

**EFFICIENT ORGANISATION**

**EMPOWERED CLIENTS**

# **Threads of Unity: Highlights from AWWA's Strategic Plan (2019-2023)**

**EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION**

**EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP**

The logo for AWWA, featuring a stylized orange circle above the letters 'AWWA' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

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“  
**[AWWA  
 has been  
 progressing]  
 steady pom pipi.**

Mr Lim Teck Kiat,  
 Senior Director, MSF

This report is a celebration of AWWA's journey over the past five years. Drawing from 42 informal interviews with AWWA staff, Board Members, public and private sector partners, donors and other community organisations, it documents significant milestones and moments from every AWWA service since 2019. Through these interviews and the analysis of supporting documents and client success stories, a comprehensive narrative of AWWA's progress emerged, capturing the collective efforts, challenges, learnings and achievements that have shaped its journey. This retrospective report recognises the dedication of AWWA staff and stakeholders and inspires collaboration and continued growth as we move into the future.

The last five years have been one of the most challenging periods in AWWA's history because of the emergence of COVID-19 in 2020. Many in-person services were indefinitely suspended and clients, caregivers and AWWA staff struggled to cope with the everyday physical and mental stressors of navigating lockdowns and a pandemic. In response, AWWA prioritised continuity of care. With the support of the Tech Taskforce, staff swiftly shifted to virtual modes of communication and engagement and started trying out different methods of providing therapy and home-based learning sessions, from tele-practice and instructional videos, to discussing hard copy materials over the phone for those who struggled with access.



Online baking activity conducted by AWWA COO, Mrs Selina Foong, in 2020 to keep staff connected during one of the COVID-19 circuit breakers

“  
 Ground-level  
 staff put in a lot  
 of commitment  
 and were  
 adaptable to the  
 daily changes...  
 a lot of them  
 were willing to  
 do what was  
 right rather  
 than what was  
 convenient  
 [during  
 COVID-19].

Ms Suujatha Nandita Peter,  
 Assistant Director for Youth  
 Disability (Community  
 Integration Service and Special  
 Student Care Centre), AWWA

“  
 What touched  
 my heart  
 [during  
 COVID-19] was  
 the fact that  
 the [School]  
 teachers rallied  
 together to do  
 home-based  
 learning for  
 students.

Ms Meena Damodaran,  
 Supervisor, AWWA School  
 Management Committee

“  
 AWWA is  
 very open to  
 feedback [and]  
 so are we.  
 This mindset  
 of trusted  
 partnership  
 [is something  
 we] would like  
 to see more in  
 sector.

Mr Tan Kwang Cheak,  
 Senior Advisor & CEO (2019-  
 2024), AIC

Internally, the organisation had to quickly learn how to manage the needs of a large and diverse team during a global public health crisis. Online meetings and chats became mainstream, helping to improve communication between staff and to address any COVID-19-related misinformation. AWWA also streamlined its responses to public advisories on COVID-19 across all services and worked closely with the government, clients, caregivers and staff to implement the appropriate measures, often at short notice. Further, to better protect the staff and reduce the stress on services, AWWA centralised the procurement and distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE). Many of these practices, normalised during the start of COVID-19, have continued, ensuring that AWWA is well-prepared to respond to the next crisis. After navigating the early years of COVID-19, staff have reported that they feel more confident in managing similar situations in the future.

All AWWA staff went above and beyond in responding to the pressures of COVID-19. In particular, School and Senior Community Home staff must be recognised for their tremendous dedication to ensuring that their clients were safe, supported and engaged. From meticulously creating hard copy materials for home-based learning (HBL) sessions to managing the frustrations of seniors in lockdown with compassion and patience, the staff learnt how to balance their professional and personal responsibilities during a deeply stressful period.

“  
 We serve with  
 the heart and  
 the mind.

Ms Angie Chen, Vice Principal,  
 AWWA School @ Napiri

The early years of COVID-19 accelerated digitalisation at AWWA and encouraged staff to think about different ways to engage clients, both in person and online. Health and Senior Care (HSC) staff, for example, started exploring different methods and online tools to reach out to seniors and to improve their digital literacy and comfort. Services have also strategically deployed technology, like TEMI robots at the Day Activity Centre, virtual reality therapy sessions, and HSC's LOVOT, to augment the impact of existing therapeutic tools.

Further, shifting to virtual platforms for client communication has had the benefit of making it more convenient to meet with clients, caregivers, teachers, therapists and other stakeholders at the same time. This has helped facilitate collaboration within a client's care team, advancing AWWA's goal of implementing holistic care practices across services.

The pandemic revealed the benefits of inclusion and perils of exclusion. Adhering to public health and safety measures implemented by the government helped create an environment that was safe and healthy for everyone, leaving no one behind. The experience of going through a pandemic has also deepened AWWA's journey of inclusion – how do we create a society where our differences are respected and embraced? AWWA has continued to centre client participation in their communities as the primary outcome of all interventions to ensure that all clients, regardless of their age, disability status, caregiving status, health status, and socio-economic background, can lead meaningful, well-connected lives. The Inclusion Taskforce has also stepped up its efforts to strengthen advocacy and to embed inclusive values within AWWA so the organisation can talk the talk AND walk the talk.

AWWA does not journey alone. Its partners span multiple sectors and countries and have been invaluable in the organisation's evolution. Their collabo-

“  
**Our strong, longstanding partner in making Singapore a more inclusive society. May we continue to work hand-in-hand to forge a greater impact for the next generation.**

Ms Ku Geok Boon,  
 CEO, SG Enable, on AWWA

rative efforts, shared expertise and unwavering support have played a crucial role in realising AWWA's mission, despite the many challenges encountered along the way. Together, AWWA and its partners have created a powerful network that not only addresses the immediate needs of the community but also paves the way for sustained positive impact and meaningful change. The strength of these partnerships underscores the importance of collective action in creating a more inclusive and supportive society.

Pausing to commemorate the end of AWWA's 4Es era is imperative. It allows us to reflect on the significant milestones achieved, the challenges overcome, the insights learnt, and the impact made on the lives of those we serve. This moment of reflection is an opportunity to express gratitude to the dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, funders, and partners who have contributed to the organisation's success. It also marks a transition point, encouraging us to look forward with renewed energy and commitment to our mission. This report reflects lessons learned and a call to action, inspiring us to carry the spirit of inclusion and innovation into AWWA's next chapter.



Children from Family Service Centre families with Mr Pol de Win from SGX Cares Bull Charge Charity Futsal 2023



# DISABILITY AND INCLUSION

## Early Intervention Centers (EIC)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

EIC provides timely access to a continuum of child- and family-centric early intervention services, including EIPIC@Centre, EIPIC@Home, EI Under-2s and Development Support Plus (DS-Plus). In collaboration with healthcare providers, educators and community partners, EIC expands the capabilities of caregivers and maximises the potential of children with developmental needs.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 93.5% of children in EIPIC@Centre have shown improvement in at least 1 domain in their Functional Age Estimate assessment in 2022.
- 100% of children in EI identified for DS-Plus services were successfully stepped down within 6 months, demonstrating efficient right-siting of students.
- An additional EIC at Fernvale Woods began in 2023. This allows AWWA to now serve over 1000 children per year.
- 96.5% of parents and caregivers have rated EI services highly (3.5 and above out of 5) in the 2022 Caregiver Satisfaction Survey.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- From 2019 to 2022, EIC successfully implemented the Early Childhood Holistic Outcomes (ECHO) framework to analyse the impact of EI interventions on global child outcomes.
- EIC provides a suite of services to support caregivers, including kopi chats, father-child bonding sessions, respite care and caregiver trainings.
- In 2022, EIC started providing interim support for children and families on the waitlist. This support entails virtual tele-interventions for caregivers and centre-based interim services for children with high support needs.
- EIC has been applying the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework in assessing and planning interventions based on every child's needs and functional abilities.
- In 2019, AWWA launched the EI continuum programme at Hougang EIC. This continuum of services allows for more targeted interventions for children based on their specific needs. This programme was rolled out in all EI centres in 2019.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » Preschools and MOE Kindergartens
  - » National Library Board's (NLB) MOLLY Mobile Library
  - » The Artground and neighbourhood partners (e.g. hairdressers and dentists)



**AWWA is one of our collaborators of choice whenever we seek to break new ground within the industry.**

Prof Kenneth Poon, President, Rainbow Centre



Fernvale Woods reception area



Sensory play in the Dancing Forest



Glenda happily playing with Teacher Glivia

## Empowering Futures: The Power of Personalised Interventions and Holistic Care

Providing timely and tailored interventions for children with additional needs is crucial in supporting their development throughout their lives. At AWWA's EIC, staff work closely with each other and with caregivers to develop Individualised Educational Plans (IEPs) for each student based on their unique needs. IEPs help students achieve their functional goals in a more targeted manner and improve their independence and confidence.

### Unlocking Diane's Potential

Four-year-old Diane joined EIC Kim Keat in January 2023. She has autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and initially struggled with adaptive skills and adherence to routines. She refused to listen to the teacher's instructions and did not play well with others. Diane often left her seat and cried on the floor when she was upset. Her preschool teachers and caregivers also observed similar behaviours in preschool and at home.



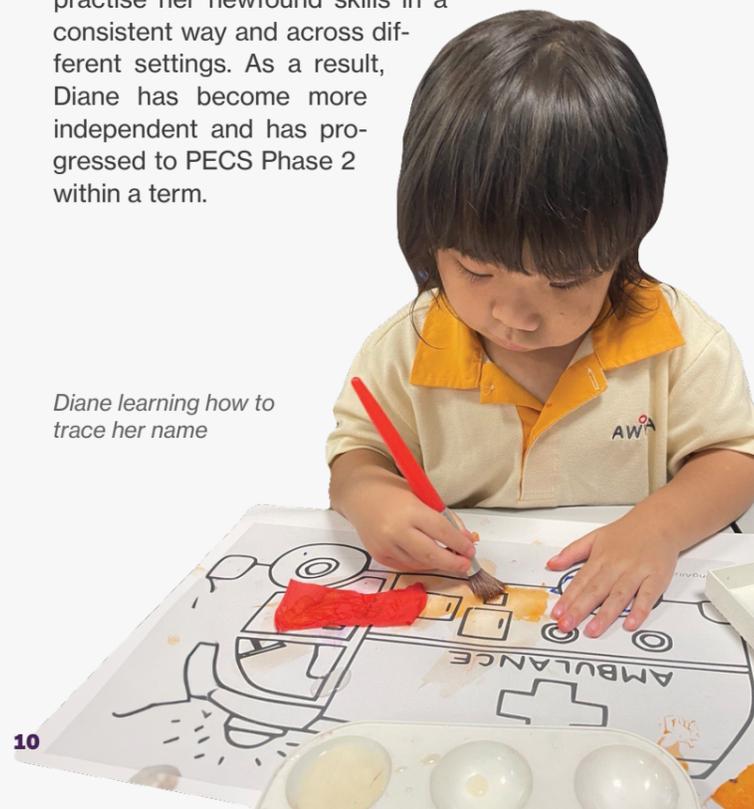
Diane engaging in cooking activities

The EIC team designed an IEP for Diane to address her behaviours, developmental needs and parent's concerns. For five months, they taught her a variety of intervention strategies, including Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH); Observe, Wait, Listen (OWL); and prompt hierarchy. Through these interventions, Diane learned how to adhere to and perform during routines and use visuals for communication. The team also introduced the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) to improve her communication and empower her to make simple requests, like asking for a particular toy of her choice. The team coached the caregivers on specific interventions to enable Diane to practice her skills in different settings.

Diane's journey in a few short months has been remarkable. Now, she actively participates in group activities and no longer cries. She pays attention to instructions and can stick to a routine. She has also made significant progress in being able to independently care for herself. Her toileting behaviour and participation in the toileting routine has improved, and she no longer displays challenging behaviours, such as playing with her faeces. Her preschool teachers and caregivers have also reported similar changes in Diane.

The EIC team's tailored IEP for Diane and their support for her caregivers have been instrumental in her transformation. With the help of the EIC team, her caregivers have implemented similar interventions at home. This has helped Diane learn and practise her newfound skills in a consistent way and across different settings. As a result, Diane has become more independent and has progressed to PECS Phase 2 within a term.

Diane learning how to trace her name



### Nurturing Natalie's Confidence

Like Diane, Natalie is a four-year-old girl, who has ASD. She started attending EIC Kim Keat in January 2023. At first, she experienced severe separation anxiety from her caregivers and had trouble regulating her emotions. She found group activities challenging and did not respond to the environment around her.



Natalie during food and sensory play

The EIC team created a set of intervention strategies that addressed these issues. They introduced her to PECS to improve her communication skills and engaged her with food and sensory play to help her overcome her aversion to certain textures that previously frustrated her. The EIC team also worked with Natalie to improve her self-feeding skills to reduce her dependence on others. Now, Natalie can independently feed herself.

As a result of the interventions, Natalie's confidence has blossomed, and her participation in play has improved. Currently, she is in PECS Phase 2, and can make requests and express herself. She has also become more responsive to her surroundings and greets people with smiles and laughter. Further, Natalie has a better grasp on how to regulate her emotions. When she feels upset, she is able to self-soothe when familiar adults hold her hand to calm her.

The EIC team worked closely with Natalie's caregivers to ensure that they implemented similar interventions at home to provide a consistent and supportive environment for her. This has helped Natalie acquire confidence and emotional resilience in a short period of time.

As Diane and Natalie continue to thrive, their journeys are testament to the transformative impact of tailored interventions and collaborative care. Through personalised IEPs that focus on the holistic development of children with additional needs across different contexts, EIC staff are shaping their present and laying a foundation for the children's continued growth and success in the future.



Natalie working on her self-feeding skills

## Development Support-Learning Support (DS-LS)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

The DS-LS Programme maximises children’s potential through timely, evidence-based learning support, and enhances the capabilities of early childhood educators to support children requiring low levels of early intervention support in mainstream preschools. In addition, DS-LS increases the capabilities of caregivers to support their children at home.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 80% of DS-LS students achieve all of their set IEP goals.
- Students in DS-LS report higher post-intervention scores compared to those for whom intervention was declined.
- The number of preschool anchor operators served by DS-LS has increased to 7 and the number of non-anchor operators has increased from 50 to 100.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- AWWA is one of the social service agencies appointed by ECDA to provide trainings and to facilitate communities of practice for 270 newly appointed inclusion coordinators (ICOs) in preschools in the North and Northeast.
- MOE Kindergartens at Riverside and Sengkang Green reported that the DS-LS programme has inspired non-DS-LS teachers to adopt relevant strategies in their classrooms.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » MOE Kindergartens
  - » ECDA
  - » Anchor operators (PCF Sparkletots and E-Bridge)



By working closely together with the AWWA DS-LS team, our preschoolers grow more confident with the provision of quality intervention.

**Nabilah**  
Senior Teacher,  
7Oaks Preschool-Sembawang

**Siti**  
Teacher,  
7Oaks Preschool-Sembawang

## Impact of DS-LS on MOE Kindergarten @ Riverside

“The support from AWWA with the DS-LS programme came at a time when we were just beginning to understand, as a new team, the additional needs of children from more complex or disadvantaged families. With our priority registration scheme for children from lower income families, we saw profiles of children that many of us did not have the experience, skills or know-how to support in our daily classroom context.”



**We have observed the children gain confidence and connection to those around them after the sessions. Also, strategies practised by the teachers with the children in the DS-LS programme became a tool for teachers to adapt and impact other children in the classrooms.**

“This engagement has helped bring about a greater understanding of our collaborative effort at the centre. Teachers are finding it easier to bring up the screening and flagging up of intervention needs with our parents. Though some are still resistant, we have found that multiple touchpoints and stakeholder involvement help to break down the different perspectives effectively.”

“The next stage of our work together will be to find synergies and areas for effective collaboration that will help to streamline the resources and support for the children. We will also target [consolidating] what our teachers and parents understand about the various programmes so that we can effectively channel the children to the most optimum support in a timely manner. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to AWWA’s DS-LS team for journeying with us through our growth in these increasingly complex times.”

**CENTRE HEAD**  
MOE Kindergarten @ Riverside  
2020

## Kindle Garden (KG)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

KG is Singapore's first inclusive preschool and provides a non-discriminatory curriculum for children with typical needs and children with additional needs. It is a model for inclusive preschool education, which serves as a learning lab for mainstream preschools to incorporate inclusive practices.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2 KG students received Little Heroes of Inclusion awards by Good Start SG in 2023. These awards are given to students who practise inclusive values in school and support their classmates with additional needs.
- More than 20 preschools and mainstream schools visited KG in 2023 to learn about its inclusive model of education.
- 100% of students have personalised learning plans (PLPs) that were developed with the support of teachers, parents and therapists; every year, all students have been meeting at least 90% of their PLP goals.
- Most parents surveyed at the 2022 Open House were happy with KG's services and provided compliments for specific teachers.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2023, KG and AWWA Senior Community Home (SCH) collaborated to boost social engagement between the two services. In July, KG students visited SCH and performed for the residents. In November, SCH seniors visited KG, where students had planned activities for them with an event planner and performed a concert.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » University of Washington Haring Centre for Inclusive Education
  - » Volunteers from mainstream schools (primary schools to junior colleges)
  - » ECDA



**Courageous move to actually do it...start a preschool even though AWWA is not in the business of childcare services.**

Ms Lynn Koh, Director (Child Development), ECDA, on KG



Storytelling at Kindle Garden



Enjoying outdoor play at Kindle Garden

## Embracing Differences: Kindle Garden's Impact on Geraldine and Zachary

Geraldine was stressed. Her son, Zachary, was enrolled in a mainstream preschool and his teachers shared negative feedback about him every day. They wanted him to be tested for autism but provided little to no additional support to Geraldine or Zachary. She started looking for a new school for her son and found KG.

KG and its team were transformative for Zachary and Geraldine. Recognising his unique needs, KG provided them with a wealth of resources and guidance to support Zachary in school and at home. Geraldine noted that the school meticulously taught her son how to perform basic daily activities, like brushing his teeth and changing his clothes, with laminated

“**It's totally beyond what I'd expect from a school.**

Geraldine (Zachary's mother)

charts. The school also gave her one to establish continuity for Zachary at home. After a year, the changes in Zachary were profound. According to Geraldine, “he can express himself so much. At home, he can tell us what he wants now. So, this reduces a lot of stress for us parents, as well as for him.” She credits this remarkable progress to KG's inclusive practices and its teachers. She has observed that unlike in his previous school, teachers include Zachary in all classroom activities, even when it is difficult, and give him the space and support he needs.

She is happy to see how much Zachary loves KG and his teachers; at check-in, he often runs into the classroom without saying goodbye to his mother. As she thinks about her son's future, she hopes that he will not be judged for being different and that he will better connect with the world around him. Geraldine expressed her gratitude to KG for starting them on this long journey of independence, empowerment and inclusion: “It's totally beyond what I'd expect from a school.”

KG's impact on Zachary and Geraldine demonstrates how well inclusive classrooms and schools support children with additional needs and their caregivers throughout their lives. KG's expert and empathetic staff are moulding Zachary's development and establishing the groundwork for him to thrive in the future. His story is one of many at KG that highlight the vital role inclusive spaces play in nurturing the potential of every child.



Zachary's mother, Geraldine. Video can be accessed on AWWA's YouTube page: ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntC3XonmVX8&t=4s&ab\\_channel=AWWA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntC3XonmVX8&t=4s&ab_channel=AWWA))

## Community Integration Service (CIS)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

CIS supports the integration of students with physical disabilities and low vision in their schools and communities to maximise their potential. It empowers students with skills for holistic development and promotes supportive environments, in collaboration with families, educators and community partners.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Because of CIS's comprehensive integration support plans and functional goals, 77.2% of students are fully integrated into mainstream settings (community, home and school), and 98.8% are partially integrated for their age.
- As a result of CIS's services for students and caregivers, 85% of CIS students (aged 15+) reported having an improved understanding of coping strategies specific to their condition. Similarly, 82% of caregivers reported an improved understanding of their children's conditions and coping strategies.
- CIS has received multiple Partner of Singapore Teachers Awards (2020, 2021 and 2022), in recognition of its invaluable contributions to the professional development of MOE officers.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The CIS Special Awards were held in 2023 to celebrate the strength, empathy and dedication of youths with disabilities and to acknowledge the contributions of stakeholders in their supportive environments, such as their families, friends, teachers and schools.
- Since 2016/2017, the CIS Outreach and Advocacy Workgroup has been conducting trainings and advocacy sessions for external stakeholders. The Workgroup also developed digital outreach materials for EICs on physical and visual impairment services and forged a relationship with KK Hospital.
- From January to September 2023, CIS conducted 35 community events with 229 students, 162 caregivers and family members, and 102 external volunteers.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Internal partners
  - » Allied Health Professional Group for efficient recruitment and deployment of therapists
- External partners
  - » Bank of Singapore for Career Guidance Workgroups and employment support
  - » Singapore Disability Sports Council for inclusive sports and capability building opportunities for physiotherapists



Community Integration Service's 30th Anniversary Virtual Award Ceremony in 2021

## Empowerment Beyond Borders: Chee Yong's Canadian Adventures

AWWA's CIS supports the integration of children and youth with physical disabilities and low vision within mainstream schools and community settings. The goal of CIS is to empower students with skills-to facilitate community participation and to lead rich, full lives.

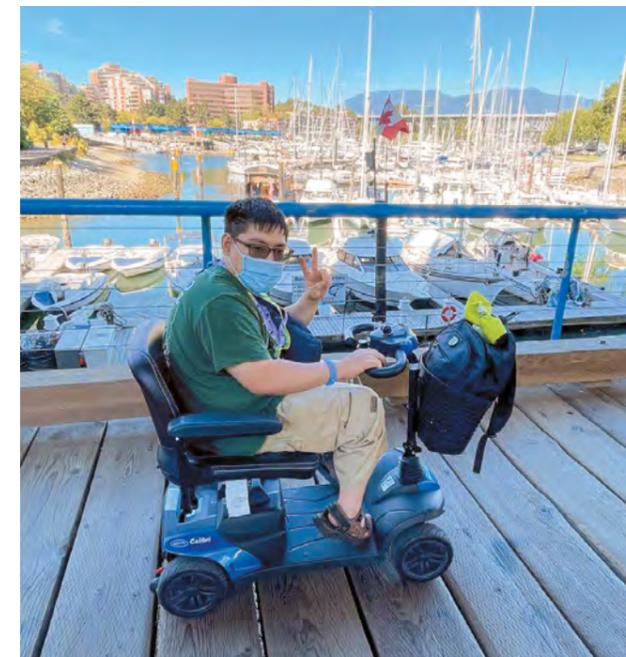
Chee Yong, a Year 3 student at the National University of Singapore, has been a CIS client for many years and lives with spastic diplegia. In 2022, his dream of travelling overseas came true. He was given a rare opportunity to study abroad in Canada for a semester. Despite his excitement, Chee Yong was concerned about how he would adapt to unfamiliar experiences and surroundings, including airport and airplane accessibility, the ability of his well-worn motorised wheelchair to move over different terrains, and managing self-care tasks in a new environment.

His CIS occupational therapist and physiotherapist co-designed a plan with him to prepare him to confidently navigate his trip to Canada. They figured out how he could attach his luggage to his wheelchair while he was travelling. Additionally, they devised strategies to assist him in safely managing tasks in his new accommodation, including food preparation and

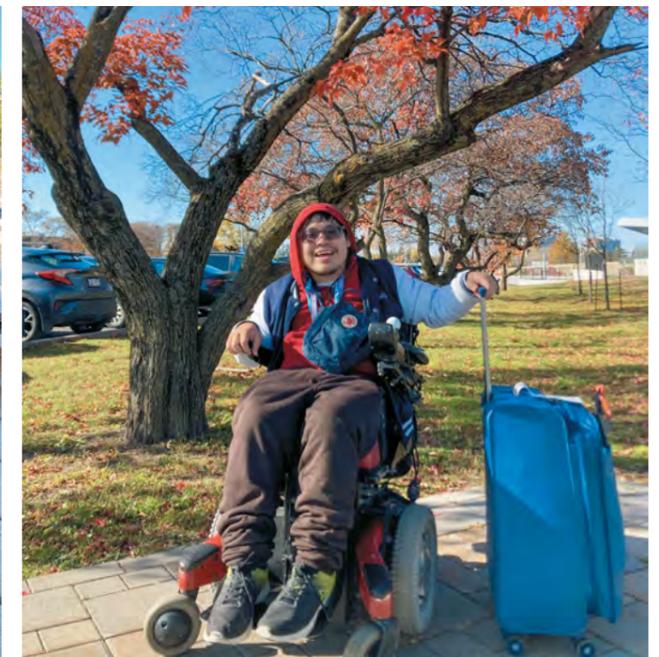
moving around an unfamiliar bathroom. Chee Yong also looked for removable grab bars online to install in his Canadian home. Further, the CIS team worked with him to improve his gait, his cardiovascular endurance and his lower limb strength. This provided Chee Yong with an option to use a walking frame if wheelchair accessibility was restricted in certain parts of campus or during an emergency.

When he left for Canada, the team encouraged him to reach out if he needed any help. Instead of calls for support, Chee Yong shared glimpses into his new life. Pictures flooded in – breathtaking landscapes, ziplining in his wheelchair and the joy of discovering a wheelchair-accessible gym. He was particularly thrilled when he found an adaptive bicycle store. "Oh, believe me, my eyes lit up," texted Chee Yong to the CIS team after he explored the various bicycles. His passion for cycling reignited and he started contemplating how to bring new adaptive bicycle models back home.

Chee Yong's Canadian adventures transcend the boundaries of physical disabilities, serving as a testament to empowerment, resilience and the profound impact of coordinated interventions. The CIS team was instrumental in preparing him to safely enjoy new experiences and environments, enhancing his skills to adapt to different situations. Their expertise in and commitment to supporting people with disabilities empower students, like Chee Yong, to redefine what is possible and embrace vibrant lives.



Chee Yong enjoying his new environment



Chee Yong in Canada

## Special Student Care Center (SSCC)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

SSCC provides physical care and social engagement for students with special needs in a safe environment. Through life-skills training programmes and enrichment activities at AWWA and in the community, SSCC equips students to thrive and promotes community integration. It also provides caregivers with respite care and facilitates their return to the workforce.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- SSCC conducts a daily survey (Happy Face Survey) with students using emoticons to understand how they are feeling and to evaluate their enjoyment of activities. From January 2022 to September 2023, the percentage of satisfied students has steadily increased from 77% to 95%. These daily surveys provide regular feedback to SSCC staff on what activities students enjoy and help staff design more effective programming.
- In the last 3 years, more than 93% of caregivers who responded to the service satisfaction survey reported being satisfied with SSCC services.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- SSCC leveraged technology to make activities more interactive with the introduction of the Vertical Mini and Smartboard.
- SSCC streamlined communication and documentation with the LittleLives app, which facilitates parent engagement on a secure platform and records attendance and temperatures.
- Through its collaboration with the Communication and Stakeholder Engagement team at Corporate Services, SSCC expanded the activities available for clients to include drumming and drama classes.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Internal partners
  - » Allied Health Professional Group, Early Intervention Centre – Napiri and AWWA School @ Napiri for support and training on behaviour and classroom management and sensory interventions
- External partners
  - » Corporate volunteers for their generosity and dedication (e.g. LGT Private Banking Singapore, Therapy Dogs Singapore, Fuse Asia, and UBS)



Learning how to wash hands thoroughly at Special Student Care Centre



**[Working with AWWA] has been a transformational relationship for us.**

Mr Raveen Bharvani, ESG Lead, LGT Private Banking Singapore

## Growing Together at SSCC

Seth and Michael are students at SSCC, a service dedicated to providing physical care and social engagement for students in Special Education Schools. **Seth** is eight years old and was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). When he joined SSCC in October 2022, his overly playful behaviour challenged the boundaries of the classroom. He refused to listen to instructions from unfamiliar faces and constantly ran around the centre to play with switches.

Recognising the need for personalised interventions, SSCC staff conducted a behavioural strategies session with him using the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). This visual support tool helped Seth learn how to follow class rules and the consequences for not following instructions. Seth found this tool remarkably helpful. In a few months, his behaviour improved; he stopped running around and only touched the switches when instructed to by a staff member.



Seth participating in Art & Crafts

As Seth entered his second year at SSCC in 2023, the positive transformations continued. The staff observed that as Seth better adapted to SSCC's setting, his participation in classroom activities increased. He is particularly fond of arts and crafts and housecraft activities. His social engagement skills have also improved. Seth is able to work independently and with others and has become more confident and outgoing. He is vocal in the classroom and always greets

and responds to staff. He has also made friends with students from different classes and has shown tremendous initiative in helping his friends and teachers. SSCC staff are heartened by his journey with them to date and are eager to witness more of his growth in the future.



Seth engaging in Housecraft

Like Seth, **Michael** also initially struggled when he joined SSCC in January 2023. Michael is seven years old and was diagnosed with Down Syndrome. He was timid, reserved, and often burst out crying on the floor. He was reluctant to engage with tasks, such as eating lunch or napping, and refused to follow instructions. Further, Michael was easily distracted when doing activities and was suspicious of unfamiliar faces in the classroom.

SSCC staff slowly cultivated a relationship with Michael by reassuring him whenever he felt uncomfortable or scared by his environment. After a few months, he started opening up to them and revealed his cheerful personality. His class participation also improved, and he is becoming more confident in building relationships with SSCC staff, friends and volunteers. SSCC staff are particularly charmed by how he loves to say "cheese" and pose in front of them for photos.

Seth and Michael's journeys with SSCC exemplify the potential for growth, social connections and joy for children with additional needs, when provided with a supportive environment. Interventions carefully tailored to every student's unique profile and learning needs also help build trust and consistency with students, which enable them to flourish in the classroom. Their stories embody AWWA's approach to inclusion – with dedicated staff and targeted support, every child can overcome challenges and thrive in their own, distinctive ways.

## AWWA School @ Napiri

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

AWWA School @ Napiri empowers students to meaningfully participate in their communities through programmes tailored to every student's needs and interests. It maximises the potential of students to thrive by equipping them with life skills and by nurturing their extracurricular talents.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- From 2019 to 2023, five students have won the Lee Kuan Yew Exemplary Student Award (LKY-ESA): Muhammad Aiman Bin Mohamed Ali (2023), Sarah Nurul Ain Binte Ismail (2022), Tan Qi Wei (2021), Daniel Bin Mohd Rizal (2020) and Chia Meng Yang (2019). This award honours SPED students who have become role models for their peers through their exemplary contributions and achievements.
- In the last five years, the School has consistently achieved at least 82% satisfaction in caregiver experience surveys.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The North East Community Development Council organised Shaping Hearts 2022, the largest inclusive arts event in Singapore. 7 works by 6 students were exhibited at Our Tampines Hub and One Punggol Hub in November. Students also performed a percussion show with audience participation on November 13, 2022, with coaches from OneHeartBeat.
- 7 students participated in the Singtel Expressions through Art Exhibition in 2022. 3 of their submissions were selected by Singtel for display at the National Gallery from August 17 to 28, 2022.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » Bowen Secondary School for joint co-curricular activities and events promoting mutual respect, compassion and friendship



**At School @ Napiri, we focus on the holistic development of our students, and we do our best to support their caregivers. By embracing and nurturing the students' diverse interests and talents, we empower them to discover their strengths and flourish as valued members of our community.**

Ms Amy Tan, Principal, AWWA School @ Napiri



Percussion performance by AWWA School @ Napiri students and teachers at Shaping Hearts 2022. Photo: Ms Zanel (Volunteer Photographer)



Percussion performance by AWWA School @ Napiri students and teachers at Shaping Hearts 2022. Photo: Ms Zanel (Volunteer Photographer)



LKY-ESA Award Winner 2023

## Empowerment Through Employment: Celebrating the Achievements of our Special Education Graduates



**AWWA**

December 15, 2022 · 🌐

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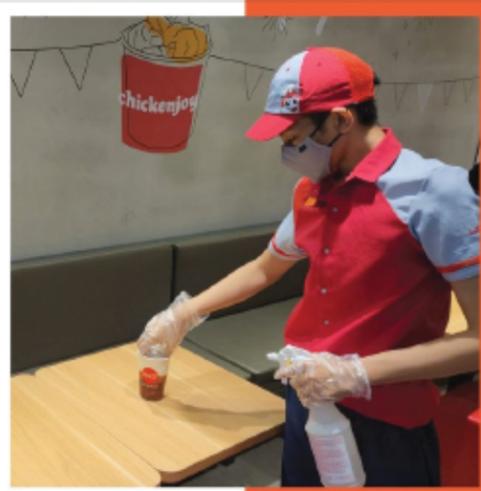
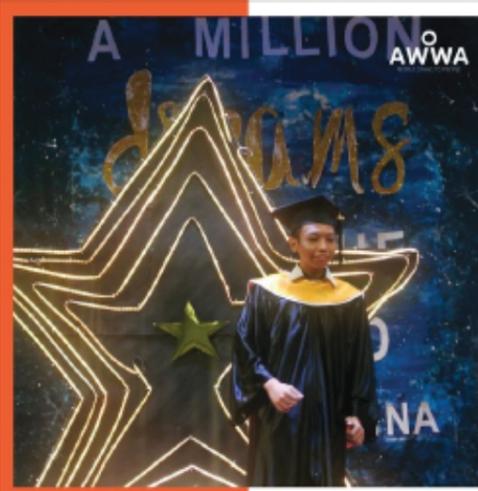
Our recent graduate from AWWA School @ Napiri (School), Daniel, has now transited into the working world as a part-time service crew at [Jollibee Singapore](#).

His job coach, Kel Lim, shares how the School prepared him for this next step. 'Daniel received support from the School teachers, allied health professionals, and family members and accommodations from the employer to prepare him for employment throughout his years with us. He went through vocational training, which provided hands-on experience and skills training. It was vital for us to equip him with skills such as communication, reliability, the ability to follow instructions and working well with others so that he could assimilate well at his workplace. The School also helped Daniel to identify his strengths and interests by providing guidance and support to help him and his family to navigate the job search process.'

Ms Zengzi, Daniel's teacher who witnessed his growth for the past two years, shared that Daniel has matured from a shy boy to what he is now - a confident teenager who is more confident, asserts himself and shares his thoughts and ideas confidently with his peers.

'Daniel, Teacher ZZ hopes you continue to be a confident boy and exercise your strengths. May you stay healthy and happy always', Ms Zengzi.

Keen on shining, Daniel!



**AWWA**

February 9, 2023 · 🌐

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AWWA School offers the Work Exposure Programme (WXP), which provides external work opportunities for our students to undergo authentic training in various industries. This allows our students to discover their best job match according to their strengths, preferences and abilities.

One such programme beneficiary is Aiman, 18, who will be graduating from AWWA School @ Napiri this year. Aiman, who is diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, performed admirably during his school-based attachment with the School's General Office, as he interacted well not only with his supervisor but also with anyone who approached him for assistance. His efforts paid off, as he was selected as a Station Guide with SBS Transit for his WXP! Aiman has been stationed at the North East Line Little India Station since 11 January, where he helps to guide commuters to amenities within the station. He also assists them with the topping up of their EZ-link card by cash or cashless payments. Aiman has become well-versed in using the General Ticketing Machine due to his keen interest in technology. This enables him to assist commuters readily!

Kel, Aiman's Job Coach in AWWA School @ Napiri, is delighted to see his growth and progress. "As a fast learner, Aiman is able to pick up the soft skills that are needed for customer service. Aiman also exhibits the AWWA Value, 'Care and Concern', where he greets his co-workers daily and asks how they are doing."

Thank you, [SBS Transit Ltd](#), for providing inclusive work opportunities for students like Aiman. AWWA will continue to work with our existing external partners while seeking to expand and work with potential partners to offer more training platforms for our students.



## AWWA School @ Bedok

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

AWWA School @ Bedok provides special education to children with autism (aged 7 to 18) to maximise their ability to live independently and to improve their quality of life.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The School successfully navigated COVID-19 restrictions to finish construction and opened in 2022. It is currently serving 93 students. Its physical design promotes inclusion, experiential learning and community participation.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Students shared their artwork at the Singapore Youth Festival and won an award.
- The School collaborated with SBS Transit to take students on the MRT to help them feel comfortable traveling on the train.
- Students participated in several community events, including Play Inclusive (soccer), Passion Wave (dragon boating) and distributing vegetables to families nearby living in vulnerable settings.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » Singapore Exchange (SGX) for CCA volunteers
  - » Marina Bay Sands (MBS) for supporting classroom activities and school events
  - » Temasek Junior College for buddies for Learning Journeys
  - » Damai Primary School for teammates for Play Inclusive
  - » Spectra Secondary School for project-based activities



AWWA School @ Bedok



Experiential and community learning design inside School @ Bedok

## Breaking Down Barriers in Bedok: A School's Journey in Community Engagement

Since opening in 2022, AWWA School @ Bedok has emphasised equipping its students with skills to meaningfully participate in their communities. These efforts range from working with SBS Transit to help students feel comfortable navigating public transportation, to organising activities with a broad spectrum of partners to forge relationships beyond its walls. Programmes like these provide opportunities for students to engage in mutually beneficial activities with community stakeholders and enable the School to advocate for inclusive spaces for children and youth with additional needs.

### Seeding Independence and Inclusion

Through its Vocational Education Programme, the School launched the urban farming module and started hydroponic gardening as a co-curricular activity (CCA) in September 2022. Students worked in teams to learn how to grow and harvest vegetables, while actively practising values like independence, teamwork and responsibility.

The School decided to share this bounty with seniors and families living in vulnerable settings in the neighbourhood by partnering with Bedok Reservoir-Punggol Rise Residents' Network (BRP Rise RN) for their last harvest. Staff, volunteers and recipients report-

ed that the event was a success. They highlighted how much students and community members enjoyed interacting with one another. Through this event, staff and volunteers also had the opportunity to share with community stakeholders about the School and its strengths-based approach to special needs education.



Students giving out vegetables to seniors in the neighbourhood during the "Giving Back to Our Community" project



Hydroponic garden

This will not be a one-off event. The Constituency Manager of BRP Rise RN has reached out for further collaboration, and the School has partnered with the People's Association for future community projects. Through these activities, the School teaches students how to care for those around them and challenges societal stereotypes of people with disabilities.

**Unity in Play**

Together with Damai Primary School, the School formed a joint soccer team and participated in Play Inclusive 2023, which was organised by the Singapore Disability Sports Council, Special Olympics

Singapore, Sports Cares, and Ministry of Education (Special Education Branch). The goal of this programme is to foster friendships between neurotypical people and people with additional needs through shared athletic experiences.



Students participating in Play Inclusive football match

Damai students first visited the School to learn more about autism and how to interact with students with ASD. The two schools came together for a meet-and-greet to start building relationships with one another. Over the next eight sessions, students trained together with a coach, with the support of teachers, in both schools. This allowed students to experience different environments and facilities, and helped Bedok School students practise their community mobility and social skills. The unified team exhibited their football prowess at the competition on September 16, 2023, and won a bronze medal.



Team proudly displaying their medals

This was a wonderful opportunity for students from both schools to build friendships and connect across the neurodiversity spectrum. Team DAP's triumphant journey of inclusion has only just begun.

**Paddle Power**

Students, staff and family members trained for and participated in an inclusive dragon boat fun race event held during the PAssion Wave @ Bedok Reservoir's opening ceremony on June 25, 2023. This event was a collaboration between Team ASD Dragon Boat, an inclusive team, and PAssion Wave. The team first learned about the basics of dragon boating and teamwork through hands-on practice at the Kallang Water Sports Centre. After exhaustive training, they competed in the fun race and earned a participation medal for their success.

Working in the same boat fostered connections between people from diverse backgrounds and enabled students and their families to experience the joys of water sports. Dragon boating was yet another high-visibility activity that highlighted the potential of children with additional needs and the importance of inclusive spaces to community stakeholders.

Activities like dragon boating, soccer and community engagement break down walls between the School and the community. These activities also help the Bedok School teach students how to actively learn and practise values, such as teamwork and social responsibility. At the same time, the School is increasing awareness of ASD and is advocating for better community integration of people with ASD. Only through the transformative power of shared experiences can we start building an inclusive society where all of us are celebrated for our unique contributions.



Dragonboat team warming up

## AWWA Home (AH) and Day Activity Centre (DAC)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

Opened in September 2022, AH and DAC provide services for adults with physical and multiple disabilities. AH provides both long-term residential care and short-term respite care for residents whose caregivers are unable to provide custodial care for their loved ones. The team assists residents in their Activities of Daily Living (ADL) needs and engages them in Community Living Skills (CLS) activities for daily participation. Through social activities and skills training, DAC maximises the ability of adults with disabilities to live independently and to participate meaningfully in the community.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- AH and DAC successfully finished the construction of their building in 2022, while navigating COVID-19 restrictions. The building uses inclusive design principles, which create a comfortable and welcoming environment for clients.
- Caregivers regularly express positive feedback about the services to staff.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- AH is strategically using assistive technology (e.g. customised wheelchairs and augmentative and alternative communication) to facilitate client participation in community and recreational activities.
- DAC is also leveraging technology, such as the TEMI robot, to engage clients in different ways. DAC exhibited its use of the TEMI robot at the Transformation Marketplace in the NCSS Social Service Summit in 2023.
- Staff design activities for their clients to access more neighbourhood amenities at Loyang Point, Changi Village, Changi Beach and Changi City Point to expand opportunities for community participation.
- DAC and School @ Napiri are collaborating to provide seamless transition support for graduating students who may attend DAC next.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Internal partners
  - » Allied Health Professional Group for programme evaluation
  - » AWWA School @ Napiri for Work Programme collaboration
  - » Tech Taskforce for the Eye Gaze system
- External partners
  - » SG Cares Volunteer Centre at Pasir Ris
  - » The Immigration People
  - » Changi General Hospital
  - » Tampines Polyclinic
  - » SingHealth
  - » SG Enable



**We dare to try out things.**

Ms Ng Lee Lee, Director (Disability and Inclusion), AWWA



AWWA Home and Day Activity Centre



Day Activity Centre



Client using Temi robot for leisure activities



Client engaging with the Immersive Room

## Wheels of Joy: Transformative Mobility at AH and DAC

AH and DAC provide tailored therapeutic and recreational services for adults with disabilities to enable them to live rich, independent and socially connected lives. One of the goals of the services is to facilitate client participation in activities conducted within and beyond AWWA. Lin Xueling, Wang Lok Tin, and Dha-shanamoothi S/O Amardass are all clients who are benefitting from AWWA's emphasis on holistic care and person-centred approach to service provision.

**Xueling** is 37 years old and has been with AH for over a year. When she first arrived in 2022, she was bedridden and unresponsive; she hardly smiled or greeted anyone. Because of her mobility limitations, she only left her house for medical appointments. At AH, her care team and therapists worked with her care-

giver to design a programme specific to her physical, mental and emotional needs. Her team agreed that she was suitable for a customised wheelchair and provided endurance training to help Xueling transition from her bed to the wheelchair. This was a turning point for Xueling; after moving to a wheelchair, she has been able to fully participate in group activities and community outings with her peers.



Group activity

Her care team and her mother have noted the significant differences in her after she joined AWWA. She now greets people with wide smiles and responds with giggles. According to her mother, “Xueling looks healthier and happier at AWWA. She has grown bigger and smiles more.”



Xueling enjoying gazing at the sky in the garden

“  
Xueling looks healthier and happier at AWWA. She has grown bigger and smiles more.”

Xueling's mother

The customised wheelchair has also been a gamechanger for **Lok Tin**. He is 52 years old and has been at AH for ten months. He was discharged from sheltered employment 20 years ago and has struggled with remaining socially engaged. He loves interacting with others but because of his health conditions and disability, he became bed-bound, with his caregiver and helper as his sole sources of social connections.

When Lok Tin first came to AWWA, his restricted mobility prevented him from participating in group activities. He longingly pointed to clients enjoying activities, indicating his desire to join them. Like Xueling's experience, Lok Tin's care team and caregiver helped him transition to a customised wheelchair. This opened a whole new world for him – he now participates in all group activities, including arts and crafts and sports, attends physiotherapy sessions, and joins his peers in community outings. AH staff and his caregiver are ecstatic to witness his newfound joy in connecting with others; he uses physical gestures to express his happiness and shakes his wheelchair when he feels excited. He nods enthusiastically when staff ask him

if he is happy at AH. His increased mobility and improved quality of life have also empowered him to make requests and decisions when the opportunities arise. AH has changed the way Lok Tin experiences his life and has unlocked new avenues of joy and social interaction for him.



Ball catching in bed before transitioning to his customised wheelchair



Attending a therapy session with the support of his customised wheelchair



Lok Tin on his wheelchair showing off his henna during the Racial Harmony Day carnival

**Dhashanamoorthis** (or Dhash) shares Lok Tin's enjoyment of group and community activities, but this was not always the case. Before joining DAC seven months ago, Dhash, a man in his 20s, was reserved and disliked leaving the house. This made it difficult for his caregiver to keep him socially engaged; they were also unsure if many places in the neighbourhood were accessible for wheelchairs.



Dhash paying for his groceries during community outing

When he first arrived at DAC, Dhash was unengaged in activities and used to shake his wheelchair out of boredom and frustration. DAC's programme framework emphasises Activities of Daily Living and Community Living Skills, which is conducted in a group setting to promote client interaction. To encourage

him to participate in these activities, DAC coaches, the psychologist and Dhash's caregiver worked closely together to provide endurance training for him. Through sit-to-stand and hand-cycling exercises, Dhash grew physically stronger, which helped him participate more actively in group activities.

Dhash is now an enthusiastic participant in DAC programmes. His favourite activity is visiting Loyang Point and Changi Village with his peers. He particularly likes the opportunity to buy his own groceries. His caregiver and DAC staff have also noticed tremendous improvements in Dhash. Dhash's caregiver has noted that he is more responsive and engaged. With advice from staff on wheelchair accessible places in the community, his caregiver has more confidence to take him out. Staff have also observed that Dhash is often smiling and laughing during group activities, indicating his increased enjoyment.



Dhash with his peers during a community outing

For Xueling, Lok Tin and Dhash, AH and DAC go beyond service provision; they are a facilitator of transformation and meaningful community participation for clients. By co-tailoring interventions for every client's unique physical, mental and emotional needs with their caregivers, and by strategically leveraging assistive technology, the services are maximising the ability of clients to thrive in their communities. For the three clients, the wheels on their wheelchairs are not just conduits of mobility; they are wheels of empowerment and joy.

# HEALTH AND SENIOR CARE

## Active Ageing Centre (AAC)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

Established in 1997, AAC is a vital community resource for seniors ageing in place around Ang Mo Kio. AAC offers services tailored to seniors' health and social needs, ranging from active ageing programmes to befriending services and care referrals. The centre aims to mitigate social isolation, promote an active lifestyle and facilitate meaningful connections between seniors and the community.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- AAC ranks in the top 35% of all centres in Singapore for reaching over 500 screened seniors.
- AAC has forged and maintained strong partnerships with 41 community partners and healthcare networks. In the Community of Care pilot (with Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH), Agency for Integrated Care (AIC) and NHG Polyclinics), these partnerships enable seniors with varying care needs to remain independent, safe and healthy in their communities.
- In 2022, 97% of seniors surveyed reported being satisfied with AAC services.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2023, AWWA, the Singapore Institute of Technology and the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine at NTU started a five-month programme called "Project Shield" to reduce falls in seniors. Interventions included awareness talks, personalised physiotherapy exercises and regular check-ins to provide ongoing support. Project Shield also aimed to cultivate healthy nutrition and exercise habits in participants.
- AAC is conducting a Holistic Care Programme for vulnerable seniors to improve their health and well-being. Seniors participate in a broad range of therapeutic activities, including music therapy and art appreciation, which are organised with the support of volunteers and community partners. Seniors graduate from this programme once they can be meaningfully engaged in their communities again.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » TTSH for capability building in community health
  - » SMRT for their dedicated volunteers to support clients
  - » AAC volunteers for leading engaging programmes like "Fit and Joy"



**As Singapore's population ages, bridging the health and social sectors becomes essential to delivering comprehensive and holistic care at all levels of society. This supports seniors in ageing well in their homes and in their communities. By breaking down silos and fostering collaboration, we can create an environment where seniors can lead independent, dignified and fulfilled lives.**

Ms Wang Yu Hui, Deputy Director (Health and Senior Care), AWWA



AWWA's Active Ageing Centre



Exercise session at Active Ageing Centre

## A Village of Care: Empowering Seniors to Thrive

AWWA Village in Ang Mo Kio offers a continuum of health and social services to support seniors living in the neighbourhood. Employing a person-centric approach, AWWA Village helps seniors to proactively manage their own health and connects them to relevant community resources to keep them engaged; this allows more seniors to lead active and healthy lifestyles, while embedded in community life.

To enhance the spectrum of services provided, AWWA is collaborating with Tan Tock Seng Hospital, NHG Polyclinics, PanCare Medical Clinic, and the AIC Silver Generation Office to create a Community of Care (CoC). Through this unified approach, every senior has a personalised care plan that is co-designed by all stakeholders. Further, CoC members regularly share updates with one another on active cases to coordinate care. This allows seniors in AWWA Village to remain in the community, while accessing the health and social services they need at the neighbourhood level.

**Mdm Amy** is flourishing because of CoC services, which help keep her safe, connected and healthy. AWWA initiated befriending visits to build trust and to better understand the needs and preferences of seniors living in the neighbourhood. During these visits, AWWA staff observed that Mdm Amy was experiencing several health issues, including memory loss, but was reluctant to seek medical assistance.



Personalised visual schedule for Mdm Amy with her favourite cat photos

Together with Tan Tock Seng Hospital's Community Health Team, AWWA worked with Mdm Amy to design a care plan for her that reflected her wish to live independently in her community. When her care plan was implemented, AWWA continued to support Mdm Amy by checking in regularly and monitoring her medication adherence and vital signs. To help her remember to take her medication on time, AWWA created a visual schedule with her favourite cat photos and a recorded voice reminder. PanCare Medical Clinic further strengthened Mdm Amy's support system by offering home consultations to ensure comprehensive management of her chronic conditions. The community rallied around Mdm Amy, with neighbours and local shop owners keeping an eye out for her safety. She is also supported by her brother who remains in regular contact with her. Mdm Amy's confidence and health management skills have improved with the support she is receiving and is able to thrive independently at home.



Mdm Amy with AWWA CREST staff

Like Mdm Amy, **Mdm Goh** is supported by the seamless CoC network. When her GP retired, AWWA, Tan Tock Seng Hospital, and PanCare stepped in to help her manage her health. Mdm Goh attended a CoC functional health screening in her neighbourhood and was encouraged to join the AAC for activities that kept her physically and mentally healthy to manage her chronic health conditions and to reduce her falls risk. She enjoyed her time at the AAC so much that she is now a senior volunteer who finds meaning and fulfilment in giving back to her community.



Mdm Goh helping to clean up after receiving a haircut with volunteer hairdressers

**Mdm Sarah** has also embraced being a volunteer at AAC. Her journey with AWWA began when she was struggling to cope with overwhelming health challenges. In particular, she found it difficult to administer her daily insulin injections because they were a constant reminder of her vulnerability. After identifying her key needs, AWWA staff connected her with Home Personal Care Services, centre-based nursing services, and CREST mental wellness services. AWWA also encouraged her neighbours to check in regularly on her to provide her with companionship and emotional support. Additionally, Mdm Sarah started participating in the wide range of activities offered by AAC.

Within a year, her life transformed. She adapted to her new medication routine and because of her improved health and expanded social connections, she found a renewed sense of purpose. Encouraged by her fellow AAC members, Mdm Sarah has deepened her community participation and enthusiastically pursues volunteer opportunities.

The integration of the health and social sectors, as emphasised by the CoC model, has been crucial in supporting the three seniors in living and ageing well in the community. Their stories are a beacon of hope, highlighting the need to further expand cohesive health and social care networks across Singapore to empower seniors to age with dignity, grace and joy.



Mdm Sarah participating in centre activities

## Community Mental Health (CMH)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

CMH (also known as Community Resource, Engagement and Support Team - CREST) is an outreach team that raises public awareness of mental health conditions and dementia. In addition, it encourages timely diagnoses of at-risk people and provides emotional support to clients and caregivers. The CMH team works with other community partners to conduct preventive activities that support mental wellbeing.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The number of people (clients and caregivers) receiving follow-up services by CMH has steadily increased over the years to 756 at the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2022.
- Far surpassing the target of 3,000 participants, CMH reached out to 8,013 people at the end of FY 2022 to connect them to dementia and mental health support services.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Together with other Ang Mo Kio Network partners, CMH organises the annual Walk2Remember event in September for World Alzheimer's Day to raise awareness of dementia and to support people with dementia and their caregivers.
- In 2022, CMH developed a Community Living Resource booklet for Ang Mo Kio Town with other social service agencies and Tan Tock Seng Hospital, which outlines neighbourhood dementia resources and services to live and age well in the community. A similar booklet for Woodlands Town will be designed in 2024.
- CMH established the Dementia Search Activation Network (DSAN), a hyperlocal Telegram channel in the Sembawang-Woodlands community with 283 members. This network promotes the community activation of members to look out for people living with dementia who are lost.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Internal partners
  - » AAC for co-management of clients in the community and for referrals for CREST @ Yio Chu Kang
- External partners
  - » Grassroots organisations, schools and places of worship to raise awareness of mental health services



Self-service cognitive engagement games rack, which provides accessible options for seniors



Commencement of Walk2Remember

## Catalysts of Resilience: CREST's Mental Health Interventions

In the last three years, COVID-19 has triggered mental health challenges around the world. From dealing with lockdowns to losing loved ones, people are struggling with navigating uncertainty, anxiety and grief. CREST has been providing mental health and emotional support to people in its catchment area and is connecting clients to relevant support services.

58-year-old **Mr Y** was struggling with severe anxiety in early 2020. He had lost his job, and his marriage was turbulent. As a result, he was constantly shivering from anxiety and was unable to leave his home. He also lost his confidence and self-esteem and experienced frequent panic attacks stemming from COVID-19 lockdowns and hygiene protocols.

His anxiety was exacerbated when his wife lodged a magistrate's complaint against him for not wanting to apply for her son's Singapore citizenship. Since Mr Y was more comfortable speaking Chinese, he found the legal procedures in English intimidating. He was also unfamiliar with online platforms, such as Zoom, which became commonplace during the pandemic.

Mr Y met the CREST team in August 2021 and has been receiving counselling support. Noting his severe anxiety and unique stressors, the social worker designed a plan to slowly scaffold supportive interventions. They introduced breathing techniques in each session to help Mr Y regulate his emotions in times of high stress. Further, they eased his anxiety around online platforms by showing him how Zoom works and by clarifying the different steps in the legal process he was facing.

Armed with this new knowledge and with the help of mindful breathing techniques, Mr Y's anxiety decreased. The team also taught him how to have healthier relationships with people at home. After two years with CREST, Mr Y's shivering and panic attacks have completely stopped, and he has been able to leave his house. Because of that, he has been more active in leisure and community activities outdoors. Mr Y is looking forward to starting a new job and has also decided to give back to the community as a Silver Generation Ambassador.

**Mdm K** was also experiencing a challenging time when COVID-19 started. The CREST team met her

during a door-to-door outreach effort in February 2022. Mdm K, who is in her 70s, was grieving the recent loss of her husband from COVID-19 and lacked a strong informal support system. Since she grew up in Hong Kong and moved back to Singapore in her late 20s, she does not speak much English or Mandarin and has trouble making friends. She also relied on her husband to manage household matters before his death.

The CREST social worker connected Mdm K to medical and community resources so she can better manage her physical and mental health. By improving her health, she was also able to be a better caregiver for her grandson. Additionally, the social worker helped Mdm K navigate legal and financial matters, such as wills, estate management and housing ownership, and taught her how to use smartphones and communication apps. Further, Mdm K joined the befriending service to expand her social network.



Mdm K learning how to use technology

CREST's multi-pronged and targeted approach to support Mdm K has been a tremendous success. She is now well-connected with her friends in Hong Kong through WhatsApp and is more aware of how to independently access community resources. As her formal and informal support systems have strengthened, Mdm K is now better equipped to cope with the grief of losing her husband and its attendant changes in her life.

Mr Y's and Mdm K's stories highlight the profound impact at the individual and community levels when comprehensive and personalised mental health support meets the courage to embrace change. Through its dedication to providing tailored mental health services and its emphasis on the holistic wellbeing of clients, the CREST team is helping people navigate major life changes and forge meaningful social connections. CREST's work is invaluable in creating a healthier and more resilient Singapore, one individual at a time.

## Dementia Day Care Centres (DDCCs)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

Located in Ang Mo Kio and Yishun, DDCCs focus on slowing down the deterioration of physical and mental functions in people with dementia. Through person-centred care and an array of activities designed to promote community integration of people with dementia, DDCCs delay the need for institutionalisation and provide support and respite to caregivers.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- DDCC-Yishun commenced operations in 2018 and has supported more than 50 seniors a year since then.
- In DDCC-Ang Mo Kio, the caregiver satisfaction score improved from 91% in 2020 to 95% in 2022.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Since 2020, DDCC-Ang Mo Kio has been implementing Care Beyond Walls (CBW), a pilot supported by the Lien Foundation that re-imagines centre-based care for people with dementia with personalised and interest-based community activities. Together with The Care Lab and IELO Design, this project challenges the programmatic and spatial boundaries of traditional centre-based services and promotes inclusive spaces for people with dementia in the community. Examples of CBW interventions include outings to temples, schools and gardens, where AWWA's partners host DDCC clients. The final evaluation for CBW will be conducted by Tri-Sector Associates in early 2025.
- AWWA's Health and Senior Care team held their first Caregivers' Appreciation Day in DDCC-Yishun in November 2022 to celebrate the often-invisible work of caregiving that is essential to supporting people with dementia at home.
- DDCC-Yishun curated an art exhibition of 54 works produced by seniors since 2020 to promote dementia awareness. This exhibition, which ran from January to October 2023, was supported by Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Ageing Asia, Bishan Library, National University of Singapore, Sengkang General Hospital and Surbana Jurong.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » OCBC Cares for support with value-added activities
  - » Lien Foundation for their generous support of CBW
  - » CBW community partners (e.g. Elias Park Primary School, Jamiyah Childcare Centre, and Sri Darma Muneeswaran Temple)
  - » Khoo Teck Puat Hospital for weekly client case discussions
  - » Campus Impact for volunteers and school partnerships



Senior painting at DDCC-Yishun

Exhibition of art work done by seniors at DDCC at NUS Medicine and Science Library

## Reshaping Tomorrows: Inspiring Narratives from the Heart of Dementia Care

As Singapore rapidly ages, dementia rates are increasing. AWWA's two DDCCs in Ang Mo Kio and Yishun are models of compassionate and innovative care that customise interventions to each senior's personality and preferences.

At DDCC-Ang Mo Kio, 73-year-old **Mr W**, diagnosed with moderate stage Alzheimer's Disease, frequently displayed confusion, restlessness and agitation. He also experienced disorientation and occasional bouts of aggression. His caregiver struggled to manage him at home and was highly stressed.

When Mr W arrived at DDCC-Ang Mo Kio, the staff conducted a thorough review of his history and learned that he had worked as a housekeeper in a preschool and that he strongly identified with the "worker" role. To help him adapt to the day care setting, the team replicated his work environment. They created a fake staff pass, a work schedule and a bank book to help him orient himself and to help with memory recall. Through creative role-playing, they facilitated a make-believe scenario where he continued his cherished role as a housekeeper within the centre.

The impact was profound. Mr W adapted well to his new environment and his confusion and agitation declined when he rediscovered his sense of purpose. His caregiver was thus able to better manage him at home, which eased their stress level.

**Mr J** and his caregivers also found similar success in DDCC-Yishun. In 2023, as his dementia progressed, Mr J developed a peculiar habit – he obsessively paced through the neighbourhood for the whole day. His wife or his helper would follow him around to keep him safe, which took a toll on their health.

Mr J was referred to DDCC-Yishun for assistance since his caregivers were overwhelmed. The centre wanted to design a new routine for him to combat his obsessive pacing but faced multiple challenges. Mr J often refused to go to DDCC-Yishun and when he visited, he did not eat the food served in the centre. After several rounds of trial and error, the staff discovered that presenting meals in a specific way (banchan/tapas-style) appealed to him and induced him to eat.



Mr J at DDCC-Yishun

As Mr J adjusted to his new setting, he became an active participant in DDCC outings and special programmes (e.g. festival celebrations). He now regularly attends day care every weekday and even won a

"Best Dressed" competition held at the centre. This shift in Mr J's behaviour has significantly increased the quality of life for his caregivers. His helper can focus on managing the household and Mrs J is able to take some time for herself; she recently went to Johor Bahru with her sister, a trip she once thought impossible.



Mr J enjoying his meal at DDCC-Yishun

Through their individualised care plans and innovative practices, both DDCCs are reshaping the lives of seniors and caregivers and modelling best practices in facilitating dignified and connected lives for people with dementia. In ageing Singapore, the stories from DDCC-Ang Mo Kio and DDCC-Yishun underscore the importance of redefining care paradigms and building a society where everyone, regardless of their cognitive status, is embraced.

## Integrated Home and Day Care Centre (IHDC)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

IHDC began in 2016 and provides comprehensive home- and centre-based care for seniors. Leveraging person-centred care models, it provides support for seniors ageing at home to delay institutionalisation in nursing homes. Through IHDC's interventions, seniors continue to be active in their communities and maintain their independence.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

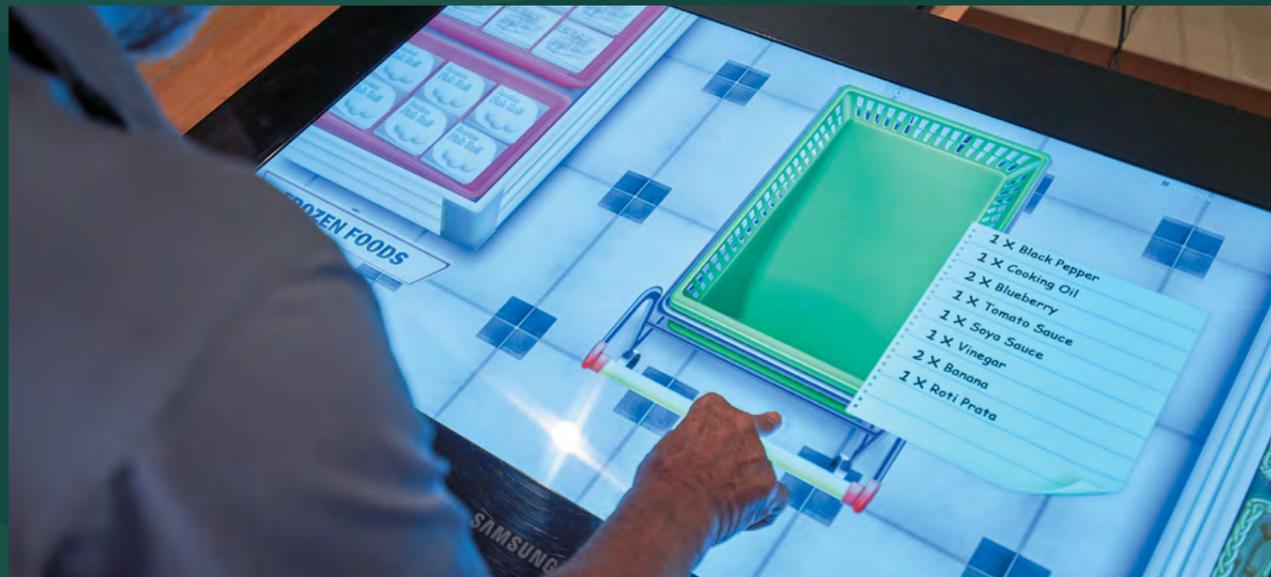
- In 2023, IHDC moved to Block 609, Ang Mo Kio Ave 4, from Boon Keng. In this new location, its capacity doubled from 18 to 40 after the facility expanded the rehab gym and equipment to better serve seniors. By moving closer to other AWWA services within Ang Mo Kio, IHDC can now more effectively coordinate care needs and design new community-based activities for seniors with community stakeholders.
- IHDC has served 127 seniors since it opened.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Together with Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH), Community Nursing Post (CNP), the Silver Generation Office (SGO), Methodist Welfare Services (MWS) AAC at Kebun Baru, and Thye Hua Kwan AAC at Block 645 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 6, IHDC started a Community Silver Trust (CST) Assisted Living project in 2023. The aim is to serve 50 frail and vulnerable seniors in the neighbourhood through a comprehensive suite of services, including functional screenings, care coordination, nursing care and support, home safety assessments, assistive technology support for seniors to reduce falls, social support, therapeutic services and meals support. This project implements a holistic care model to better support ageing in place for seniors at the community level.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » TTSH for regular consultations to discuss client care needs



Senior playing a digital game at Integrated Home and Day Care Centre

## Embracing Independence: Mr Kong's Journey with Person-Centred Care

In Singapore's rapidly ageing society, seniors prefer to age at home and maintain their independence and connections to their communities. This requires an integrated neighbourhood-level care infrastructure to support older people's health and social needs. AWWA's IHDC facilitates healthy and active ageing in place for seniors with a person-centred care (PCC) approach, which customises interventions for each client.

64-year-old Mr Kong Weng Chuen greatly benefited from IHDC's dedicated care team. He was admitted to IHDC in July 2021 with a mixed Alzheimer's and vascular dementia diagnosis. He is single, unemployed and lives alone in a one-room rental flat in Ang Mo Kio. Although he was largely able to independently perform daily activities and move around the neighbourhood in a motorised scooter before entering IHDC, his worsening dementia was starting to impact his life.

Mr Kong has no specific caregiver and has a distant relationship with his siblings. He also requires financial assistance for his care needs. IHDC was part of his interim care plan, and he was on a waitlist for a nursing home referral.

The IHDC care team, comprising nurses, community care associates, therapists and drivers, designed an individualised care plan for Mr Kong to maintain his functional status and keep him socially engaged with activities. Initially, the team encountered many challenges in working with him. He was non-compliant with medication, displayed challenging behaviours, and because of his inability to retain information, he was often not at home when the team arrived to take him to IHDC.

Over the next seven months, the care team methodically addressed Mr Kong's issues. He receives services five days a week, and visits IHDC five days a week. Once a week, care staff help him with simple housekeeping. With their consistent and reliable presence, the team slowly fostered his compliance with medication and addressed his behavioural issues with empathy and patience. His attendance at the centre has improved and he is more engaged in IHDC's activities. His doctor has also noted the positive changes in Mr Kong, observing his increased

compliance with medication and the reduction in behavioural issues. With this marked improvement in his quality of life at home, his nursing home referral was withdrawn in February 2022.



Playing foosball with Integrated Home and Day Care Centre care staff

Mr Kong's journey with the IHDC care team demonstrates how, with the right support, seniors with complex health needs can flourish at home. The centre's PCC approach empowers older people to age with dignity and grace, while receiving comprehensive care dedicated to their unique needs. With their work supporting seniors to age in place, IHDC is reducing the burden on long-term care facilities and is paving the way for a more inclusive society where ageing does not equate to isolation.

Morning walk with Integrated Home and Day Care Centre care staff



## Rehab and Day Care Centre (RDCC)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

RDCC started in 1998 and supports people with chronic diseases and/or functional impairments in living an independent, healthy and socially connected life. In line with its holistic care philosophy, the centre provides multi-disciplinary rehabilitation, social work services, custodial care and health-promoting activities.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Even with a pandemic, the number of centre-based clients increased from 277 to 338 from 2019 to 2022. In the same period, the number of home-based clients increased from 125 to 280.
- To fully implement AWWA's holistic care approach, 100% of clients have individualised care plans, tailored to their unique needs and interests.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- In November 2022, RDCC started participating in One-Rehab, a nationwide initiative to enhance patients' rehabilitation journeys and outcomes. This includes tracking outcomes from key diagnostic groups, such as stroke and total knee replacement.
- RDCC is leveraging technology, including visual feedback tools for common exercises and robot-assisted therapy for stroke rehabilitation, to improve quality of care and staff productivity.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » Tan Tock Seng Hospital
  - » Lien Foundation
  - » NUS for SMART Centre



Client and therapists during an intervention at Rehab and Day Care Centre



Trialling the Exoskeleton



Gym Tonic



Group exercise at Rehab and Day Care Centre



Seniors doing physiotherapy exercises with therapists

## Mr Tan's Path to Independence with Community Rehabilitation

52-year-old Mr Tan Chor Yong lived an active lifestyle before he suffered a stroke in August 2022. When he was referred to RDCC, he was facing a slew of challenges. His upper and lower limb strength had significantly diminished, his coordination was impaired, and his endurance had weakened. Additionally, he was unable to use his left arm, his knees often buckled, and he sometimes could not lift his ankle when walking. As a result, his gait was slow and stiff.

The RDCC team designed an individualised care plan with Mr Tan, incorporating his personal goals to resume playing sports and driving. With their expertise and support, Mr Tan regularly attended rehabilitation sessions at the centre at least three times a week and diligently performed his prescribed exercises at home.

By November 2022, Mr Tan's health dramatically improved. His stiff, hesitant steps transformed into confident strides. Through intensive and targeted rehabilitation, he regained his physical abilities, and on the way, his self-confidence. He was able to play tennis and badminton with smooth and fluid movements and could travel and drive on his own again.

Mr Tan's recovery illustrates the vital role services like RDCC play in ensuring that people with complex health challenges are integrated into their community and continue to lead healthy and independent lives. The marked improvements in his quality of life, physical health and mental health also demonstrate the power of a holistic care approach to rehabilitation, when all facets of a client's health and well-being are addressed with a comprehensive treatment plan. Mr Tan's experience is a compelling reminder to continue investing in community health infrastructure to lay the groundwork for more stories of resilience and strength.

## Senior Community Home (SCH)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

SCH provides accommodation for low-income seniors above 60, who have no alternative living arrangements. SCH enables and empowers seniors to live independently and to actively participate in the community through the provision of person-centred, community-based and team-oriented services.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- More than ten SCH residents have reintegrated into the community over the past three years through moving to public rental housing and reconciling with family.
- Over the last 5 years, SCH has consistently achieved at least 90% satisfaction on resident satisfaction surveys.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- From 2022 to 2023, SCH staff and partners conducted digital literacy courses to improve residents' digital wellbeing and confidence using technology.
- In 2022, the SCH community garden was officially launched for seniors to experience the therapeutic benefits of collaborative gardening.
- To promote active ageing, the TV room was converted into a mini gym for seniors.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Internal partners
  - » AWWA Schools
  - » Kindle Garden
  - » Dementia Day Care Centre – Ang Mo Kio
- External partners
  - » Food Citizen for community garden
  - » PanCare Clinic for client care needs
  - » Republic Polytechnic for Health Coach Project
  - » Nanyang Polytechnic for Industry Project Collaboration



Senior Community Home residents playing a game together



Client and staff enjoying a festive celebration together

## The Heartbeat of Community Health: Integrated Services for Successful Ageing

AWWA's SCH offers accommodation and community integration services for low-income seniors living in vulnerable settings. Mr Wong Ah Kaw and Mdm Tey Cho Keng are two residents who are flourishing from being a part of SCH and the other Health and Senior Care services offered by AWWA.

**Mr Wong**, who is 82, became a member of the Active Ageing Centre (AAC) after he moved to a public rental flat in 2015. He found it challenging to get along with his co-tenant despite his best efforts and avoided going home. He preferred sleeping at the void decks nearby during the day and his mood was affected by the lack of a comfortable living environment. The AAC team was concerned about Mr Wong and suggested that he move to SCH in 2021.

At SCH, staff conducted a comprehensive assessment of his needs. He had been previously diagnosed with Alzheimer's dementia, and the SCH team referred him to AWWA's Dementia Day Care Centre (DDCC) – Ang Mo Kio and Rehab and Day Care Centre to boost his social engagement, improve his functional abilities and slow the disease's progression. Additionally, they support his daily health and social needs, including helping him manage his medication and chronic health conditions and facilitating friendships with other SCH residents. The team also ensures that Mr Wong maintains his relationship with his daughter by coordinating visits and regular phone calls.

Despite his dementia diagnosis, the integrated and holistic suite of AWWA services provided to Mr Wong has enabled him to live an independent life. SCH staff encourage him to keep to his routine as much as possible, like visiting the local coffee shop and keeping up with his appointments, while they provide as much support as he needs. This helps Mr Wong live with autonomy and freedom in his neighbourhood to which he feels deeply connected.

**Mdm Tey** has also deepened her social participation, thanks to the SCH team. She has been a resident since 2016. In 2020, SCH staff started prioritising community engagement activities for residents, based on their interests. The pandemic also presented opportunities for residents to actively participate in measures supporting their community health and

safety, such as regularly taking and documenting temperatures.



Mdm Tey prepping afternoon tea for clients at DDCC-Ang Mo Kio

The team identified Mdm Tey's interest in volunteering and connected her with DDCC-Ang Mo Kio. She has become a daily fixture in their kitchen, helping the staff with washing and cleaning. She was recently recognised for her dedicated service with an award for volunteerism.

Mr Wong's and Mdm Tey's experiences at SCH highlight the vital importance of comprehensive and harmoniously integrated services that promote healthy ageing at the community level. SCH and AWWA's other Health and Senior Care services exemplify this approach, offering tailored care that addresses the unique needs of seniors in the neighbourhood. From providing needs assessments to designing community engagement initiatives, SCH provides a supportive environment for seniors to thrive. The stories of Mr Wong and Mdm Tey are an incentive to accelerate the development of inclusive community health services to create age-friendly neighbourhoods.



Mdm Tey washing cups after the afternoon tea break

# FAMILY SERVICES

## Family Service Centre (FSC) and Transitional Shelters (TS)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

FSC supports families living in vulnerable settings in building resilience, stability, self-reliance and social mobility through social work interventions. TS provides temporary accommodation and onsite social work interventions for displaced families; the goal is for TS families to achieve long-term stable housing and improve their level of self-sufficiency.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The two Transitional Shelters, constructed in 2018 and 2021, have supported 153 families, as of September 2023.
- In 2017, FSC started a mindfulness group, called “Mindful Me,”! to support caregivers. The group aims to share mindfulness practices to help caregivers cope with the challenges of taking care of aged relatives with additional needs and mental health challenges. 89% of participants from 2017 to 2022 reported that they have experienced an improvement in life satisfaction after the group sessions. 66% of caregivers experienced a reduction in stress and 100% of participants shared that they were practicing at least 1 out of 7 emotional care strategies.
- In 2020, FSC conducted a client satisfaction survey with 214 clients. 93% of clients reported being satisfied with FSC’s services. Clients were particularly impressed with the staff’s resourcefulness, supportive caseworkers, and the tangible improvements they experienced in their lives because of FSC’s interventions.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- With the support of Standard Chartered, Temasek Trust and Tri-Sector Associates, FSC implemented a pay-for-success income stability pilot called the Family Empowerment Programme (FEP). Conceptualised in 2021 and implemented in 2022, FEP is the first unconditional cash transfer programme and randomised controlled trial in Singapore. It explored the impact of monthly cash assistance over 18 months on educational, employment and other quality-of-life outcomes in families living in vulnerable settings. FEP concluded in 2023 and successfully achieved the outcomes needed to trigger the next tranche of funds for FEP 2.
- On December 10, 2022, TS held its largest in-person annual graduation ceremony yet to celebrate families who had secured long-term housing. These ceremonies are also a platform for families to share messages of hope and resilience to inspire and encourage one another.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » GIC for COVID-19 funding for displaced families
  - » Marina Bay Sands for being a key TS donor and for sponsoring joyful activities for families
  - » Standard Chartered Bank, Temasek Trust and Tri-Sector Associates for their support with FEP



**[Working with AWWA has given us] insight into the various communities that may often be invisible, vulnerable, people sitting outside the mainstream of society.**

Mr Raveen Bharvani, ESG Lead, LGT Private Banking Singapore



Caregiver activity



Photo of Caregiver Group



Graduation ceremony



Transitional Shelter

## Rising from Adversity: A Family’s Path to Stability and Hope

Mdm Quek (46 years) lived with her mother, Mdm Li (72 years), and four children with ages ranging from 8 to 15. After her husband’s death in 2006, Mdm Quek was unemployed and was financially supported by her mother’s monthly CPF payout of \$250 and her Silver Support Scheme assistance (\$200 per month).

AWWA’s FSC initially met Mdm Quek and her family in 2013 when she sought support for financial and childcare challenges. The FSC team’s assessment revealed a web of problems: no work-capable adults in the household, a mounting housing loan exceeding \$30,000, insufficient financial support for the growing family, child neglect, and an unsuitable living environment marked by hoarding and cleanliness issues. The children often missed school and suffered from skin problems because of their living conditions.

The FSC team designed a comprehensive intervention plan for Mdm Quek using the bio-psycho-social-spiritual (BPSS) framework. Using the BPSS lens, the team identified six primary challenges for the family: family violence, child neglect, Mdm Quek’s diminished mental capacity and ability to be an adequate caregiver for her children, unsafe living environment, housing instability, and insecure finances.

To set the family on the path to long-term financial independence and wellbeing, FSC collaborated with a wide range of partners. To implement their support plan for financial and housing stability, they applied for Comcare Financial Assistance for the family’s basic living needs and schooling expenses. YMCA’s M.Y MANNA and MOE’s Financial Assistance schemes provided for their grocery needs, school fees and childcare expenses. The FSC team also helped the family reach out to HDB to negotiate a minimum payment plan to secure the flat.

To protect the children’s welfare and development, the FSC team worked with Child Protective Services

(CPS) and referred the children for fostering support. Mr Tan, a community volunteer, visited the family every week to provide additional assistance with the children's safety and development needs. Additionally, the FSC team collaborated with the children's schools and childcare centres to improve their attendance and identify any learning challenges.

Mdm Quek and Mdm Li also received support for their health. They were referred to Adult Protective Services (APS) for healthcare support, and the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) provided a formal diagnosis and medication for Mdm Quek's mental health condition – delusional disorder. APS arranged for doorstep medical support for Mdm Li and a hospital checkup for Mdm Quek. When doctors found a lump in Mdm Quek's stomach, APS facilitated further treatment and the FSC team supported Mdm Quek throughout the process. Within three months, Mdm Quek had fully recovered from her surgery.

As the family's financial, physical and mental health improved, the FSC team coordinated resources from multiple partners to improve their living environment. From 2020 to 2021, FSC drew \$2,500 from GIC's donations and worked with AERO HUB Pest Control & Cleaning Support, Max Value Building Services, Ban Hock Furnishing Pte. Ltd., and Habitat to clean up and repaint the flat and set up new furniture.



The family's house before Family Service Centre's interventions

With this coordinated and multi-pronged approach, the family's transformation was astounding. The family is now financially independent and has stable housing with the help of HDB's new payment plan. They are also renting out one of their rooms for \$600 per month. Mdm Quek has been compliant with her medication and has displayed no aggressive behaviour since she started receiving treatment at IMH. Her physical health has also improved. Three children are placed with foster families and the second child is fostered by Mr Tan. Although the court has ordered the children to be fostered until they are 21, Mdm Quek continues to see her children regularly with the support of FSC, CPS, and the Thye Hua Kwan Centre for Family Harmony.



The newly cleaned house

The family's new lease on life is also reflected in their newly refurbished flat. Mr Tan and the caseworker regularly visit Mdm Quek and Mdm Li and have observed that the flat is maintained well by them and their tenants. FSC hopes to close their case in March 2024 as the family members have achieved all their goals and are well on their way to long-term financial security and happy, healthy lives. FSC has scheduled an end-of-case celebration in March 2024 to celebrate the family's achievements and to recognise the contributions of the caseworkers who have journeyed with them for over ten years.



Sand tray therapy with the family when the family felt scattered



Sand tray therapy with the family when they felt united after Family Service Centre's interventions

FSC's support for Mdm Quek and her family demonstrates the importance of a comprehensive and holistic intervention plan for families living in vulnerable settings, experiencing multiple and intersecting challenges. Only by treating the roots, and not just the symptoms of problems, can we foster sustainable change and genuine progress. Further, her family's journey illustrates how crucial it is for a network of supportive partners across sectors to work together to effectively support clients. In order to strengthen families and enable them to thrive, our interventions and partners must be as multi-faceted as the challenges families experience. FSC's steadfast commitment to Mdm Quek and her family is testament to the efficacy of comprehensive support models, inviting service providers and government and community partners to embrace a holistic ethos in their mission and practices to uplift families living in vulnerable settings.

## Allied Health Professional Group (AHPG)

### SERVICE OBJECTIVES

AHPG provides a reliable supply of licensed, independent and competent Allied Health Professionals (AHPs), such as Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech and Language Therapists and Psychologists, to meet the evolving needs of AWWA's clients and its partner organisations. By consistently raising and maintaining the professional standards of therapy services, AHPG has been instrumental in building capacity and capability across the health, education and social sectors and in improving client outcomes.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- AHPG is currently the biggest therapy hub in Singapore and is an important conduit to training and placing therapists, many of whom are fresh graduates. It works with close to seventy internal and external services across the disability and health sectors. In addition to AWWA's clients, AHPs have supported over 5,000 clients from over 40 external organisations and have received satisfaction ratings exceeding 80%.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- AHPG plays a central role in improving inter-professional collaborative practices (IPCP) across the organisation. To expand the capabilities of therapists beyond their core disciplines, AHPG engaged SAHK to train 60 AWWA staff across the disability continuum. After this training ended, ten classes in AWWA Schools @ Napiri and @ Bedok were selected to pilot IPCP. This pilot has been successful, and its learnings will be rolled out at a larger scale.
- AHPG has continued to deepen its capabilities in specialty practices, including managing feeding, low vision, seating and mobility, and hydrotherapy.
- To deepen core clinical skills, AHPG rolled out on-the-job training and foundation training in sensory integration, safe handling and facilitation skills. 420 staff participated in these trainings in 2022 and 2023; trainings like these help AWWA expand professional development opportunities and improve its ability to manage medical needs at the community level.
- In 2021/2022, the splint clinic moved to Lab Integrate at the corporate office to reduce clients' waiting time to receive splinting support from AHPs. As the process became more streamlined for clients across AWWA's services, timely splinting support enhanced client participation in the community.
- AWWA's Pain Management Centre, with roots in a 2016 informal wellness initiative, was established in 2023. The focus of the centre is to enhance AHPs' capabilities in musculo-skeletal training and pain management to provide a higher quality of care to clients and staff.

### KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- External partners
  - » Ministries, Statutory Boards, and Institutes of Higher Learning
  - » MOH Central Health System
  - » Allied Health Professions Council
  - » Social service agencies and community care organisations



**AHPG's dynamic training opportunities are constantly evolving to meet the needs and gaps we are witnessing on the ground. This helps our AHPs expand their skillsets and learn how to work across disciplines to better support clients. This proactive approach has made a big impact in our partner organisations, increasing service efficiency and effectiveness.**

Ms Joyce Lum, Deputy Director (Allied Health Professional Group), AWWA

## Impact of AHPG on its Partners

### St. Andrew's Autism Centre

"AWWA Therapists are sincere and put in [their] best efforts to support the clients at the Day Activity Centre. [They] work well with the other Allied Professionals and do their very best to support the needs of [their] clients.

[They] engage with coaches and other Allied Professionals well. [They are] hardworking and are always open to feedback.

We are pleased to have them."

**Therapists: Jaya, Sim Mun & Hellows**

**Mr Ravindran Nair Binu (SK & Siglap)**



At AWWA's first InnovTech Fest in 2023, Allied Health Professionals share pain management strategies



Allied Health Professionals demonstrate the use of Mobi Chair, an inclusive chair designed for wheelchair users with additional needs

**DNR Wheels Pte. Ltd**

“Dear Ms Vanitha Muthiah,

I am writing to show my appreciation for working with you [for] SUNDAC and other AWWA clients for proper seating solutions.

For each client, I have seen you going the extra mile, intervening to explain in detail to make them understand the reasons for and importance of each part or equipment required for longer hours of proper seating. I also noticed that you repeatedly explained and demonstrated to client’s family members or caretakers [how] to position the user on the mobility equipment step-by-step to achieve the best seating position so [as] to prevent further deterioration to their posture for long-term care.

It has been great teaming up to work with you and we look forward to [serving] more people with such needs.

Once again, thank you.”

**Raja Singh, PBM - DNR Wheels Pte Ltd**

**Raffles Medical Group**

“Dear friends from AWWA & MOH,

I am writing to thank all of you for the invaluable support you have given to the Raffles team throughout [these] 2 months of running our Transitional Care Facility.

Although the stint was short, Dr Melvyn and the entire Raffles team learnt a lot from the expertise of our colleagues from AWWA and we are deeply grateful for the shared effort in caring for these patients.

Many thanks to our MOH colleagues for helping us link up with such wonderful team-mates at such short notice. Am [heartened] and thankful for this big public-private collaborative effort.”

**Therapists: OT Korrine Koh, Sr OT Lynette Lee, Pr OT Yap Liwen, Pr PT Gladwin Prabhu**

**Dr Tan Joo Peng, Director, Operations, Raffles Medical Group**

# TASKFORCES, PILOTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

## TECHNOLOGY TASKFORCE

### To Boldly Go Where No AWWA Technology Has Gone Before

**T**he Tech Taskforce at AWWA explores and leverages the latest technologies to improve client outcomes and enhance effective work practices. Consisting of Practicing Professionals across the spectrum of AWWA’s services, the Taskforce identifies and implements appropriate assistive technologies, depending on each client’s unique needs. The Taskforce is also a resource for AWWA staff to streamline internal processes and to develop strategic external partnerships to spur innovation.

AWWA’s drive to incorporate more technology in its existing work was invaluable when COVID-19 started in 2020. Face-to-face therapy sessions were not allowed during the circuit breakers, but therapy remained essential to support the continued development of clients, like children with additional needs. AWWA staff swiftly shifted to tele-practice and online modes of engagement. Within the Tech Taskforce, a special interest group was set up to analyse the gaps and concerns associated with tele-practice expressed by staff and their clients.

One significant challenge was teaching clients and caregivers how to access online therapy sessions and consultations. With the support of the Tech Taskforce team, AWWA staff conducted trial sessions with clients and caregivers to increase their confidence and comfort levels with online platforms. They helped clients identify how to troubleshoot issues like switching to headphones when needed and managing their audio and video quality. Further, several AWWA services conducted micro-teaching sessions to help clients adapt to tele-practice and provided detailed information on WhatsApp or via hard copy information packets. If clients still felt uncomfortable with online programmes, therapists mailed hard copy materials to them and discussed the materials with them over the phone.

As clients and caregivers adjusted to tele-practice during COVID-19 lockdowns, therapists expanded their range of online interventions. Live and pre-recorded exercise videos for seniors to follow along at home and on-



The team really supported me at this time when I had to learn technology, which is not my strength.

Ms M. Yasothara, Senior Educational Guidance Officer, Community Integration Service, AWWA, on adapting to new technologies during COVID-19

line game-based activities were included to keep clients from all backgrounds engaged. This transition to tele-practice also improved communication between AWWA, clients, caregivers, and other stakeholders like teachers. When case conferences and caregiver update sessions moved online, it became more convenient for everyone to come together.



Therapist engaging clients

Therapists, too, leveraged technology to keep up with their training during the COVID-19 circuit breakers. Since in-person therapy was not possible, the Tech Taskforce identified MedBridge as a digital resource for patient education, caregiver training and therapist training. AWWA therapists have continued to use MedBridge to augment therapist training and to improve client engagement. Additionally, the Taskforce is always on the lookout for new models of digital engagement and therapies. Currently, AWWA is collaborating with Dancing Minds, a digital therapeutics platform to use virtual reality tools during therapy sessions.

Besides refining tele-practice at AWWA, the Tech Taskforce has also prioritised partnerships with schools and non-profits to enhance the use of assistive technology and 3D printing. Through collaborative projects with Nanyang Technological University, Republic Polytechnic and Singapore Institute of Technology, AWWA has designed customised joysticks for motorised wheelchairs, portable ramps, and a shared book reading application for children with additional needs and their caregivers. The Taskforce also encouraged staff across all services to participate in Engineering Good's Annual Innovation Challenge (Tech for Good) and the National Council of Social Service's Sector Design Challenge (2021). AWWA's Charlie and Us app to support clients with ASD and their caregivers was developed for the Sector Design Challenge and is currently in trial mode.

The Tech Taskforce is committed to keeping AWWA at the forefront of innovation, using state-of-the-art technologies to revolutionise client outcomes and intervention efficiency. By adeptly navigating the challenges posed by COVID-19, it facilitated a seamless transition to tele-practice that maintained vital therapy services and fostered a more connected and inclusive support system. The Taskforce has also been instrumental in AWWA embracing cutting-edge tools like virtual reality programming and assistive technology. Their work propels AWWA's mission to enhance client participation to new heights.

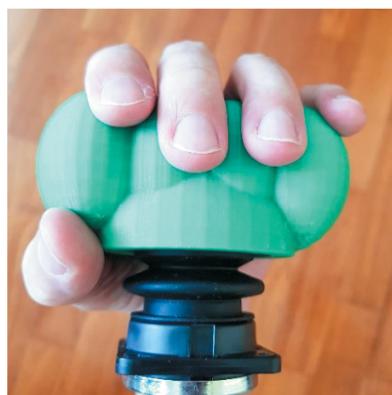


**Daring to go into uncharted spaces.**

Assoc Prof Wong Meng Ee, NIE, NTU – Psychology and Child & Human Development, on AWWA



Students using modified switches with cause-and-effect toys



3D printed customised joystick, a project with Republic Polytechnic



Therapists conducting virtual reality sessions with students

**Expanding Horizons: Technology-Driven Support for People with Disabilities**

The Tech Taskforce at AWWA is driving the strategic adoption of technological interventions across the organisation to support clients in leading more empowered lives. The fusion of inter-professional collaboration and cutting-edge technology is shaping new narratives of independence, integration and inclusion for clients and caregivers. The stories of Zi Yee, the Charlie & Us app team, and the WriteSpace team illustrate AWWA's commitment to thoughtfully harnessing technology in its holistic care approach to client development and wellbeing.

**Zi Yee and iPushing Limits**

Zi Yee is currently at School @ Napiri, after graduating from AWWA's Early Intervention Centre. She was diagnosed with Prader Willi Syndrome and is wheelchair bound. She is currently being pushed in her wheelchair by others from one place to another. Her father, Mr Teo, who is her primary caregiver, is deeply committed to his daughter being as independent as possible in her daily activities.

Recognising the importance of addressing Zi Yee's mobility challenges, the Tech Taskforce, in partnership with School @ Napiri staff and the NUS Biomedical Engineering for Good (bGood) team, embarked on a mission to enhance her independence and quality of life.

After a comprehensive assessment of Zi Yee's needs, the team identified iPush as the best technology for her. Designed by NUS, iPush is an innovative device that attaches to manual wheelchairs and helps users propel themselves without having to grasp the wheel rims. With iPush, Zi Yee would be able to navigate herself with increased ease and efficiency, significantly reducing physical strain and minimising injury.

The Tech Taskforce 3D printed the design and installed it on Zi Yee's wheelchair. Mr Teo, an engineer with a keen interest in technology and new ideas, welcomed iPush and has been encouraging Zi Yee to use it. Mr Teo noted that Zi Yee has started using



Zi Yee using iPush



Zi Yee using iPush with her father in the library

iPush when prompted. The team is also supporting and observing Zi Yee's usage of iPush and is working on redesigning the tool until it motivates her to independently use it. Together with Mr Teo, the Inter-Professional Collaborative Practices (IPCP) team is hoping that with consistent practice and guidance at school and at home, Zi Yee will soon be able to propel herself from one point to another without prompting or assistance.



iPush: customised for AWWA School students

### “Charlie & Us”: A Lifeline for Clients and Caregivers

In response to rising rates of autism in Singapore and around the world, AWWA is strengthening and expanding its arsenal of interventions to support clients with autism and their caregivers. There are approximately 50,000 individuals with autism in Singapore currently and 23% are under the age of 19 years. People with autism and their loved ones face several challenges, such as sensory overload, disruptions to routines and public meltdowns, during community activities.

In 2021, a team from AWWA participated in NCSS's Sector Design Challenge. The team wanted to develop a solution that would empower caregivers and enhance the overall quality of life for people with autism. The team designed an app called “Charlie and Us: Allies in Autism,” which is both a resource bank and a crisis management tool for caregivers. Leveraging AWWA's extensive experience with autism across services, the team designed the app to support caregivers in managing meltdowns. Caregivers can access resources targeted to the person's profile and can also reach expert volunteers and emergency contacts during a particularly difficult meltdown for assistance. The app provides information for volunteers on where the person and their care-

giver are, what the person's triggers are, and what interventions have previously worked or have been attempted. This real-time support ensures that people with autism receive the personalised care they need to manage challenging situations.

The app is currently in trial mode and 19 caregivers have enrolled. Staff from Schools and EICs assist with communication with caregivers and have also signed up to be volunteers. Feedback from this initial stage will be gathered from all users to improve the app and roll it out on a larger scale.

The long-term vision of the “Charlie & Us” team is to open the app to users outside of AWWA. They are also interested in partnering with other organisations with expertise in autism to expand the pool of volunteers across the country.

### Thinking Inside the Box with WriteSpace

Aqilah, an Occupational Therapist, and Angela, a Speech and Language Therapist, from EIC Napiri observed that their clients working on their writing skills had difficulties staying within visual boundaries (e.g. boxes and dotted lines). They decided to work together to address this issue. Initially, they collaborated with teachers to devise strategies for additional support using materials available in the classroom, like ice cream sticks and Blu Tack. However, these methods were not sustainable in the long run and the students found them distracting.

Aqilah and Angela went back to the drawing board and came up with a solution that provided clients with physical, tactile and auditory feedback as they wrote, building accuracy, consistency and confidence in their writing abilities. Early prototypes were made using corrugated board and cardboard boxes to test out various designs and mechanisms with clients to further improve the design. Key considerations for the duo were useability, feasibility, functionality, and portability.

After exploring the benefits and limitations of available materials and designs, the duo worked with the Tech Taskforce and a volunteer engineer to design and 3D print a prototype. They called it WriteSpace. When this tool was rolled out to clients, teachers and the IPCP team observed that students started to pay more attention to how they were writing and became more conscious about staying within the visual boundaries. As a result, their letter formation, sizing

and alignment also improved. An unexpected benefit from WriteSpace was its ability to break down bigger pieces of work into small and easily digestible tasks, which increased students' motivation and engagement during tabletop activities.

Aqilah and Angela are in the process of rolling out WriteSpace with more students and teachers to gather additional user feedback for design improvements. They hope that, eventually, WriteSpace will become a mainstream tool to encourage children to write within boundaries and to support them in being more independent in the classroom.

Zi Yee's journey with iPush, the “Charlie & Us” app team, and the WriteSpace duo underscore AWWA's commitment to harnessing technology as a force for good, a means to design a future where people with disabilities independently thrive and freely participate in the community. These stories also reinforce the importance of inter-professional collaborative practices as a key pillar of holistic care. Working together across services and disciplines to support clients and caregivers in determining how technology can be adapted to their needs to help them achieve their goals is the hallmark of strategic innovation.



3D printed WriteSpace with antislip technology



Not shying away from difficult conversations... falling back on research, falling back on evidence... to communicate and assuage the powers who make these important decisions to continuously engage them.

Assoc Prof Wong Meng Ee, NIE, NTU – Psychology and Child & Human Development, on AWWA's inclusion work



**AWWA is leading and living by example.**

Ms Anita Fam Siu Ping, President, NCSS & Vice President of AWWA (2007-2013)



**AWWA is a leading force and voice for inclusion in the sector.**

Ms Chung Wei Han, AWWA Chairman (2019 to 2023)

## INCLUSION TASKFORCE

### Inclusion Begins with 'I'

Since its founding in 1970, AWWA has been on the journey of inclusion. From supporting caregivers and families living in vulnerable settings to providing specialised services for people with disabilities of all ages, AWWA has tried to ensure that no one is left behind. More recently, the organisation has leveraged its expertise in early childhood interventions and disability support for children and youths to advocate for more inclusion in the educational sector. In 2016, with the support of Lien Foundation, AWWA started Kindle Garden, Singapore's first truly inclusive preschool and a learning laboratory for inclusive educational practices. In 2021, AWWA was invited to provide technical support to the Early Childhood Development Agency's (ECDA) Inclusive Support Programme (InSP) Pilot to foster inclusive models and nurture the development potential of all children.

This push for an inclusive society has also motivated AWWA to reflect on its own culture and processes: How can we better talk the talk AND walk the talk? The Inclusion Taskforce was thus born. The Taskforce has a dual role: it seeks to mainstream and embed inclusive values within the organisation, as well as to advocate and build capabilities for inclusive practices in the preschool and mainstream school sectors in Singapore. In March 2018, a few AWWA staff members went on a learning trip to the United Kingdom and Finland to better understand how different policy environments and inclusive educational practices converge to create preschools and schools that embrace and support students with different abilities. This visit informed the team how Dr Tony Booth's index of inclusive values could be operationalised within schools and other settings, including at AWWA, to create an inclusive environment and a sense of belonging.



Study trip group photo with Dr Tony Booth and Ms Serene Hemmings at Dawnay School, UK

Building on the learnings from the overseas trip, the Taskforce launched the AWWA Inclusion Experts Series (AIES) at the end of 2018 to share best practices in inclusive education with Singaporean educators and support professionals. When COVID-19 struck, AIES pivoted to a webinar format, which allowed it to reach a larger audience. To date, AIES has conducted 15 sessions featuring renowned experts in inclusive education from around the world, as well as local practitioners and experts. In March 2022, AIES celebrated its 10th session, attracting over 1,000 participants. It featured Ms Kim Barthel, a well-known occupational therapist from Canada, as well as MSF Minister of State Ms Sun Xueling as guest of honour. Most AIES sessions have drawn between 300 to 600 participants from varied backgrounds, including preschool and primary school teachers, support professionals, academics, policymakers from MOE and ECDA and funders. The AIES mailing list has over 1,000 subscribers, and this number is expected to grow with recent sessions catering to Mandarin language educators.

The Taskforce launched Include.sg, an inclusion resource portal, in November 2021. It features a wealth of carefully curated content, adapted to the Singaporean context, to raise awareness, share inclusive practices, and inspire Singapore educators to build their practice of inclusion. 45 resources have been posted to date, including AIES material, curated links to local and overseas resources, self-assessment toolkits, hands-on tips from inclusion professionals, and stories from the community. The latest addition to Include.sg is AWWA's Inclusion Playbook for Schools, a set of guided reflections for primary school teachers to accompany them on their journey of inclusion.

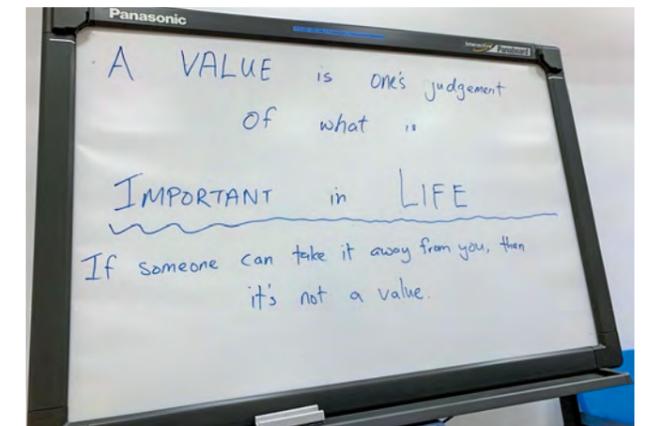
In 2022, the Inclusion Taskforce also facilitated a series of Community of Inclusive Practices (COIP) sessions for local educators interested in more extensive discussions of the issues raised by AIES speakers. The COIP platform was helpful in thinking about and talking through how to adapt and operationalise strategies shared by AIES speakers in preschools and primary schools. In a survey of COIP participants, 100% reported that their knowledge level about inclusion had increased after attending AIES and COIP, 77% agreed that they were now able to resolve challenges with inclusive practices in their workplace, and more than 80% were able to practice inclusion in their schools. In addition, over 90% of participants said that they had shared information on inclusion with colleagues and friends. The learnings from the 2022 COIP sessions were used by the DS-LS Programme to run similar Communities of Practice for inclusion

partners from preschools, providing a beneficial platform for AWWA to build long-term relationships with educators and to better understand their experiences and challenges in implementing inclusion in mainstream settings.



Inclusive culture building activities at AWWA Corporate Services

Within AWWA, the Inclusion Taskforce organises regular get-togethers for its members across all services. These meetings are a valuable forum to share reflections on incorporating inclusive values into everyday practices and to exchange strategies for building inclusive teams. In late 2023, members of the Inclusion Taskforce and the Human Resources team have also started leading inclusion workshops for Corporate Services staff to work together to co-create goals for their own inclusion journeys.



An insight shared during one of the Inclusion Network sessions

The Inclusion Taskforce works to spread the understanding, both internally within AWWA and externally in the education sector, that inclusion is a continuous journey of reflection, adjustment and learning, rather than a fixed destination. Within this framework, inclusive education thus transforms into planting seeds

that allow all children to blossom and all educators to flourish. Central to this approach is the belief that inclusion begins with “I.” It invites each of us to reflect on our habits, behaviours, biases and approaches, and to make incremental adjustments to become more inclusive. By championing this ethos of continual growth and reflection, the Inclusion Taskforce aims to cultivate an environment where diversity is celebrated, barriers are dismantled, and every individual feels valued and empowered.



### A Leader’s Reflection on her Journey of Inclusion

Ms Sharifah Rawiah Matnor, the Central Zonal Lead at Community Integration Service (CIS), began her journey of inclusion awareness as a senior Occupational Therapist in an AWWA collaboration with a primary school. This project sought to strengthen the school’s capabilities in supporting its students with additional needs. When the project ended, its learnings were incorporated into the work of CIS and the Inclusion Taskforce at AWWA.

Through the primary school project and the Inclusion Taskforce, Sharifah learned about implementing inclusive values and practices on a larger scale. For instance, working with multiple stakeholders to implement a whole-class and whole-school framework for inclusion in a primary school was a stark departure from supporting students one-on-one at CIS. She learnt how to navigate different people’s definitions of inclusion and understood how sustained inclusive practices at the teacher- and class-levels translated into significant changes at the school level. She also benefited from the personal and shared reflections on inclusive values that happened throughout the pilot with team members, students and teachers.

Sharifah has incorporated this element of reflective practice in her leadership at CIS. In each zonal meeting, she encourages her team to share their reflections on how their work is going and how they can better implement inclusive values in their daily work. At their last zonal meeting in 2023, for example, they discussed which inclusive values each team member had exhibited that year. For Sharifah and her team, this safe space for reflecting provides an opportunity for deeper discussions on how to tackle challenges together and how to improve their work. It also makes

her team members feel heard and valued. While reflective practice is not new to therapists, the fusion of inclusion with reflection makes implementing inclusive values with CIS staff and students more intentional. As Sharifah said, “reflective practice is not new to me. The things we reflect on now are different.” She also noted that at the service level, this new wave of reflections has had an impact. According to Sharifah, “CIS was always doing inclusive work, but it was a subconscious thing. Now, it’s become more conscious.”



Sharifah and her team members during the CIS Interzonal Competition 2023

The Inclusion Taskforce has played a pivotal role in shaping Sharifah’s growth as an inclusive leader. Get-togethers organised by the Taskforce have introduced her to people and perspectives from across AWWA, which have enriched her views on inclusion. She credits the Taskforce for facilitating thought-provoking discussions on which inclusive values they prioritise in their work and which exclusive values they need to more carefully consider. Sharifah holds “respect for diversity” and “participation” as the key inclusive values that guide her work. She has also reflected on efficiency as an exclusive value and seeks to balance the benefits of being an efficient

team (meeting KPIs) with its costs (forgetting, in the quest for KPI achievements, that the team is made up of humans). Consequently, she gets to know every team member as a unique individual and discusses strategies with them on how to support their professional development.

Although Sharifah is an introvert, she has welcomed the opportunity to form meaningful relationships with her team members and to help identify their strengths. This has been crucial to her building an effective and harmonious team. Her goal for 2024 is to extend her inclusive leadership skills to new members of the team and to integrate them well within CIS and AWWA. She is also looking forward to learning more about how different services, like Health and Senior Care and the Family Service Centre, practice inclusion to deepen her knowledge of inclusive practices and caregiver support strategies.

Learning about inclusion has been a paradigm shift in Sharifah’s career. She acknowledges that “inclusion is a journey, and not a destination,” with new people who will continue to challenge and enhance her views. Sharifah’s intentional journey as an inclusive leader and reflective practitioner is an inspiration to others at AWWA who are dedicated to creating inclusive environments for clients and colleagues.



**Reflective practice is not new to me. The things we reflect on now are different.**

Ms Sharifah Rawiah Matnor, Central Zonal Lead & Senior Occupational Therapist, Community Integration Service, AWWA

# OTHER TASKFORCES, PILOTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS



At AWWA, we constantly try to think about how we can help our clients be more empowered and included in society. That could involve landscape scans to understand gaps on the ground, incremental innovation within existing services, or trying out something entirely new. And then sharing the learnings back with the sector so that we can all continue to do better for Singapore's vulnerable populations.

Ms Pooja Bhandari, Consultant (Impact and Special Projects), AWWA

## EARLY INTERVENTION (EI) OF THE FUTURE TASKFORCE

EI of the Future explores the frontiers of early intervention in Singapore and in other countries to build AWWA's capability to meet future needs. Through collaborations and learning sessions with leading EI experts, the Taskforce is identifying key future trends and translating international best practices to the Singaporean context to better empower clients and caregivers.

## HOLISTIC CARE PRACTICE (HCP) TASKFORCE

This Taskforce constructed AWWA's HCP framework and devised strategies to evaluate the level and quality of holistic care practices across services. Insights generated by this Taskforce have been mainstreamed into the organisation's next five-year strategic plan (Purpose, Practice, People).



AWWA's holistic care philosophy

## CLINICAL RESEARCH TASKFORCE

The Clinical Research Taskforce at AWWA aimed to increase knowledge of research methodologies and supported staff in sharing their work at professional and academic conferences. The Impact and Special Projects team in Corporate Services is building on the work of this Taskforce to strengthen research knowledge and cultivate a culture of robust analysis and evaluation.

## FAMILY EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME (FEP)

From 2022 to 2023, AWWA conducted a randomised controlled trial to investigate the impact of unconditional cash transfers on families living in vulnerable settings. With the support of Tri-Sector Associates, Standard Chartered Bank, and Temasek Trust, this pay-for-success experiment explored how families used the monthly cash grant to improve their employment situation, finances and mental health. FEP concluded in 2023 and successfully achieved the outcomes needed to trigger the next tranche of funds for the second round of FEP. The FEP report will be publicly launched in mid-2024, and AWWA has planned to conduct sharing and advocacy sessions with government and SSA partners.



Ms Huixia See Toh (Director of Family Services) and Ms Pooja Bhandari (Consultant) sharing about the Family Empowerment Programme at Tri-Sector Associates' Innovate for Impact event (October 17, 2023)

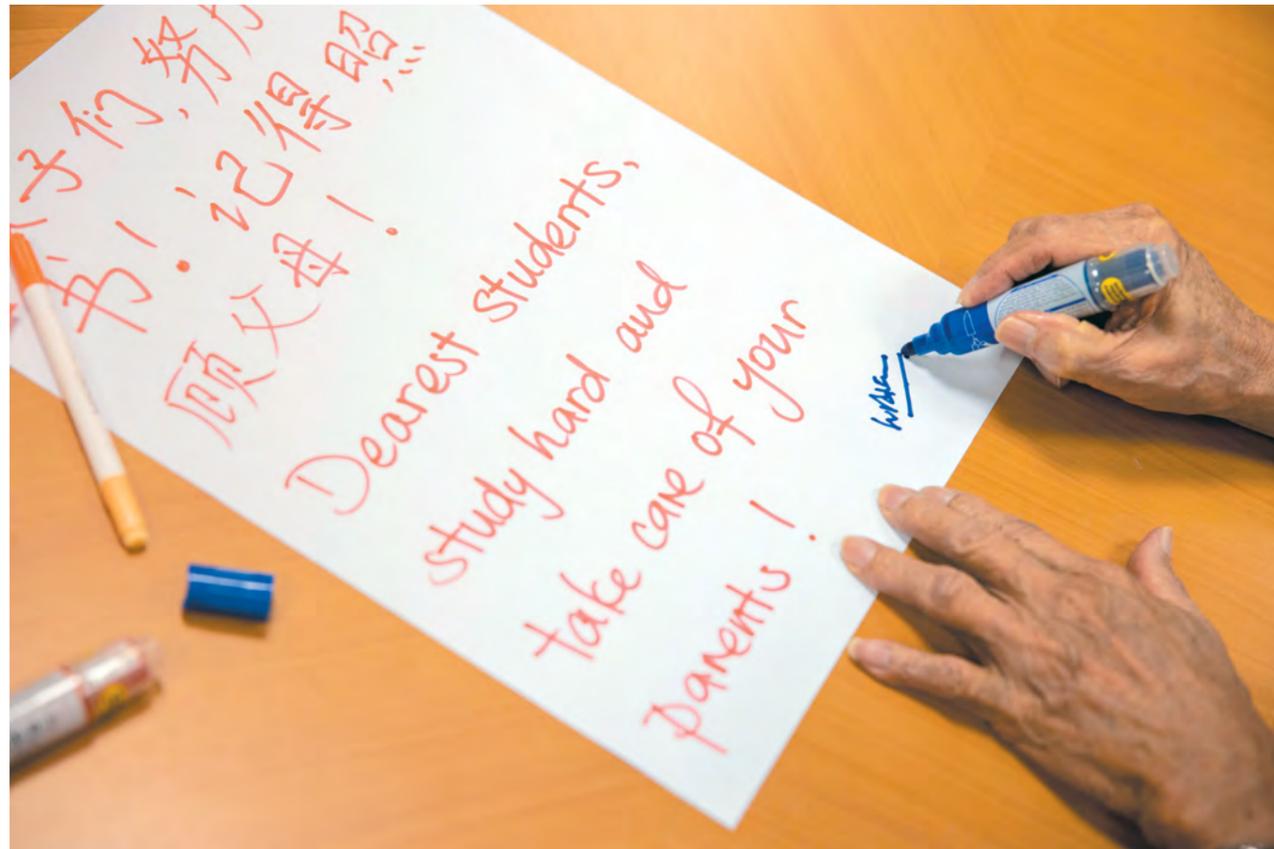


Through innovative pilots like the FEP, we are breaking new ground in supporting low-income families. The FEP has also helped us better understand our families' experiences and challenges. This enables us to amplify their voices and advocate for their needs to be met in a sustainable way.

Ms See Toh Huixia, Director (Family Services), AWWA

## CARE BEYOND WALLS (CBW)

CBW is re-imagining conventional Dementia Day Care Centre models to better integrate people with dementia into their communities. Leveraging person-centred care and support services for caregivers, this pilot aims to develop a dementia- and senior-friendly neighbourhood around Ang Mo Kio. CBW is also focusing on building relationships with community partners to raise awareness of dementia and to build capability in the community to better engage with people with dementia.



Care Beyond Walls participants engaging with students at Elias Park Primary School

In 2023, Health and Senior Care, in collaboration with the Lien Foundation, launched an integrated social space called “Kampung AWWA” in Block 130 (Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3) to provide residents with programmes promoting social engagement, volunteering and active ageing opportunities under CBW. This space contains a Gym Tonic programme, a community cafe and a caregiver resource centre to create a community of support. Kampung AWWA will be formally launched at the end of 2024. CBW, which is also supported by The Care Lab, and Tri-Sector Associates, started in 2021 and is expected to wrap up by the end of 2024, with the final impact evaluation available in mid-2025.



We appreciate how forward looking AWWA is. For instance, AWWA initiated Care Beyond Walls and AWWA Village before the focus on community became more widespread.

Mr Dominic Lim, Senior Assistant Director & Head (Sector Funds), AIC

## AIR MASTER

Air Master started in 2023, and is a ten-week community rehabilitation service for patients with chronic lung conditions or heart failure led by Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) and funded by the Lien Foundation.

Together with Ren Ci Hospital and St. Luke’s ElderCare, therapists from AWWA’s Rehab and Day Care Centre provide cardiopulmonary rehabilitation sessions to improve patients’ quality of life and functional abilities. TTSH nurses conduct regular screenings and make referrals to doctors as needed. Strengthening community-based health programmes, such as Air Master, will reduce the stress on tertiary hospitals, improve functional capacity through patient-centric rehabilitation, and expand access to early palliative care and rehabilitation services.



Air Master service demo with Mdm Wong Siew Sin. Photo: Lien Foundation

## AWWA’S PAIN MANAGEMENT CENTRE

The Pain Management Centre is a capability building activity implemented by AHPG to deepen therapists’ training. Open to AWWA clients and staff, this Centre provides pain and posture-related assessments and interventions to better manage chronic and acute pain in the long run. By learning how to provide pain management care to a broad spectrum of people, AWWA therapists are preparing to meet the future healthcare needs of a rapidly ageing Singapore.

## ACTION OFFICE

The ACTION Office started in 2021 to foster a culture of continuous improvement at AWWA. Using frameworks like kaizen and design thinking, the team provides training to all staff on creating incremental improvements in everyday processes. The ACTION Office has also helped every service map its client lifecycle to better streamline client journeys.



**Hungry to keep moving. How can we do even better?**

Dr Fermin Diez, Senior Consultant (CEO Office), NCSS, on AWWA’s culture



# EMPOWERED CLIENTS

Empowering clients and caregivers to fully participate in society; facilitating client and caregiver resilience



Silver Sports Day 2023 at ITE College Central with Guest of Honour, Mr Rahayu Mahzam, Senior Parliamentary Secretary (Ministry of Health & Ministry of Law)



**If the Regional Health Services look for a partner in the central region, they always look for AWWA....it's the go-to pilot site.**

Dr Wong Loong Mun, Chief (Care Integration and Operations), AIC



**AWWA is a do-er and not only a say-er.**

Mr Lim Teck Kiat, Senior Director, MSF



What I try to bring to other boards that I serve or have served on, is that it is never about me, and it's always about the organisation and what's best for the organisation and the people whom we serve, because that's what AWWA was always about.

Ms Anita Fam Siu Ping, President, NCSS & Vice President of AWWA (2007-2013)

**AWWA's services are piloting new models of care and service provision.**

These pilots help services explore different tools to empower clients in the long run and foster partnerships with new stakeholders to expand and strengthen AWWA's networks. E.g. Family Empowerment Programme (Family Services), Care Beyond Walls and Air Master (Health & Senior Care).

**The Allied Health Professional Group (AHPG) is facilitating the rollout of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model in EIC and Schools.**

The MTSS model, which is being explored by relevant AWWA services, will ensure that all clients will be screened and will receive interventions targeting their specific needs.



Every day, before they go home, we will ask them how they are feeling, and every day, they will tell us that they are happy...To see them smile every day, I think that's enough.

Ms Nur Atiqah Hairodin, Centre Supervisor, Day Activity Centre, AWWA



Clients in CIS stay with us from the day they are enrolled, that can be in primary school, until they leave school. Most of them are with us for a very long time, so we see them grow and the growth is really amazing. When you see them becoming more responsible, more independent, and more confident, this makes me feel very proud.

Ms M. Yasothara, Senior Educational Guidance Officer, Community Integration Service, AWWA



Family Service Centre staff introducing expressive arts therapy to the public at the 2022 Open House

**AWWA Schools @ Napiri and @ Bedok efficiently pivoted to home-based learning during COVID-19 to continue supporting students virtually.**

**AWWA School @ Napiri is developing its school-to-work opportunities to facilitate placement of eligible students in different types of employment.**

**AWWA Family Service Centre has built out its expressive arts therapy programme to help families process difficult feelings and improve their coping skills.**

**Transitional Shelter families now can access Wi-Fi in their flats to ensure that they have access to key virtual platforms for school and work.**

**The Day Activity Centre regularly takes clients out on outings into the neighbourhood to foster community living skills.**

**The Community Integration Service (CIS) organises activities to help students build friendships and social skills, like Science Club.**



# EFFICIENT ORGANISATION

Improving governance systems to enhance productivity, visibility and client experience; leveraging technology to increase efficiency



Ms Nur Atiqah Hairoldin (Centre Supervisor) explaining the technology used by AWWA's Day Activity Centre at the 2023 NCSS Transformation Marketplace



AWWA's media coverage from 2020 to 2023. Credit: TEAM LEWIS

All services are strategically implementing technology to improve client outcomes, with the support of the NCSS Tech Booster Fund for a few projects. During COVID-19 lockdowns, technology enabled clients to continue receiving services from AWWA using tele-practice and home-based learning. Post-circuit-breakers, the use of technology has taken on a new nuance – technology is now being used to improve inter-professional collaboration and to achieve AWWA's holistic care goals. Examples include:

» At the 2023 Social Service Summit organised by NCSS and MSF, AWWA exhibited several digital tools and technologies services have deployed, like TEMI robots at DAC, HSC's LOVOT, smart boards, and FSC's appointment management system.

» HSC used digital tools to virtually check in on caregivers during lockdowns, taught seniors how to manage health appointments online, and are using the latest rehab technology to improve client outcomes.

» AWWA Home and Day Activity Centre have invested in an efficient client management system and are working with NCSS on Project Back-to-Basics (B2B) to boost the productivity of therapists in the disability sector through technology. AWWA Home has also implemented PreSAGE technology to detect bed exits for falls prevention, which helps create a less restrictive environment for clients.

» The Allied Health Professional Group and Community Integration Service shifted to tele-practice and virtual assessments during lockdowns. This shift to virtual platforms has made it more convenient for caregivers to join in teaching and coaching sessions.

» Kindle Garden (KG) preschool has also adopted virtual consultations with parents and therapists, which has greatly improved communication between all parties. In addition, the quality of documentation has improved with the use of virtual platforms.

During COVID-19 circuit breakers, AWWA swiftly pivoted to digital fundraising campaigns to adeptly adjust to the demands of the pandemic.

To boost the organisation's visibility, AWWA has worked to increase the number of AWWA features in daily broadsheets.

» From 2020 to 2023, AWWA media mentions increased from 141 to 229. During this period, there were more human-interest stories and thought leadership pieces.

Within AWWA, procurement has been centralised and digitalisation has been accelerated.

» Streamlining internal processes has improved communication within AWWA on budgeting and has enhanced coordination for tapping on available government funds.



# EFFECTIVE ORGANISATION

Strengthening impact on client and caregivers through holistic care; forging strategic partnerships; identifying and filling in gaps in service provision



AWWA School @ Bedok celebrating National Day 2023 and Sports Day

Pet therapy session for children in Early Intervention Centre @ Napiri



**[AWWA is an] innovative and progressive partner.**

Ms Loh Shu Ching, Executive Director (Division for Central Health), Tan Tock Seng Hospital



I would like to commend...how AWWA has been able to identify the needs of today's society and intervene timely and sufficiently to create significant change in the social service sector.

Dr Roland Yeow, Executive Director, Boys' Town



**AWWA is a trusted partner [for ECDA].**

Ms Lynn Koh, Director (Child Development), ECDA



We're always open to sharing and supporting the Ministry & ECDA in terms of creating awareness and advocacy.

Ms Thombre Maya Ravindra, Assistant Director (Early Intervention), AWWA

**AWWA is thrilled to partner with people and organisations from all sectors to maximise client participation and to promote inclusion. Examples include:**

» Boston Consulting Group (BCG) has been an integral partner providing pro bono advice on design thinking and innovation. When the pandemic started, BCG reviewed AWWA's tech readiness and provided recommendations for improvement. They have also facilitated innovation drives, like the recent AWWA challenge.

» AWWA's Special Student Care Centre has been strategically using skilled volunteers to amplify the impact of programmes.

» School @ Napiri's partnership with Bowen Secondary School has facilitated connections between students with additional needs and those with typical needs. The School also collaborated with OCBC to teach students about financial literacy with a large-scale supermarket model.

» Through the Care Beyond Walls pilot, Health and Senior Care has forged relationships with community partners, which has helped raise awareness of dementia in the neighbourhood.

» In 2023, AWWA Home and Day Activity Centre (DAC) invited the Muscular Dystrophy Association for an overnight camp in AWWA Home. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with them, provide a space for them to "camp" in an inclusive environment, and to learn from their experience to improve the building design for AWWA Home/ DAC clients.

» DS-LS has been working with Little Mighty Me Preschool to promote the benefits of having therapists in their school to support both students and teachers. The preschool also visited EIC for a learning journey and are a part of the AIES community.

**AWWA regularly conducts gap analyses in the health and social sectors to identify how the organisation can better meet evolving demographic needs. In the last few years, AWWA has constructed three new Early Intervention Centres (EICs) at Fernvale Link (2017), Kim Keat (2017), and Fernvale Woods (2023). Additionally, AWWA started operating two Transitional Shelters (2018 and 2021) and completed construction of AWWA Home/Day Activity Centre (2022) and School @ Bedok (2022).**

**EIC implemented Early Childhood Holistic Outcomes (ECHO) to track student outcomes and adjust interventions as needed. AWWA EIC has also been supporting other early intervention centres in implementing ECHO.**



We are a progressive organisation, in the sense that we always look at areas of gaps. And we also have that innovation and spirit to dare to try to make a difference. That sets us different from the business-as-usual model.

Ms Wong Mun Yee, Senior Manager (Admin & Operations), Allied Health Professional Group, AWWA



# EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP

Building capability; implementing a learning-by-doing culture; strengthening advocacy and thought leadership



Ms Kim Barthel, renowned occupational therapist, speaking at AWWA's Inclusion Expert Series in October 2018



**In the early childhood space, KG has really been one of the pieces [where] AWWA has pushed the boundaries, and as a result, led in the early childhood inclusion movement nationally.**

Prof Kenneth Poon, President, Rainbow Centre

Kindle Garden (KG) and the AWWA Inclusion Expert Series (AIES) are leading champions of promoting inclusive education in Singapore. Together with learning journeys for mainstream preschools and primary schools hosted by KG, AIES's programming provides actionable guidance and strategies to design inclusive educational environments.

AWWA has also been recognised by the educational sector for its high standards in Special Education (SPED). Pauline Cheng, now at School @ Bedok, won an MOE Outstanding SPED Teacher Award in 2018, in recognition of her exceptional contributions. In the same year, School @ Napiri also won the MOE-NCSS Innovation award.

DS-LS is also an integral part of AWWA's inclusion efforts. In addition to supporting DS-LS classrooms in preschools, the service's work and staff encourage non-DS-LS teachers to learn new strategies. This helps bridge the divide between students with additional needs and those with typical needs in mainstream education.



Kindle Garden celebrating Christmas in 2023



What has kept me going in this organisation is that I'm really able to fuse my personal aspirations with my professional aspirations. When I say I want to do meaningful work in a company that really believes in meaningful work, AWWA is that for me.

Ms Wrightia Wahid, Assistant Director (Strategy and Communications & Stakeholder Engagement), AWWA



Melting but not broken [yet].

Ms Petrina Sharmila Gupta, Centre Head & Ms Geraldine Tan, MOE Kindergarten Educator, MOE Kindergarten @ Sengkang Green, on how AWWA's advocacy efforts are slowly chipping away at the stigmas associated with disability



We are just one KG, and yet [mainstream schools] could find meaning [on their learning trips to KG] and the whole journey could empower them to change their mindset. I think that itself is very heartwarming.

Dr Shirley Soh, Assistant Director (Early Childhood and Inclusion), AWWA

Several AWWA staff participate in external committees and associations related to AWWA's expertise. These opportunities enable AWWA to amplify disability and inclusion in multi-sectoral policies and programmes and to support policymakers in bridging the gaps on the ground between policy design, implementation and outcomes. Examples include:

» **Mr Karthikeyan JR, CEO**

Notable roles: Member of AIC Community Care Technology Council, MOH Community Rehab Transformation Workgroup, MSF Enabling Masterplan 2030 Steering Committee Meeting, NHG Population Health Collective Leadership Council, TTSH Centre for Healthcare Innovation Innovate 2023 Scientific Committee, and NLB Advisory Committee for Persons with Disability; Board member of Special Needs Trust Company Limited)

» **Mrs Selina Foong, COO**

Honorary Assistant Treasurer, Singapore Disability Sports Council

» **Ms Ng Lee Lee, Director (Disability and Inclusion)**

Member of MSF Workgroup on Care and Programme in the Disability Sector

» **Ms Joyce Lum, Deputy Director (Allied Health Professional Group)**

Member of Social Service SkillsFuture Tripartite Taskforce (Therapy Sub-Team)

» **Ms See Lay Kim, Head of AWWA Home**

Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) Associate Faculty in Occupational Therapy

» **Ms Vincent Raj Ferida, Deputy Director (Early Intervention)**

Member of Social Service SkillsFuture Tripartite Taskforce

» **Dr Kelvin Lee, Vice Principal, AWWA School @ Bedok**

Member of Social Service SkillsFuture Tripartite Taskforce (Psychology Sub-Team)



Whenever we have queries or anything we have to ask, [AWWA] staff are very approachable. So, we don't feel frightened to ask questions or feel like "Oh are we disturbing the staff there"?...This makes it easier for me to approach them to ask for more strategies and ways to support the children. Ultimately, we have the common goal of supporting the children.

Ms Geraldine Tan, MOE Kindergarten Educator, MOE Kindergarten @ Sengkang Green

» **Ms Nurnain Safariah Bte Selamat, Head of Programme, AWWA School @ Napiri**

Curriculum Resource Person for MOE's Home Schooling Panel

» **Ms Siti Khalijah Bte Abdul Aziz, Principal Physiotherapist, Allied Health Professional Group**

SIT Associate Faculty in Physiotherapy

» **Ms Ebba Fernandez, Clinical Head (Speech & Language Therapy) and Lead (Inclusion Practice)**

Member of MOH Curriculum Review Standing Committee

» **Ms Eta Lauw, Senior Music Therapist, Allied Health Professional Group**

Vice President of Association of Music Therapy (Singapore)

» **Ms Wang Yu Hui, Deputy Director (Health and Senior Care)**

Member of MOH Frailty Implementation Workgroup

» **Ms See Toh Huixia, Director (Family Services)**

Adult Educator (Family-Based Casework Training) at Singapore Social Service Institute; Member, Housing Support Network, Singapore Association of Social Workers; Member, Medifund Committee, National Heart Centre

» **Ms Michele Gan, Senior Counsellor (Family Services) and Ms Sutrima Bte Saphadi, Social Worker, Family Services**

Members of Central Family Violence Working Group

» **Dr Nicodemus Lim, Lead Social Worker, Family Services**

Core Member of MSF Practice Circle for Suicide; Member of MOH-MSF Interagency Taskforce on Mental Health and Wellbeing, Workgroup 2 (Service Integration); Member of Implementation Committee for the Tiered Care Model (Adult) for Mental Health; Member of Publications Standing Committee, Singapore Association of Social Workers



[AWWA] challenges the norms and is a role model for others.

Mr Marcus Heng, AWWA Board



The opportunity to impact people's lives and empower them ... being involved in the lives of our clients, waking up every day knowing that you have that opportunity and that privilege to work with people who may not necessarily been given a lot of opportunity in life for many reasons. Being in that position, given that opportunity, energises me every morning.

Dr Kelvin Lee, Vice Principal, AWWA School @ Bedok

# CONCLUDING REMARKS

“  
**I want to commend AWWA on its progress and leadership in this sector. I think you have very good leaders. The culture is strong. I appreciate Karthik’s deepness in thinking. All the CEOs have been deep thinkers. This is also a reflection of a strong Board that so wisely picks the right leaders. Congrats on finishing the five-year plan.**

Ms Loh Shu Ching,  
 Executive Director (Division for Central Health),  
 Tan Tock Seng Hospital

**A**WWA’s inaugural five-year strategic plan has been marked by profound learning and dedication to serving clients. Central to its progress has been the integration of technology, which became more significant with COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions. Staff effectively adopted digital tools and platforms, resulting in continuity of care for clients and caregivers, and improved communication within AWWA and between AWWA and clients. After circuit breakers ended, services have embraced digital tools to improve client outcomes and enhance staff productivity, like Soundbeam and appointment management systems.

The implementation of pilots and special projects, such as the Family Empowerment Programme and Care Beyond Walls, has also been instrumental to the organisation’s evolution. These projects are a tangible demonstration of AWWA’s commitment to inclusion and demonstrate the importance of thoughtfully experimenting with different community-based models and resources that support people living in vulnerable settings, including families with low-income backgrounds and seniors with complex medical conditions. Through pilots and special projects, AWWA has also been engaging in capability building to understand and meet future needs and is strengthening its ability to conduct research and programme evaluations to refine its service delivery.

AWWA’s journey in the last five years highlights the vital role of strategic and diverse partnerships. By cultivating relationships with the public sector, private sector, donors, hospitals, schools and community organisations, AWWA has harnessed the power of shared expertise and resources. These partnerships have expanded the organisation’s reach and sphere of influence and have increased the support available to clients, amplifying outcomes. To best support clients, AWWA’s interventions and partners must be as multi-faceted as the challenges they face.

Building on the foundation laid by the 4Es, AWWA is now transitioning to its second five-year strategic plan – Purpose, Practice and People (or the 3Ps). Expanding client participation continues to be central to AWWA’s mission and the 3Ps. Purpose refers to maximising clients’ potential to thrive using holistic care practices and innovative strategies, which include evidence-based interventions and cutting-edge technology. Practice is defined as driving excellence through the mainstreaming of holistic care principles across services, leveraging patient-centred care and improving functional outcomes. Both Purpose and Practice depend on People; AWWA’s vision of an inclusive society can only be realised with an agile and engaged staff with a growth mindset.

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**AWWA does not have the other E i.e. Ego – there is a genuine desire to know what works, what doesn’t, and then seek out opportunities to collaborate where each party can lean on each other’s strength. This is demonstrated in AWWA’s approach in the Post-18 Study (new project), to work with various partners in the ecosystem. It is clear that interactions with and respect for other organisations is genuine.**

Ms Nadia Ahmad Samdin,  
 Counsel and Associate Director,  
 Tri-Sector Associates



AWWA’s second five-year strategic plan

### What do the 3Ps look like when operationalised?

**Purpose:** AWWA continues embracing strategic innovation and a why-not attitude to explore new frontiers of assistive technology, care paradigms and educational interventions. The organisation expands its case and cause advocacy efforts to include purposefully selected pilots and sharing of lessons learned with a diverse group of stakeholders.

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**[AWWA staff are] trailblazers in the areas they work in. First movers with ideas.**

Mr Raveen Bharvani, ESG Lead, LGT Private Banking Singapore

**Practice:** Holistic care practices are implemented and evaluated across the organisation. AWWA builds on its expertise in identifying and filling gaps in the sector to better cater to the needs of its clients. Further, events like Learning Day 2023 are more common in fostering a learning and sharing culture within AWWA.

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**[Karthik is] a CEO who is building a learning organisation.”**

- Ms Ng Chin Yu, AWWA Board

Ms Ng Chin Yu, AWWA Board

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**[AWWA gives us] that space to be creative, that space to do things out of the box, the confidence to take calculated risks, the confidence to say it’s okay to fail, as long as we did try.**

Ms See Lay Kim,  
 Head of AWWA Home

**People:** Staff are future-ready with professional development and training opportunities aimed at anticipating changing community needs. AWWA’s commitment to bridging the health and social sectors is operationalised through these training and development opportunities to build capabilities in both sectors while centring disability. Inclusion continues to be at the forefront of AWWA’s efforts for both clients and staff.



**We are in the people business.**  
 Mrs Selina Foong, COO, AWWA

Putting the 3Ps into practice requires a forward-looking approach, characterised by strategic innovation, a culture of continuous learning, and a steadfast commitment to the development and empowerment of both clients and staff. In embracing Purpose, Practice and People, the organisation is charting a course for the future where inclusion and service excellence intersect, maximising the potential of clients to thrive in their communities. AWWA is poised to build on the successes of the 4Es framework and advance its mission of creating a more inclusive and equitable society for all.

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 Leading by example and wanting to be involved with seeing the value of disabled people and having them be part of the organisation. AWWA is showing that this is an organisation that is involved in advocating for PWDs...and to also see how they can be an inclusive employer.

Assoc Prof Wong Meng Ee, NIE,  
 NTU – Psychology and Child & Human Development



AWWA Community Integration Service Awards 2023 with Guest of Honour, Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman, Minister, Prime Minister’s Office & Second Minister, Ministry of Education & Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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**We bet on great management – it always has been, and it always will be.**

Mr Lee Poh Wah,  
 CEO, Lien Foundation



AWWA leaders at the AWWA Community Integration Service Awards 2023 with Guest of Honour, Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman, Minister, Prime Minister’s Office & Second Minister, Ministry of Education & Ministry of Foreign Affairs



AWWA Home residents enjoying hydrotherapy



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Team AWWA,

As we close this chapter in our organisation's history, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for all that we have achieved together, despite the personal and professional challenges wrought by COVID-19.

Looking ahead, it is vitally important that we continue to learn and adapt, to continue to address social and community gaps as they may arise, in tandem with national trends. We must continue to focus on building an engaged and agile workforce that strives for excellence in service delivery through holistic care.

Over the next five years, the alignment of the health and social sectors is crucial to the successful implementation of population health policies, and AWWA is well-placed to support this integration. One area where we must strengthen our efforts is in managing more complex medical cases at the community level. As Singapore's population is rapidly ageing, the demand for health services is increasing. Community-level health infrastructure will play a key role in managing this transition, and organisations like AWWA can provide essential services and support tailored to the unique needs of individuals within their communities. By enhancing our expertise in community health through partnerships and capability building projects, we can significantly contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of our clients, while ensuring accessibility and inclusivity in healthcare delivery.

We must also continue our drive towards more outcome-based evaluations of our services, so that we can track and do better for our individual clients and programmes, make evidence-based decisions, and understand and advocate for continuing or new needs arising on the ground.

AWWA's ability to be a trailblazer and an organisation of excellence will depend on you and me. I feel encouraged by our progress, and I am excited to see what tomorrow brings as we build a brighter future, where everyone can thrive.

Team, thank you for all the good work that you have done, and thank you for all that we will do in the years ahead!

With gratitude,

**Karthik**

**AWWA HQ**  9 Lorong Napiri, Singapore 547531  6511 5200  [www.awwa.org.sg](http://www.awwa.org.sg)

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