funded agencies that conduct remote counselling.

⁹ Tech Booster projects enhance operational efficiency in manpower-intensive MSF-funded Homes/Centres through technology adoption [for Welfare Homes, Adult Disability Homes, Children's Disability Homes, Day Activity Centres, Voluntary Children's Homes and Sheltered Workshops].

¹⁰ Back-to-Basics projects enhance productivity and job satisfaction of Therapists, Social Workers and Youth Workers through job/process redesign and technology adoption [for Therapy Hubs, Family Service Centres and Integrated Service Providers (ISPs)].

ACHIEVEMENT 3.2: SHARING OF BEST PRACTICES.

24. NCSS's Sector Capability & Transformation Group led the development of the Industry Digital Plan for Social Services (IDPSS), which was launched in July 2021. More than 200 participants consisting of SSAs from various sub-sectors, and eco-system partners, came together to ideate and provide inputs to the plan. The IDPSS provides systematic guidance on how SSAs can assess and accelerate their digitalisation to support their transformation journey. One of the focus areas within the IDPSS is "Digital Talent and Leadership", and the cross-sharing with STT allowed NCSS to encourage SSAs to optimise the value of technology by improving adoption of solutions, promoting digital literacy and competency, and driving an agile and data-driven culture. Members also noted that SSAs could refer to the Digital Skills Guide to upskill employees with the relevant role-specific skill sets to support their digital transformation plans.



Industry Digital Plan
for Social Services
2021 – 2024

25. The Therapy Sub-team arranged for AWWA and SG Enable to share on the Holistic Care Approach in EI Services, to promote awareness of trans-disciplinary practice. Given the wide range of collaborative practices and the diverse needs of various sub-sectors and programmes requiring different approaches, the STT recognised the value in helping the sector understand and apply such practices. Going beyond awareness and sharing, the STT will commence a workstream in the new term with the aim of creating greater understanding of collaborative practices and potentially providing guidelines to the sector on how to implement suitable collaborative practices.

ACHIEVEMENT 3.3: ENCOURAGE JOB REDESIGN AND MANPOWER OPTIMISATION.

26. The Social Work sub-team adapted the concept of Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) for Senior Social Work Associates (SSWAs) to facilitate career progression for Social Work Associates. This initiative also sought to better optimise manpower within the Social Work profession to enhance the quality of care to service users through the right-siting of skills sets. The sub-team envisaged that competent SSWAs could take on some roles of Social Workers, rendering the latter to dedicate their expertise to more complex cases. Gleaning learnings of counterparts from the healthcare sector, the Social Work sub-team developed and iterated a list of EPAs, focusing on the key responsibilities of the Social Worker job role. The EPAs list the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform independently as an SSWA. The sub-team also developed the career pathway and skills map for SSWAs, consulting multiple stakeholders including representatives from SSAs, Hospitals, Community Care Organisations, Post-Secondary Institutions and IHLs. In the second term of the STT, the sub-team will continue to work out the implementation details of the EPAs.

27. Similarly, the Therapy sub-team developed the Entrustable Therapy Tasks Framework for Therapy Assistant/Aides (TAs). Working with NCSS's Digitalisation Programmes team and a team of consultants, the sub-team developed a framework for Therapists to assess the competencies of TAs and entrust therapy tasks to TAs who have demonstrated the necessary skills in centre-based and residential-based services for adults with disabilities. This framework was piloted at four different SSAs, and learning points were incorporated before the framework was published for the use of the sector at large. Through the framework, Therapists could systematically enable their TAs to carry out more rehabilitative activities, thereby improve the efficiency of both Therapists and TAs.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

28. The STT has strengthened partnership and co-creation between policymakers, SSAs, professionals and training providers, enhancing the collective focus on manpower and skills impacting the social service sector. There is a continued need for tripartite collaboration to build on the momentum and partnership arising from the first term of the STT, and the STT will continue its work into the second term from May 2022 to April 2025.



29. In its second term, the STT will continue to drive efforts to promote collaborative practices to improve service delivery, enhance retention efforts of sector professionals, and improve PET and CET to address skills gaps and upskill the sector's manpower. The STT will explore stackable learning pathways and milestone programmes to further strengthen the career tracks for the various professions in the sector. In addition, it will set up a workgroup to develop a new Counselling track in the SFwSS that seeks to outline occupation and job roles, career pathways and competencies for the Counselling profession. The STT will also expand its representation to include a wider spectrum of IHLs and SSAs who are key partners in specific sub-sectors. In so doing, the STT hopes to gain greater insights and perspectives from a more diverse range of organisations that may face different manpower challenges and promote sustained and positive outcomes for all SSAs in the sector.
30. The STT would like to place on record its gratitude and appreciation to everyone who has contributed in one way or another to the STT's work. In particular, the STT is grateful to past members Mr Sim Gim Guan, Mr Alfred Tan, Mr Sam Kuna, Mdm Rahayu Mohamad, Mr Leng Chin Fai, Ms Long Chey May, Mr Clarence Ti, Prof Ling San and Prof Tsui Kai Chong. Their views and insights have played a significant part in the STT's achievements.

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Past and present STT sub-team leads, members and Secretariat team

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