
Sound HR measures key to retaining social workers

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We thank Mr Kwan Jin Yao and Ms Jeelian Leong for their thoughtful suggestions (Understan... social workers' concerns to fix job crunch; April 20 and Low pay in social services is core issue; April 18).

The National Council of Social Service (NCSS) recognises the need to better attract, develop and retain talent in our drive to build the capacity of the social service sector.

Students and mid-career professionals looking to join the sector should consider the various specialised, corporate and support roles available. One would have to meet the minimum competency requirements to take on professional roles in the sector.

Since 2015, we have published salary guidelines recommending competitive starting salaries benchmarked to relevant industries in Singapore. Three in four employees are paid within the guidelines.

The number of professionals in the sector has grown from 8,400 in 2007 to more than 13,000, each one united by a common purpose to support and empower those less advantaged.

Everyone in the people, private and public sectors plays a part in the social service ecosystem. We also value the services of volunteers who commit time to help organisations and their clients.

While volunteering roles are important, they do not replace the work of trained professionals, but instead complement them. We encourage more to participate in regular and sustained volunteer activity.

Sound human resource management is important to retain good people in the sector. Thus the NCSS introduced the People Practice Consultancy to provide organisations with HR experts to help improve their people practices.

We will continue to research new insights in attracting and retaining our workforce to shape future HR programmes. We also invest in the development of our social service professionals, board leaders, carers and volunteers.

The Social Service Institute, under the NCSS, leverages the latest technology to make learning accessible to all.

The NCSS welcomes views and suggestions for uplifting the sector, and we will continue to improve. With support from organisations and communities, we can do better together to help those in need.

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