

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



ENGAGE & ENABLE

The imagery of gears featured on the cover of our annual report aptly illustrates the theme of 'Engage & Enable'. Like gears that mesh together to achieve a common objective, the smooth interplay and unity of the different stakeholders are needed to drive the social service sector forward. In the same vein, the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) works closely in partnership with the numerous gears or helping hands in the sector, engaging and enabling each part, setting the whole system in motion.

The many helping hands, comprising NCSS, Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs), volunteers, donors, corporates, individuals and the government - come together for the common purpose of reaching out to those who need help. As the sector continues to gather speed, we need to gear up for challenges ahead. Gearing up means having to put in place capabilities, organisational excellence, effective resource management and robust governance and financial systems. Hence, the importance NCSS accords to our enabling and facilitating role, which includes building VWO capability through professionalising the social service sector, nurturing growth in service delivery, garnering funds for critical services and setting service and governance standards.



Building VWO Capability

Underscoring our commitment to engage and enable VWOs, NCSS re-organised its structure in July 2006 wherein the key functions of service planning, service management and resource allocation, previously performed by a single division, became three separate divisions to better support the execution of our strategies and functions. The Service Management Division provides guidance and support to the VWOs, so as to allow VWOs to focus on service users and on delivering a quality service.

Key among our enabling role is building VWO capability through the provision of training. NCSS recognises that the VWO boards and management, social service personnel and volunteers need to be enabled so that they can in turn enable the people whom they serve. As such, the NCSS training arm, the Social Service Training Institute (SSTI) continues to offer strategic training programmes and consultancy services; and provide platforms for NCSS members to share ideas and network with one another. In the quest to upgrade skills, enhance board governance and management expertise, the response from VWOs has been overwhelming as evident in the 6,320 training places that were taken up in the last year, an increase of 62 per cent from the 3,900 places of the previous year.

In line with our efforts to help develop, attract and retain manpower in the sector, NCSS together with the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) carried out a comprehensive review of the funding for service programmes run by VWOs, including expenditures on manpower. The resultant increase in funding has allowed for upward adjustment in the salaries of key social service professionals.

As part of our service to members, NCSS continues to help VWOs to reap cost benefits by arranging bulk purchase of services and products like insurance policies and workmen compensation. Going beyond this, NCSS will facilitate the provision of shared administration and support services in areas such as book-

keeping, building maintenance and printing. This will be especially useful to smaller VWOs that may not have staff to handle these functions.

Through engaging and partnering the community, corporations and individuals, the NCSS fund-raising arm, Community Chest, met its target of \$47 million to fund 149 programmes that served 350,000 people. Going forward, Community Chest has included a new focus on encouraging planned giving by individuals, including making provisions in their wills to bequeath cash or assets to charities. To facilitate this, Community Chest will work on providing a structured framework to encourage individuals to give in a planned manner.

Enhancing Service Standards

In the areas of service planning and development, NCSS continues to provide guidance to VWOs in developing new services and in setting directions, standards and best practice guidelines. During the year under review, NCSS implemented 10 new services, including a Centre for Caregivers and two Early Intervention Programmes for Infants and Children. We also managed the development of 27 facility development projects to support social service delivery. The Electronic Case Management System (eCMS) now allows VWOs to refer service users across agencies. This 'real-time' cross-referral has helped to enhance VWO collaboration to better serve service users who need to cross from one agency to another, or use services from multiple agencies.

The recommendations of the Enabling Masterplan for disability services, a collaboration between MCYS, NCSS and VWOs with inputs from both the public and private sectors, were released in February 2007. The recommendations adopted a life-stage approach covering early intervention and education for children with disabilities, employment and community, residential and caregiving support.

To help VWOs better assess the effectiveness and impact of their services, NCSS has trained more than 1,800 VWO board members and staff on the concept and implementation of outcome

management. At the end of the financial year, more than 120 programmes have piloted the client-centric outcome management tool for programme evaluation. NCSS plans to introduce this outcome management tool to all the programmes it funds, and hopes that VWOs running non-funded programmes will also adopt it, in due course, for their own programme management.

Spearheading Service Initiatives

While NCSS continues to identify and address the needs of the VWOs, it is also crucial for VWOs to provide feedback and submit proposals to NCSS in order to close the loop. It is therefore useful for VWOs to reflect on their mission and relevance from time to time, to make sure that they are keeping up with the needs of society and providing the needed services with skilled manpower.

As service providers and social service professionals, VWOs are well placed to lead in new initiatives that will benefit the service users and the sector as a whole. NCSS will be working with selected VWOs towards becoming Centres of Specialisation to provide leadership and help build capability for a specific programme type or to build a body of knowledge and skills. These can be in the form of developing guides on best practice standards, assessment tools, care-plans and discharge plans; and methodologies towards accreditation for specific programmes or creating prototype programmes. Centres of Specialisation can also conduct applied research and evidence-based practice documentation for further expertise development. I am pleased to announce that there are plans in the pipeline to kickstart the Centres of Specialisation in the new financial year.

Harnessing Passion and Commitment

The introduction of the new NCSS corporate identity in October 2006 reflects our renewed passion and commitment to the social service sector and the expanded role played by NCSS

to meet the changing needs and challenges of the dynamic social service sector. These challenges are best met by enabling and facilitating VWOs to be relevant, self-regulating and well-managed, with good governance and best practices. When VWOs can articulate their causes and demonstrate the positive outcomes of their good work, this will build and sustain confidence in the sector which can in turn attract and retain resources. This virtuous cycle will help to energise and continually renew the passion to serve and commitment to reach out to those who need help.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow Board and Committee members for their invaluable insights and all our partners for their staunch support and fund-raising efforts. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Benedict Cheong and staff of NCSS for their dedication and contributions in the past year. Mr Cheong has resigned from NCSS on 20 April 2007 to pursue a new interest and I would like to place on record our heartfelt thanks to him for all the significant contributions he has made to NCSS and the sector during his nine-year tenure as CEO of NCSS. Please join me in wishing him all the best in the next phase of his career.

Together, let us continue to work hand in hand as we journey onwards in higher gear to achieve our common purpose.



RADM (Ret.) Kwek Siew Jin
President



HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

SOCIAL SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE	SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2006/2007
Ensure that critical service needs are met	<p>Implemented 10 new services. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) Centre for Caregivers • Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS) Children's Wing <p>Assessed and approved \$53.6 million for 282 programmes for funding by Community Chest and Singapore Totalisator Board Social Service Fund; and nine pilot programmes under the VWO Capability Fund (VCF).</p>
Enhance service delivery of VWOs	<p>Implemented outcome-oriented contract framework.</p> <p>Conducted 95 on-site assessments.</p> <p>Published five specialisation/service standards guides. Among them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice guides for therapy services in the Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC) • Documentation & Record Keeping - A Guide for Service Providers

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

OBJECTIVE	SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2006/2007
Raise adequate funds for approved programmes under NCSS	<p>Community Chest achieved its fund-raising target of \$47 million.</p> <p>Partnered three grantmakers including the Lee Wee Kheng Trust Fund, to reach out to the needy in the social service sector.</p> <p>Developed Standard Operating Procedure for emergency. A trial collection run was conducted on 14 February 2007.</p>
Encourage public participation	<p>Organised the 'Youths Embrace Social Services!' competition which received 50 submissions.</p>

VWO CAPABILITY BUILDING

OBJECTIVE	SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2006/2007
Enhance training and development of VWO boards, staff and volunteers	<p>Achieved 6,320 training places with 95 per cent of participants who agreed that course objectives were met and 29 per cent of participants who agreed that courses have overall exceeded expectations.</p> <p>Completed the leadership competency and development framework. The framework will be implemented in Financial Year 2007/2008.</p> <p>Drawn up competency maps for EIPIC Therapists (Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists & Speech Therapists), Therapy Aides, Teachers & Teacher Aides.</p>
Enhance management efficiency of VWOs	<p>Completed 12 board governance consultancy projects to help VWOs to adopt and apply recommended board governance principles and practices.</p> <p>Held the NCSS Members Conference themed 'Taking Resources for Granted?', in October 2006.</p> <p>Held two LeadersXchange sessions. Topics discussed were 'Leadership and High Performance Teams' and 'The Big Impact of Small Human Capital Ideas'.</p>

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE	SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2006/2007
Enhance NCSS organisational excellence	<p>Developed strategic planning process together with the Business Model and Value Propositions.</p> <p>Developed a three-year development plan based on the SQC framework.</p>