

Community Chest
report for

Philanthropists

2021/2022

Mental Health Landscape

Executive Summary

Mental health conditions can affect individuals of any age, education, lifestyle and income level. While intervention is one step towards recovery, it is not a once-off action. The process can be tough and the road to recovery can be long.

This report seeks to inform and draw insights on the state of the mental health in Singapore.

According to the Singapore Mental Health Study initiated in 2016, 1 in 7 people in Singapore has experienced a mood, anxiety or alcohol disorder in their lifetime.

This report also covers the initiatives and opportunities for donors and philanthropic foundations to work together with Community Chest, to create positive and impactful changes to address the challenges faced by the sector.

These include empowering users for personal recovery, reducing employment barriers, advocating for social inclusion, supporting youth mental health, and suicide prevention.

The National Council of Social Service's 2021 Study on Public Attitudes towards Persons with Mental Health Conditions found that public attitudes improved and awareness towards persons with mental health conditions increased from an earlier survey done in 2017. The COVID-19 pandemic also contributed to driving up the awareness of mental health matters.

Initiatives to increase awareness and knowledge of mental health matters will continue to be of relevance to address misconceptions and prevent stigma. Beyond the Label, a national movement the National Council of Social Service launched in 2018 to address stigma and improve public attitudes towards persons with mental

health conditions, will engage different target groups as informed by the 2021 Study to nudge behavioural shifts and empower individuals to be more involved in Beyond the Label movement and enhance their capability to support others in mental distress. The National Council of Social Service will also work through key touchpoints including employer associations, chambers of commerce and schools to reinforce knowledge on mental health matters and improve overall awareness. Towards enhancing employment opportunities of persons with mental health conditions and workplace inclusiveness, the National Council of Social Service will develop more resources for employers, create support structures for employees and communicate success stories of inclusive employment.

As the National Council of Social Service and Community Chest take on an active role in bridging the critical issues mentioned in this report, there remains an inherent need for contributions by philanthropic foundations to drive long-lasting social change.

These include:

- Scaling the impact by co-funding existing initiatives.
- Sustainable funding model to enhance service providers' capability to innovate and pilot alternative initiatives.
- Extending resources beyond monetary terms in the form of expertise, experience and networks to advance the programmes' success.

Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge departments in the National Council of Social Service that have provided support, and the following partners for their generosity in sharing their experiences and information:

Mr Hsieh Fu Hua
Founder, BinjaiTree

Ms Pearlyn Phau
Philanthropist and Vice-Chairman,
Community Chest Committee

Ms Raman Sidhu
Advisor,
Community Chest Report for Philanthropists 2021/2022

Samaritans of Singapore

Singapore Anglican Community Services

Methodology

This report is put together using information from:

- The National Council of Social Service's Services Landscape for Mental Health
- The National Council of Social Service's Monitoring and Evaluation statistics
- Interviews with donors, service providers and service users

Scan QR code for more references



No part of the publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without the permission of the publisher.

All information is correct at time of publishing.

Contents

1

Executive Summary

2

**Acknowledgement
Methodology**

3

Contents

4

Foreword

5

Overview

Why the Mental Health Sector?
The Mental Health Landscape

6

Mental Health by Life Stages

Children and Young Adults
Adults
Seniors

12

Our Impact

Our Network
Our Strategy
Transforming Lives
Our Giving and
Accountability Cycle

28

ONEfor10

About
Conversations with
ONEfor10 Philanthropists

35

Contact Us

Foreword

Dear Philanthropist,

We hope you have found useful insights from our inaugural Report for Philanthropists: Children with Special Needs and Youth-at-Risk. In this edition, we will highlight statistics, trends and insights of the mental health landscape, as well as the impact of philanthropic capital on the sector.

With growing anxiety over Singapore’s economic outlook and continued stress brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic, the incidence of mental health-related conditions have increased significantly. This, in turn, places the burden on social service agencies to provide support to those in need.

As we continue to lend support to communities in need and build a caring and inclusive society, partnerships with like-minded philanthropists such as yourself, to support critical programmes and advocate for long-term social change become more important than ever. We hope to inspire and encourage more philanthropists to join us as we support the recovery journeys of persons with mental health conditions and empower them to lead dignified lives.

We invite you to connect with Community Chest to co-create sustainable solutions together for a more caring and inclusive society.

Phillip Tan
Chairman, Community Chest

Charmaine Leung
Managing Director, Community Chest

Overview

Why the Mental Health Sector?

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought issues of mental health and mental well-being to the forefront. With insights and findings provided by the National Council of Social Service and Community Chest, this report aims to provide a detailed look at the current mental health landscape in Singapore, and the work of the National Council of Social Service and Community Chest to support and improve the services that impact the lives of persons with mental health conditions.

The main challenge that the mental health sector faces is unwavering support, because the road to recovery is costly and long, often taking a decade or even a lifetime.

Mr Hsieh Fu Hua
Founder, BinjaiTree

The Mental Health Landscape

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual can realise his or her potential, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, as well as contribute to the community.

A mental health condition is characterised by clinically significant disturbances in a person’s behaviour: a thinking or feeling that suggests dysfunction in psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning.

Based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), an identified mental health condition must satisfy three criteria:



Deviance
serious deviance from social norms of the culture.



Distress
significant personal distress in social, occupational or other important activities.



Dysfunction
behaviour which interferes with the ability of a person to function effectively.

Mental health conditions can affect individuals at any stage in life. It is also worthy to note that various contributing factors give rise to different mental health conditions.

The next section will highlight the general landscape and trends related to mental health by life stages.

Mental Health by Life Stages

Children and Young Adults

There is an increased awareness of mental health conditions such as depression among children and youths. According to reports by the Institute of Mental Health, 12.5% of Singaporean children aged 6 to 12 years have emotional or behavioural issues. These figures are comparable with recent studies that revealed a prevalence rate between 9% and 16% of overseas children having mental health conditions.

From 2017 to 2019, suicides among those aged 10 to 29 years increased from 12 in 2017 to 22 and 23 in 2018 and 2019 respectively. This near two-fold increase in suicides is a symptom of a deeper issue that needs to be addressed.

The Samaritans of Singapore has observed that the difficulties young people have coping with their mental health often relate to factors like struggles to manage challenging or romantic situations, cyberbullying, stress with studies or work, unemployment, financial worries, family life, and social interaction difficulties. The National Council of Social Service supports Samaritans of Singapore in providing help to those who are emotionally-distressed or facing suicidal situations.

The NCSS-MSF REACH study observed that for every additional adversity experienced by a child, the likelihood that he or she develops mental health problems increases by around 1.5 times. Resilience and Empowerment amidst Adversities of Childhood (REACH) is a 5-wave longitudinal study to understand the trajectories of children and young persons who have been exposed to early adversities.

Based on the 2018 DQ Impact Report, an annual report summarising the state of online safety and digital citizenship of 8 to 12 years old around the world, 54% of children aged 8 to 12 years are exposed to at least one cyber risk in Singapore. Cyber risk involves cyberbullying, video game addiction, offline meetings with strangers and online sexual behaviour. More than half of those exposed to online risks have been victimised through cyberbullying in the past year.

Children and Young Adults

The 2016 Singapore Mental Health Study found that those aged between 18 and 34 years were the most vulnerable group—1 in 5 would have experienced a mental disorder in their lifetime. In other words, with an estimated youth population of 830,000 in Singapore, more than 160,000 youths will experience a mental health condition in their lifetimes. The number of suicide deaths amongst those aged 20 to 29 years old remains highest compared to all other age groups; suicide deaths increased from 61 in 2017 to 72 and 71 in 2018 and 2019 respectively. This was an increase of about 16% across the 3 years.

From 2017 to 2019, an average of 12,600 patients aged 15 to 34 years sought treatment for mental health conditions at public hospitals each year.

Ministry of Health

The Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT)—a community-based youth mental health outreach and assessment initiative—received around 1,800 referrals and conducted assessments for about 770 youths in 2019. This was 36 times more referrals and 15 times more assessments than in 2009 when the initiative was first launched. There were also 4,124 calls to Samaritans of Singapore from those aged 20 to 29 years between April 2019 to March 2020 compared to 3,396 in the same period the previous year.

With digital tools being the facilitator for youths to seek help, communicate distress and access services, there is a need to increase accessibility of help-seeking through technology.

Other essentials required to effectively manage recovery include:



Holistic interventions that address health and social needs.



An ecosystem which involves empowering the persons with mental health conditions.



Working with their families and the community to enhance the support network.

The 2018 study on Children and Youth’s Quality of Life also found that young persons with mental health conditions had significantly lower quality of life scores than their peers, highlighting the detrimental effect of mental health condition on children and youth, and the importance of early intervention.

For young persons without any health or mental health conditions, psychological well-being was also identified as one of the most important factors to their overall quality of life.

The study on the Employment of Young People with Mental Health Conditions: Making it Work, revealed that the employment barriers for young people with mental health conditions are diverse and include individual, interpersonal and systemic factors. The most frequently mentioned employment barriers in this study were interpersonal and systemic in the form of stigma and discrimination towards people with mental health conditions. Employers cited time, resource, and information constraints as the main limitations to embracing a fully inclusive workplace for persons in recovery. The National Council of Social Service works closely with partners like Singapore Anglican Community Services to provide various services to integrate persons with mental health conditions in the workplace effectively.

Most major mental illnesses occur by the age of 26 and begin when a person is between the age of 18 and 29.

National Council of Social Service
Understanding the Quality of Life of Adults with Mental Health Issues, 2016

The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the employment market will likely have long-term effects on the mental health landscape in Singapore. Even before the pandemic, the unemployment rate of persons with mental health conditions at 8.3% was high compared to that of the general population at 4.8%. In 2020, the proportion of university graduates who found permanent full-time employment 6 months after their final exams dropped by more than 10% in 2020 compared to 2019. In reducing overall employment opportunities, the pandemic has also created greater challenges for persons with mental health conditions to find employment.

Adults

Commonly known as the “sandwich generation”, a majority of adults are responsible for both their young children and aging parents. They commonly experience isolation and depression, which are related to depressive disorder—the most common mental health condition in Singapore. Nearly 1 in 16 experienced it at some point in their lives.

It is also worrying to note that it affects women more than men, and half of those who suffered from depressive disorder had a chronic physical illness. Their other shared stressors include employment issues, financial worries, family relationships, physical health, and psychological impairment.

1 in 7 people in Singapore have experienced a mood, anxiety or alcohol use disorder in their lifetime.

**Singapore Mental Health Study
2016**

However, only less than a third of those who suffer seek help. This is related to public misconception that persons with mental health conditions are “weak-willed” because people often misunderstand that they “could have recovered if they wanted to”. The National Council of Social Service works closely with partners on campaigns to correct public misconceptions towards persons with mental health conditions.

With the ongoing pandemic, even persons without prior mental health conditions could be impacted. Research has shown that outbreaks can have profound psychological impact on the population, precipitating new psychiatric

symptoms in people without mental health conditions, aggravating the condition of those with pre-existing mental health conditions, and causing distress to the caregivers of affected individuals. The general population whose lifestyles and livelihoods are disrupted may also experience heightened stress as they now have less personal space and have to juggle between domestic duties and work.

Economists have predicted that the number of retrenchments in Singapore in 2020 could fall between 45,600 and 200,000 despite stimulus packages. In comparison, there were 10,690 retrenchments in 2019, around 40,000 retrenchments in the 2008 to 2009 global financial crisis, and around 30,000 retrenchments in the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we are already noticing that job loss has taken an emotional and mental toll on individuals, with psychologists and social workers seeing more distressed individuals seeking help due to retrenchment or imminent job loss.

Based on the 2015 study on Vulnerable Adults’ Quality of Life Study by the National Council of Social Service, social inclusion has the greatest impact on improving the quality of life and the recovery of persons with mental health conditions. However, only 31% of respondents felt socially included, and only 42% felt socially accepted.

Counselling services can help individuals and families manage their emotional and psychological well-being as they help clients cope with interpersonal, mental health, financial issues and others, as well as reduce distress. Some of the counselling programmes funded by the National Council of Social Service also saw a year-on-year increase in the number of people seeking counselling between February to July 2019 and February to July 2020.

Seniors

Given our rapidly ageing population the number of seniors living alone is rising. 1 in 3 seniors are experiencing loneliness. At an estimated 11.4% reporting depression symptoms, seniors are also at a higher risk of suffering from mental health conditions. All these point to the need for strong support for our seniors.

Recent study reported the estimated prevalence of depression symptoms among the community-dwelling elderly in Singapore to be 11.4%.

**Well-being of the Singapore Elderly Study
April 2016**

Common reasons cited by this group include lack of social network and social participation, the fear of becoming a burden to family and friends, impairments to daily functioning due to physical challenges, and deteriorating mental health. Singapore’s demographic shift to smaller family units can also lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness. All these factors may contribute to lower life satisfaction and an inability to live life as they knew, which can lead to mood swings and anxiety.

Furthermore, a cultural shift towards a digital lifestyle may also mean that seniors who are less technologically savvy are unaware of the resources available to them to support their mental health.

Our Network

Who are involved, and what are their roles?

National Council of Social Service

- Provides community funding (via Community Chest) and builds capability and capacity of social service agencies to meet underserved, unmet and emerging needs.
- Promotes social inclusion.
- Facilitates adoption of empowerment principles and recovery-orientated practices in mental health services.

Ministry of Health

- Co-leads the Interagency Taskforce on Mental Health and Well-being.
- Funds hospitals, polyclinics, nursing homes and mental health residential facilities.

Institute of Mental Health

- Provides a comprehensive range of psychiatric, rehabilitative and counselling services.

Agency for Integrated Care

- Coordinates referrals.
- Develops and implements community mental health service.

Ministry of Social and Family Development

- Co-leads the Interagency Taskforce on Mental Health and Well-being.
- Leads the Youth Mental Well-being Network.
- Develops and implements services for vulnerable children and youth.

Tripartite Alliance for Fair & Progressive Employment Practices

- Prevents workplace discrimination.
- Promotes the adoption of fair, responsible and progressive employment practices.

Ministry of Education

- Promotes mental wellness and resilience building for students.
- Introduced Character and Citizenship Education curriculum on mental health literacy for teachers to teach students.

Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth / National Youth Council

- Promotes youth mental well-being and social inclusion.

Health Promotion Board

- Promotes mental wellness.

Our Impact

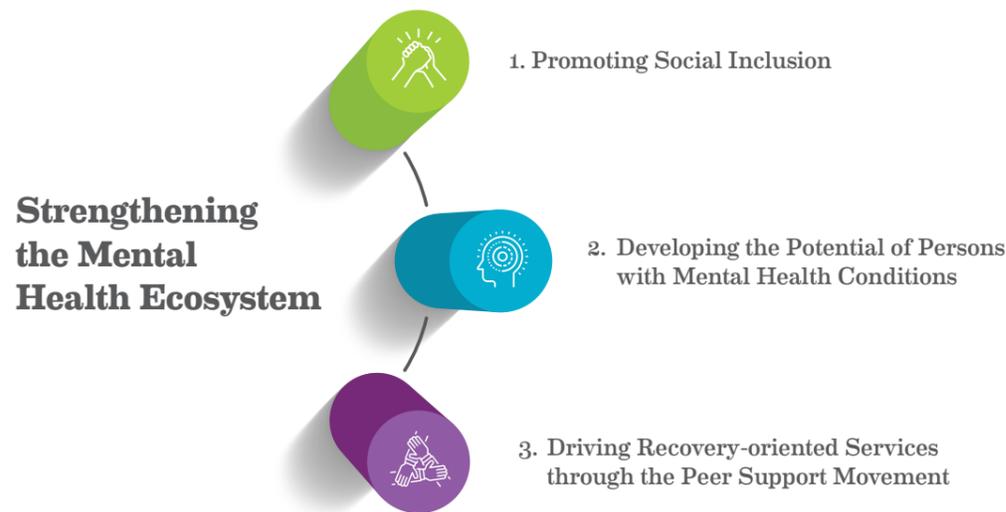
Our strategy

How we work together.

The National Council of Social Service is the umbrella body of more than 470 member social service agencies in Singapore and believes in taking a whole-of-society, people, private, public (3P) approach in addressing issues to meet clients' multi-faceted needs in a way that is empowering. It collaborates with key stakeholders such as Institute of Mental Health, Agency for Integrated Care, social service agencies and ground-up groups, corporates, and individuals with mental health conditions. Together, we strengthen the mental health ecosystem through three main areas, as shown below.

The National Council of Social Service refines its approach to be in tune with dynamic changes in the ecosystem and the community's needs. For example, besides supporting those already having mental health conditions, there is a need to address the challenges of those who are at risk of developing mental health conditions, such as caregivers.

Based on a local study of 150 caregivers sampled from 3 outpatient clinics of a local mental health hospital over a period of 6 months, 1 in 3 caregivers were distressed, and 1 in 3 found stigma upsetting. Caregivers also experienced both objective (e.g. missing days at work, difficulty concentrating on normal activities) and subjective burden (e.g. feeling trapped by their caregiving situation, feeling guilty based on perception that they have not done enough for their care recipient). These experiences reflect the impact of caregiving on caregivers' mental health. The National Council of Social Service's research on Quality of Life of Caregivers which will be published in FY2022, and connection to the ground would also help provide deeper insights on what needs to be addressed.



1. Promoting Social Inclusion

Beyond the Label, a nation-wide movement to fight mental health stigma and promote the inclusion of persons with mental health conditions in society, was first launched in September 2018.

In 2018, the theme was to raise awareness of mental health stigma, followed by revealing mental health stigma in relationships in 2019, and finally the most recent campaign in 2020, to support Singaporeans in overcoming self-stigma and seeking help early for their mental health.

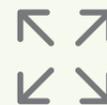
The movement adopts a tiered strategy to achieve a multiplier effect and ensures that anti-stigma efforts continue beyond campaign, through the following:



Engaging the community through arts, music and conversations.



Catalysing and developing synergistic partnership with public agencies, social service agencies, non-profit organisations and corporates.



Expanding sphere of influence across People, Public and Private sectors.



Garnering movement supporters through media and key opinion leaders.

In order to address stigma of mental health conditions among youths, the Youth Alliance, which is a network of agencies that share a common interest in addressing issues of youth mental health, is also mobilised as agents of change to provide support and encourage early help-seeking behaviour.



2. Developing the Potential of Persons with Mental Health Conditions

The National Council of Social Service looks at enhancing employment opportunities for persons with mental health conditions through a three-pronged approach:

(i) Enhance Public Awareness and Acceptance

The National Council of Social Service initiates campaigns to correct public misconceptions on the work abilities of persons with mental health conditions. These campaigns showcase their success stories and feature inclusive employers through various media platforms.

(ii) Enhance Work Readiness, Job Sustainability, and (iii) Workplace Inclusiveness

To integrate persons with mental health conditions in the workplace effectively, the National Council of Social Service partnered Singapore Anglican Community Services to implement the Integrated Employment Services.

The Integrated Employment Services provides a range of services such as job training, placement and support. It also offers workplace support through Peer Support Specialists and counsellor to employees with or at risk of having mental health conditions. The Integrated Employment Services also provides training and advisory to the business community on implementing inclusive practices to integrate persons with mental health conditions in the workplace.

Programmes supported by Community Chest

Integrated Employment Services by Singapore Anglican Community Services	
Programme Focus: • Recovering persons in search of employment.	
Input/Activities	Training to gain employability skills. Internship and employment opportunities. Job support upon placement.
Output	Employment support for >310. >280 Employed. Internship and employment opportunities with 43 companies.
Outcomes (annual indicators)	>70% gained/improved employability skills. >25% sustained employment for at least nine months.
Impact (mid to long-term social change)	Recovering persons gained independence and integrated into society with dignity.
Programme Focus: • Companies looking to promote workplace mental wellness. • Companies hiring and supporting persons with mental health conditions.	
Input/Activities	Corporate outreach. Corporate workshops and training. Face-to-face and phone counselling support.
Output	25 companies with >9,600 employees have access to workplace mental wellness resources.
Outcomes (annual indicators)	Trained 1,652 supervisors and co-workers on how to support PMHCs through SACS Integrated Employment Services (as at FY20). 1,990 PMHCs were placed in employment (as at FY20). 994 sustained jobs for at least 6 months (as at FY20).
Impact (mid to long-term social change)	Employees access an inclusive (mental health) workplace. Employees with conditions sustain employment while seeking help.

Challenges that persons with mental health conditions and their employers face are multifaceted. In response, the National Council of Social Service convened a Collective Impact workgroup to co-create solutions with stakeholders in the employment space to enhance the employment opportunities for persons in recovery.

The workgroup comprises members from the National Council of Social Service, Singapore Anglican Community Services, Singapore Association for Mental Health, Institute of Mental Health, Agency for Integrated Care, and Ministry of Social and Family Development.

Some of the areas that this workgroup looks at include:



Enhancing referral and case management to meet the individual needs for recovery.



Developing and streamlining tiered vocational training models and pathway to support individuals with varying level of job readiness and needs.



Strengthening inter-agency collaboration and shared measurement.

To enhance the quality of life and independence of persons with mental health conditions, the National Council of Social Service develops and funds programmes that equip them with social and life skills, and coping mechanisms. The programmes aim to help persons with mental health conditions reintegrate back into the community and live their lives to the fullest potential.

Programmes supported by Community Chest

SAMH Insight Centre by Singapore Association for Mental Health	
Programme Focus	Persons requiring counselling support.
Input/Activities	Community-based mental health awareness activities. Face-to-face and phone counselling support.
Output	122 community outreach activities. >2,200 helpline calls were attended. >990 counselling sessions.
Outcomes (annual indicators)	>9,300 members of the public reached. 90% who received counselling felt or coped better with their issues.
Impact (mid to long-term social change)	Public awareness. Recovering/Recovered persons are better able to cope with their issues and are living to their fullest potential.
SAMH Oasis Day Centre by Singapore Association for Mental Health	
Programme Focus	Persons requiring psychiatric rehabilitation.
Input/Activities	Psychiatric rehabilitation activities. Day activity programmes such as outings, social skills training, etc.
Output	59 persons underwent psychiatric rehabilitation.
Outcomes (annual indicators)	>90% were not hospitalised in the past 6 months while under the programme. >70% achieved new goals that promote social integration.
Impact (mid to long-term social change)	Participants are better able to cope with their conditions and are living to their fullest potential.
SAMH Group Homes by Singapore Association for Mental Health	
Programme Focus	Recovering persons in need of a place to stay while gaining independence in the community.
Input/Activities	Provide community-based shelter. Counselling and support services. Management and recovery training.
Output	>45 people lived in the community.
Outcomes (annual indicators)	>90% were in employment during their stay. >80% not hospitalised due to relapse.
Impact (mid to long-term social change)	Recovering persons are better able to cope with their conditions and are living to their fullest potential.



3. Driving Recovery-oriented Services through the Peer Support Movement

As part of the strategy to drive recovery-oriented services, the National Council of Social Service launched the Peer Support Specialist programme to develop the potential of persons with mental health conditions.

Peer Support Specialists are individuals empowered to leverage their lived experiences to support others on their recovery journeys. They work in multi-disciplinary teams and complement mental health professionals.

(i) Apprenticeship Scheme

This scheme provides Peer Support Specialists with training allowances for up to 9 months which would allow employers to assess job fit of the Peer Support Specialists prior to considering formal employment. The scheme is currently administered by AMKFSC Community Services.

(ii) Consultancy for Peer Roles

Taking a systemic approach, the National Council of Social Service has provided consultancy services to equip organisations with the necessary competencies, framework and structures to develop recovery-oriented services to empower service users and integrate peer roles.

Since its launch in 2017, the National Council of Social Service has supported 12 programmes in implementing recovery oriented practices that empowered service users and better integrate Peer Support Specialists. Through the consultancy, agencies learned how to co-produce services together with Peer Support Specialists and incorporate the views of service users in organisational policies and processes. Agencies were guided on how to set clear roles and boundaries for Peer Support Specialists, putting in

place induction, supervision and mentoring structure to integrate the Peer Support Specialists.

- AMKFSC Community Services (Mindcare)
- Club HEAL
- Institute of Mental Health Emergency Unit
- Institute of Mental Health Slow Stream Rehab
- Institute of Mental Health Specialist Outpatient Clinic
- Institute of Mental Health Ward 32A
- Institute of Mental Health Ward 33B
- Resilience Collective
- Sengkang Hospital
- Silver Ribbon Singapore
- Singapore Anglican Community Services Clubhouse
- Singapore Anglican Community Services Employment Team

(iii) Peer Support Specialist Funding Scheme

To support agencies in hiring and incorporating peer support specialists in service delivery, the National Council of Social Service launched the Peer Support Specialist Funding Scheme in December 2020. The Scheme provides up to 24 months of tiered funding support for new job roles created for peer support specialists. Since its launch, the National Council of Social Service has been able to mobilise the support from 5 partner agencies.

- Limitless Ltd
- Psalt Care
- Resilience Collective
- Singapore Association for Mental Health
- TOUCH Community Services

Programmes supported by Community Chest

Peer Support Specialist programme by the National Council of Social Service (Pilot ended in FY2019)	
Programme Focus	A person with a diagnosed mental health condition that has stabilised and keen to be trained in supporting others on their recovery journeys.
Input/ Activities	180-hour training to provide structured support through the sharing of recovery stories. Practicum to apply knowledge.
Output	113 certified as Peer Support Specialists.
Outcomes (annual indicators)	45 employed as Peer Support Specialists.
Impact (mid to long-term social change)	Recovered persons gained independence and integrated into society with dignity.

Our HEALing Voice by Club HEAL	
Programme Focus	Recovered persons looking to offer informal support to persons in recovery.
Input/ Activities	6-month skills-based training. Apply skills and knowledge by sharing recovery stories and provide informal support.
Output	>20 recovered persons underwent the 6-month training. >15 sharing platforms were curated.
Outcomes (annual indicators)	45 employed as Peer Support Specialists.
Impact (mid to long-term social change)	Recovered persons gained independence and integrated into society with dignity.

(iv) Conceptualising a Peer-driven Organisation

The National Council of Social Service mooted the idea of a peer-driven organisation to actualise empowerment and promote recovery. Riding on background research undertaken by the National Council of Social Service, BinjaiTree and Caregivers Alliance Limited then founded Resilience Collective.

The National Council of Social Service helped lay the foundation and introduced concepts of co-production and recovery-focused practices. The Resilience Collective then built upon the foundation to empower the mental health community.

Transforming Lives:

An interview with the Samaritans of Singapore on Emotional Support

Samaritans of Singapore is a key social service programme which Community Chest has been fundraising for since 1984. Samaritans of Singapore is dedicated to providing confidential emotional support to individuals facing a crisis, thinking about or affected by suicide.

Its work focuses on crisis intervention and suicide prevention. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the mental health of many in Singapore. During this time, Samaritans of Singapore has attended to 20-30% more calls on their 24-hour Hotline. However, suicide is a taboo topic with which people do not want to be associated. As such, getting funding for the services Samaritans of Singapore provides has always been a challenge.

The role that Community Chest plays in helping SOS achieve its vision is important. Funds raised by Community Chest will be put into good use to build our capacity and capability.

Samaritans of Singapore

Samaritans of Singapore currently runs five main initiatives:



A 24-hour Hotline
(managed by volunteers) to provide a listening ear for those who seek help and bring them to a “safe level”.



CAREmail
for those who prefer writing email to talking on the phone.



24-hour Care Text
a newly launched text-based service that is most popular among the younger service users (under 29 years).



Provision of counselling support
for clients who have higher suicide risk and willing to seek help.



Provision of counselling support
and care to those who lost family members to suicide.

Manpower is a key challenge in supporting existing programmes due to the resource intensive needs of a 24/7 service requirement and long training passage. Samaritan of Singapore’s services are preventive in nature, so the impact of their work and service is difficult to visualise and measure. Success is often measured by the decline in the number of clients, as they shift to lower risk or have received appropriate treatment for their condition.

The vision for the future is to provide an ecosystem for those in crisis. This will require training more counsellors in crisis work, forming more partnerships, and implementing better technology to increase access and improve service delivery.

Samaritans of Singapore and the entire social service sector depend heavily on charity and government funding for their operations. Funds for Samaritans of Singapore comes primarily from Community Chest. The sustained funding enables them to build new capacity and capability to continue being a lifeline to anyone in crisis.

Programme supported by Community Chest

Samaritans of Singapore	
Programme Focus	Any individual facing a crisis, an emotionally-distressed or suicidal situation.
Input/Activities	24-hour telephone service. Email befriending support. Emergency squad on 24-hour standby to provide crisis support. Face-to-face crisis counselling. Promotion of well-being and suicide prevention.
Output (FY2020)	> 47,600 calls attended to. > 8,200 email replies (with suicidal risk). > 540 counselling sessions conducted. 38 awareness and outreach talks conducted.
Outcomes (annual indicators)	Of those who provided feedback, 89% felt less distressed at the end of calls. Of those who provided feedback, 82% of the clients who corresponded through email felt less distressed.
Impact (mid to long-term social change)	Recovering persons are better able to cope with their suicidality or crises and are living to their fullest potential.

Transforming Lives:

An interview with Singapore Anglican Community Services on Support Network

Dawn* first realised she had a mental health condition in her teens but did not seek treatment. She continued to experience the symptoms until she entered university, where following a doctor recommendation, Dawn received help from a university counsellor. The sessions with the counsellor helped her a lot. However, the sessions stopped following her graduation.

A year into her first job, she experienced a major breakdown. After returning to work, she relapsed again. She tried working part-time to assess if her symptoms would improve. However, they did not. Dawn realised she needed to seek professional help once more.

At her psychologist's office, Dawn came across a brochure on Integrated Employment Services by Singapore Anglican Community Services. She was immediately drawn to it as her main goal was to seek help and regain employment.

She enrolled in the Integrated Employment Services programme, which proved to be very helpful. Dawn learned ways to manage her symptoms, and gain employment successfully.

Having benefited greatly from the Integrated Employment Services programmes, Dawn was inspired to take up new challenges. She signed up for the Peer Support Specialist Programme, and successfully graduated with the certification from the National Council of Social Service. Now, she volunteers at Singapore Anglican Community Services as a Peer Support Specialist, encouraging others experiencing mental health conditions with her experience, and providing practical, life-changing assistance to them.

*Name has been changed to protect privacy.

Singapore Anglican Community Services provides programmes for persons with mental health conditions through five services: Residential Rehabilitation Services, Day Rehabilitation Services, Community Intervention Team, Psychiatric Sheltered Home, and Integrated Employment Services. The Integrated Employment Services, in particular, receives a grant from Community Chest to focus its employment efforts.

Its key objectives are to:



Enable successful return to the workforce.

Provide advice and assistance to help them gain employment. Work with employers to create a workplace that helps recovery.



Establish collaboration and partnership.

Collaborate and partner available community resources to support and empower persons with mental health conditions in their recovery.



Identify vulnerable people earlier.

Entrenched habits and thoughts are much harder to rectify. This makes their recovery longer and more challenging.



Eliminate the stigma at work and in society.

Greater understanding and acceptance will encourage people with mental health conditions to seek help and do so early.

“

For nearly two years, my rehabilitation counsellor has diligently assisted me in many aspects of my journey to cope with my mental health issues and reintegrate into the workforce. I started with Integrated Employment Services' Work Integrated Skills Training (WIST) programme, progressed to supported employment in retail and subsequently to open employment as a technician in a local healthcare company which I am still a staff member today. My rehabilitation counsellor's constant encouragement and support have motivated me to persevere despite the few setbacks encountered. Through her support, I have achieved more than a year of employment and counting. I have learnt to cope with my anxiety disorder and managed to re-enter the workforce despite the challenges that COVID-19 brings.

My rehabilitation counsellor has shown me compassion and empathy, always making sure that I am well supported and guided whenever I was faced with challenging situations. Every time I expressed my concerns over issues at work, she encouraged me to be positive and made time to process the issues which have helped me tremendously. I am thankful for the support, care and concern showered upon me.

Testimonial from a Client on the Integrated Employment Services Programme.

Transforming Lives:

An interview with **Singapore Anglican Community Services** on Support Network

Integrated Employment Services Programme

Our Client's Journey



Challenges faced by Singapore Anglican Community Services

People with mental health conditions who come to Singapore Anglican Community Services are at varying recovery stages. Everyone faces different challenges. There is no “single solution”. The rehabilitation counsellor needs to understand each client and devise a plan to help them gain societal and employer acceptance. This can be a long-term journey and process.

It takes a continuous team effort between the Integrated Employment Services instructors and rehabilitation counsellors to ensure that all clients benefit in the most appropriate way. This requires highlighting areas that clients need to work on and challenging them to overcome these issues. Singapore Anglican Community Services’ counsellors keep them accountable and provide support and encouragement as they journey to recovery.

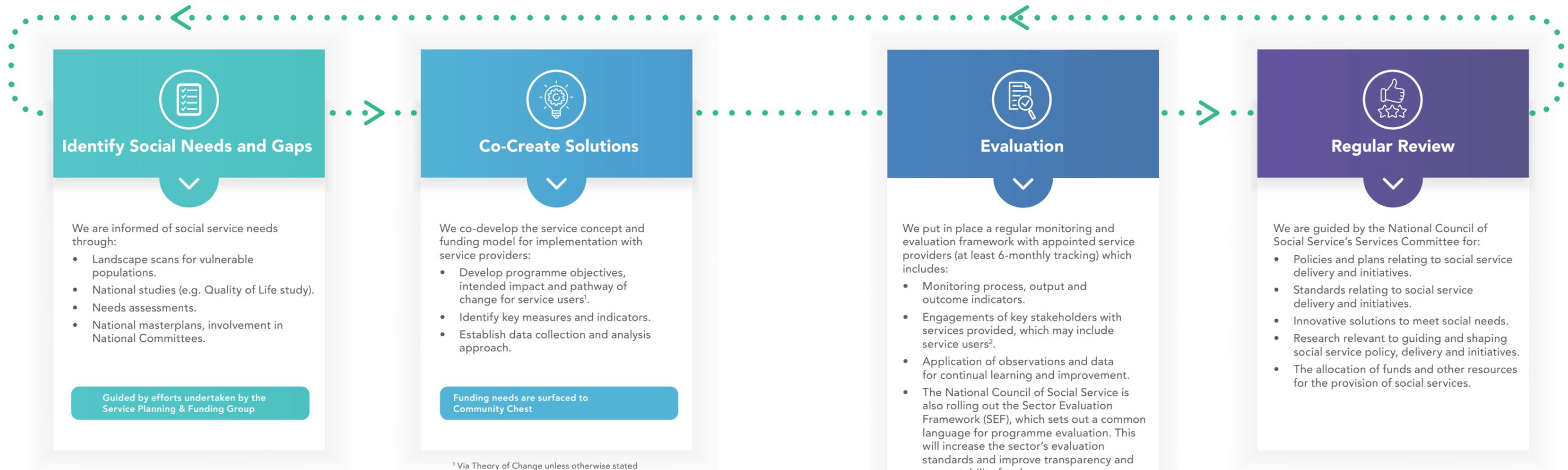
Successful Outcomes

Supportive communication is an essential element in the recovery of people with mental health conditions. Many have lost the firm support of friends or family. Singapore Anglican Community Services and its Integrated Employment Services programme provide an avenue for someone to turn to whenever they face challenges or need help in their ongoing recovery.

Listening to real-life experiences offers a better understanding of their conditions and how to cope with symptoms. Being heard and understood is life-changing for people with mental health conditions. Seeing others progressing in their recovery journey provides reassurance and motivation.

This is a support network they can turn to, where they learn to rebuild their confidence and reintegrate back to society.

Our Giving and Accountability Cycle



Identify Social Needs and Gaps

- We are informed of social service needs through:
- Landscape scans for vulnerable populations.
 - National studies (e.g. Quality of Life study).
 - Needs assessments.
 - National masterplans, involvement in National Committees.

Guided by efforts undertaken by the Service Planning & Funding Group

Co-Create Solutions

- We co-develop the service concept and funding model for implementation with service providers:
- Develop programme objectives, intended impact and pathway of change for service users¹.
 - Identify key measures and indicators.
 - Establish data collection and analysis approach.

Funding needs are surfaced to Community Chest

¹ Via Theory of Change unless otherwise stated

Evaluation

- We put in place a regular monitoring and evaluation framework with appointed service providers (at least 6-monthly tracking) which includes:
- Monitoring process, output and outcome indicators.
 - Engagements of key stakeholders with services provided, which may include service users².
 - Application of observations and data for continual learning and improvement.
 - The National Council of Social Service is also rolling out the Sector Evaluation Framework (SEF), which sets out a common language for programme evaluation. This will increase the sector's evaluation standards and improve transparency and accountability for donors.

Surface funding needs to Community Chest: Accountability reporting back to donors through reports and engagements³

² May include, but is not limited to, focus group discussions, interviews and observations where appropriate

³ Scope of engagement may vary

Regular Review

- We are guided by the National Council of Social Service's Services Committee for:
- Policies and plans relating to social service delivery and initiatives.
 - Standards relating to social service delivery and initiatives.
 - Innovative solutions to meet social needs.
 - Research relevant to guiding and shaping social service policy, delivery and initiatives.
 - The allocation of funds and other resources for the provision of social services.



National Council of Social Service
The umbrella body for over 470 member social service agencies in Singapore. It was set up with a mission to:

- Provide leadership and direction in social services.
- Enhance the capabilities of social service agencies.
- Provide strategic partnerships for social services.



Community Chest
The philanthropy and engagement arm of the National Council of Social Service. We raise funds for over 100 social service agencies for more than 200 programmes over 5 groups in need of support:

- Adult with disabilities
- Children with special needs and youth-at-risk
- Families in need of assistance
- Persons with mental health conditions
- Seniors in need of support

ONEfor10 is an initiative by Community Chest designed to create a connection between those who have the resources and abilities to give, and those who are vulnerable in our community due to various disadvantages and difficulties.

Your help makes a critical difference

Impacting lives for brighter futures

Community Chest would like to extend a private invitation for you to come on a philanthropic journey with us.

There will be opportunities for you to gain insights and fulfilling giving experiences through exclusive roundtable discussions with like-minded philanthropists and thought leaders.

We are committed to helping you identify your philanthropic interest and create a customised giving plan.

ONEfor10

Causes you can support



Building strong and resilient families



Caring for seniors in need of support



Empowering children with special needs and youth-at-risk



Integrating adults with disabilities into society



Supporting persons with mental health conditions

Why ONEfor10 by Community Chest

As the philanthropy and engagement arm of the National Council of Social Service, Community Chest raises funds for programmes that provide direct social support services and are relevant and critical to helping the disadvantaged.

individuals, Community Chest will be able to customise a giving plan to help realise your philanthropic goals.

With our extensive experience in partnering corporations, foundations, family offices and

As our operating costs are covered mainly by Tote Board, 100% of your donation will go towards the social service agencies. ONEfor10 does not charge any fees.

Conversations with ONEfor10 Philanthropists

Be the one to enable.

Like many other people, Hsieh Fu Hua did not expect mental health issues to hit so close to home. Unfortunately, his family was deeply affected when his 2 children suffered from depression at separate points in their youth. That experience opened his eyes to the gaps within Singapore's mental health sector. He has since been actively championing mental wellness and encouraging more people to make a difference.

Through Fu Hua's involvement in the mental health sector, he realised that mental health is the scourge of our time. "The main challenge that the mental health sector faces is unwavering support, because the road to recovery is costly and long, often taking a decade or even a lifetime. There should be improved services, deeper understanding of mental health issues and illnesses, increased willingness to seek treatment, and more people should embrace mental health as a part of life," says Fu Hua.

BinjaiTree, a Singapore-based philanthropic organisation that Fu Hua set up, is his way to enable structured and sustained giving towards mental wellness and other meaningful causes. He renders his support in three different areas:

1. New initiatives

In collaboration with others, he founded various social service agencies to serve unfulfilled needs, such as Caregivers Alliance (providing relief to caregivers of persons with mental health conditions), Resilience Collective (a peer-to-peer movement where peers support one another), and Care for Life (providing resources at an earlier stage to help those vulnerable to suicide).

2. Supporting existing initiatives

Contributing to and collaborating with established associations, such as Singapore Association for Mental Health, Singapore Anglican Community Services, and TOUCH Community Services.

3. Advocating for action

Raising the issue within his personal and professional networks to rally others to address mental health, as well as continue to encourage inclusive practices on hiring and supporting employees with mental health conditions. In addition, Fu Hua has committed resources that champion and prioritise mental well-being within the organisations under his stewardship.



"Community Chest is a vital part of the giving ecosystem—a trusted link and channel between donors and mental health initiatives."

Mr Hsieh Fu Hua
Founder, BinjaiTree

On Partnering Community Chest

Community Chest is a natural partner for Fu Hua and BinjaiTree. He sees Community Chest as a vital part of the giving ecosystem—a trusted link and channel between donors and mental health initiatives. He also values these commitments that Community Chest holds dear: responsiveness to the needs of the mental health sector; keeping donors well informed with good data and information; sound execution of programmes; and most importantly, conviction and passion.

Conversations with ONEfor10 Philanthropists *Make a difference today.*

Pearlyn Phau joined the Community Chest as a Committee Member in 2016. Prior to this, she donated to individual causes based on what she knew and heard from friends.

Pearlyn believes that aggregators have extensive insights because they can look across the entire social service spectrum and allocate resources appropriately. They are in a better position to stretch every donated dollar, to provide sustainable funding, and more importantly, to allocate donations across a broad range of causes effectively.

While her job as Group CEO at Singlife with Aviva takes up much of her time, Pearlyn is eager to make a difference. For individuals who do not have time to do their own research on the needs of the social service agencies and the causes they champion, a trustworthy and highly regulated aggregator, such as Community Chest, provides assurance that donations are well-managed.

Pearlyn believes that there are two main benefits of donating via the Community Chest:

1. Trustworthiness and Transparency

As a part of the National Council of Social Service, the Community Chest is highly regulated and receives strong governance at the Board level. There is also regular reporting of how donations are disbursed. Donors can also request for tours with service users to understand how their donations have made a difference to the causes they champion.

2. Landscape Perspective

It has a comprehensive view of the social service sector and a clear view of the needs of individual social service agencies and the challenges they face. Working with the National Council of Social Service's Fund Allocation team, Community Chest allocates donor funds effectively across a broad range of causes.

"Aggregators such as Community Chest are in a better position to stretch every dollar donated, provide sustainable funding, and effectively allocate donations across a broad range of causes."

**Ms Pearlyn Phau,
Philanthropist**



With Community Chest as an aggregator, these social service agencies and programmes are able to receive the funding they need to provide timely support for those who need it. Pearlyn says she feels a sense of fulfilment through her philanthropy work and has introduced friends and business partners to the Community Chest. This has helped raise awareness of the work it does.

Greatness
is measured not by
what we have
but by what we
share

Dr Ee Peng Liang
Founder, Community Chest

Contact Us

With your generous support, we can address the needs of those who require help and empower them on their road to recovery.

Philanthropists can create an impactful difference to the mental health landscape with Community Chest. Together, we can affect positive change and rally companies and organisations to adopt ethos and practices to support persons with mental health conditions.

Please contact us if you would like to know more about ONEfor10 or commence your philanthropic journey with us today.



ONEfor10

www.comchest.gov.sg/ONEfor10

NCSS_Comchest@ncss.gov.sg



ONE for 10
IMPACTING LIVES FOR BRIGHTER FUTURES

100% of your donations goes directly towards empowering lives as our fundraising and other operating costs are covered mainly by Tote Board.