



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2016**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board (SWAAB), formerly known as the Social Work Accreditation Board (SWAB), was formed on 1 January 2009. The accreditation of social workers and social service practitioners was implemented on 1 April the same year. Accreditation is voluntary. It started with manual registration and switched to the online system on 1 April 2011.

Registered Social Workers (RSWs) and Registered Social Worker-Provisionals (RSW-P) are professionals who have a recognised degree or graduate diploma in social work. Registered Social Service Practitioners (RSSP) are professionals and practitioners who do not have a degree or graduate diploma in social work but have many years of experience in the field. Accreditation may be renewed every two years upon fulfilment of 60 Continuing and Professional Education (CPE) credits. The accreditation of social service practitioners was introduced for a limited period of three years and no new practitioners were accredited in this category since 1 July 2012. Those who were accredited may continue to renew their accreditation, or pursue a degree or graduate diploma in social work to enable them to convert to RSW-P, followed by RSW.

The Board maintains the Register of RSWs, RSW-Ps and RSSPs, issues certificates of accreditation, and promotes the professional standards and good conduct of registered social workers and practitioners. The Board specifies pre-registration requisites, approves Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits for renewal, and investigates any complaints received against a registered professional. Registrants found guilty of professional misconduct may be reprimanded, suspended or removed from the Register. With the transformation of SWAB to SWAAB in January 2014, the Board has expanded its role to provide leadership in the professional development of social workers.

The Annual Report documents the activities and registration statistics as at 31 December 2016.

## **SOCIAL WORK ACCREDITATION AND ADVISORY BOARD**

(1 JANUARY 2016 TO 31 DECEMBER 2017)

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Chairman	Ms Ang Bee Lian	Director of Social Welfare	Ministry of Social and Family Development
Vice-Chairman	Ms Tina Hung	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	National Council of Social Service
Member	Ms Agnes Chia	President	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Member	Ms Long Chey May	Senior Assistant Director, Allied Health & Head, Medical Social Services	Ng Teng Fong General Hospital & Jurong Community Hospital
Member	Ms Morene Sim	Director	inlingua School of Languages
Member	A/Prof Esther Goh	Head, Social Work Department	National University of Singapore
Member	Dr Peace Wong	Senior Lecturer, Social Work Department	National University of Singapore
Member	A/Prof Seng Boon Kheng	Head, Social Work Programme, School of Human Development and Social Services	SIM University
Member	Mr Abdul Halim A.	Director, Community Outreach and Development	Jamiyah Singapore
Member	Ms Julia Lee	Director, Social Work Department	TOUCH Community Services Limited - TOUCH Seniors Activity Centre
Member	Dr Katijah Dawood	Executive Director	Thye Hua Kwan Moral Charities – THK Centre for Family Harmony

### SECRETARIAT

<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Ms Nancy Teo	Head, Accreditation & Programme Director	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Ms Jerene Chua	Assistant Head, Accreditation	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Ms Joelle Tan	Senior Executive, Policy and Research	Singapore Association of Social Workers
Ms Jean Ng	Senior Administrative Executive, Accreditation	Singapore Association of Social Workers

## **CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE**

Since the accreditation framework was set up on 1 April 2009, the Board has accredited 1,682 social workers and social service practitioners as at 31 December 2016. This report provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the Board in 2016. The renewal rate for the Registered Social Worker-Provisionals (RSW-P), Registered Social Workers (RSW) and Registered Social Service Practitioners (RSSP) were 85%, 86% and 76% respectively. The overall renewal rate was 85%.

One of the conditions of accreditation is that the applicant must have social work practice experience. To enable those who do not have direct but indirect practice experience to apply for accreditation, the Board had, in August 2016, introduced a list of criteria that could be deemed the equivalent of social work experience. The criteria are based on the National Social Work Competency Framework for indirect social work practice. These applications shall be considered on a case by case basis.

Following the Seminar on "Social Work Supervision: Challenges and Advances" in May 2015, the Board had set up a Social Work Supervision Workgroup chaired by Dr Peace Wong, SWAAB Board Member and Senior Lecturer, Social Work Department, National University, to look into drawing up guidelines on social work supervision. The workgroup comprised nine senior social workers from academia and the social service and healthcare sectors. A set of guidelines was drawn up following the workgroup's deliberation and references to relevant literature. To ensure that the guidelines are useful for social workers, the workgroup conducted four focus group discussions among social work supervisors from different sectors. The inputs gained from these FGDs proved to be very valuable.

I am, therefore, pleased to announce that the guidelines will be officially launched in the middle of this year. It also serves as a start of more dialogues to come. The workgroup will organise engagement sessions with agency heads to seek their support for the guidelines. A video will also be produced for this purpose. In addition, the workgroup will work closely with the Singapore Association of Social Workers and its training arm, the Family Resource and Training Centre, to develop training programmes on supervision for social workers at the various levels and in all sectors. An online portal will also be set up for the posting of suitable materials on social work supervision for the community.

As in previous years, the SWAAB Secretariat had continued to visit social service and healthcare agencies to promote and gather feedback and suggestions on accreditation. The total number of agencies visited to-date is 134. The inputs received had enabled the Board to fine-tune the accreditation and renewal criteria during the reporting year.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their service and various contributions during the year. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Social Work Department of the National University of Singapore and the SIM University for their active and unstinting support for accreditation. My appreciation also goes to the staff team for their hard work and dedication in managing the accreditation system and in providing excellent secretariat support to the Board. May I urge all accredited social workers and social service practitioners to continue to uphold the standards of practice and ethics of social work so as to raise the quality of social work services and enhance the image of the profession.

Ms Ang Bee Lian  
Chairman  
Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board

## **STATISTICS**

### **NUMBER AND TYPES OF ACCREDITATION**

As at 31 December 2016, there were 1,682 accredited social workers and social service practitioners compared to 1,591 on 31 December 2015. This was an increase of 6%.

Table 1: Number and Types of Accreditation as at 31 December 2016

Type	2015		2016		Increase / Decrease	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Registered Social Worker-Provisional (RSW-P)	222	14	235	14	13	6
Registered Social Worker (RSW)	1153	72	1256	75	103	9
Registered Social Service Practitioner (RSSP)	216	14	191	11	- 25	- 12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1591</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1682</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>6</b>

### **DISTRIBUTION BY SECTOR**

A majority of the accredited professionals practised in voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs). The second largest group practised in the public healthcare sector comprising restructured hospitals, specialist centres and polyclinics. The third largest group practised in the government ministries and statutory boards.

Table 2: Distribution by Sector and Accreditation Type as at 31 December 2016

Sector of Employment	Distribution by Sector						Total	
	RSW-P		RSW		RSSP			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWO)	189	80	771	61	136	71	1096	65
Public Healthcare Sector (Restructured Hospitals, Specialist Centres, Polyclinics)	25	11	251	20	9	5	285	17
Government Ministries & Statutory Boards	8	3	154	12	36	18	198	12
Self-employed	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Unemployed	9	4	58	5	5	3	72	4
Others	4	2	21	2	5	3	30	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1256</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1682</b>	<b>100</b>

## QUALIFYING QUALIFICATION BY COUNTRY OF ACCREDITED PROFESSIONALS

### 1. REGISTERED SOCIAL WORKER-PROVISIONALS (RSW-Ps)

A majority of registered social worker-provisionals qualified in Social Work from Singapore. Other countries where our RSW-Ps were qualified from includes Hong Kong, India, Australia, Philippines, Canada, China, Malaysia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

Table 3: Qualifying Qualification By Country for RSW-Ps as at 31 December 2016

Country of Qualifying Qualification	No.	%
Singapore	210	89.4
Hong Kong (HK)	10	4.3
India	4	1.7
Australia	3	1.3
Philippines	3	1.3
Canada	1	0.4
China	1	0.4
Malaysia	1	0.4
Ukraine	1	0.4
United Kingdom (UK)	1	0.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100</b>

### 2. REGISTERED SOCIAL WORKERS (RSWs)

The largest number of registered social workers qualified in Social Work from Singapore. Other countries where our RSWs were qualified include Australia, Hong Kong, United States of America, India, Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan, United Kingdom, Canada, China and New Zealand.

Table 4: Qualifying Qualification By Country for RSWs as at 31 December 2016

Country of Qualifying Qualification	No.	%
Singapore	1074	85.5
Australia	81	6
Hong Kong (HK)	37	3
United States of America (USA)	21	2
India	13	1
Philippines	12	0.9
Malaysia	9	0.7
Taiwan	3	0.3
United Kingdom (UK)	3	0.3
Canada	1	0.1
China	1	0.1
New Zealand	1	0.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1256</b>	<b>100</b>

### **3. REGISTERED SOCIAL SERVICE PROFESSIONALS (RSSPs)**

#### Qualifying Qualification By Country for RSSPs

No information is available in this section for RSSPs as they were not accredited based on possession of a social work qualification, but on possession of other qualifications and/or certain number of years of experience in the sector.



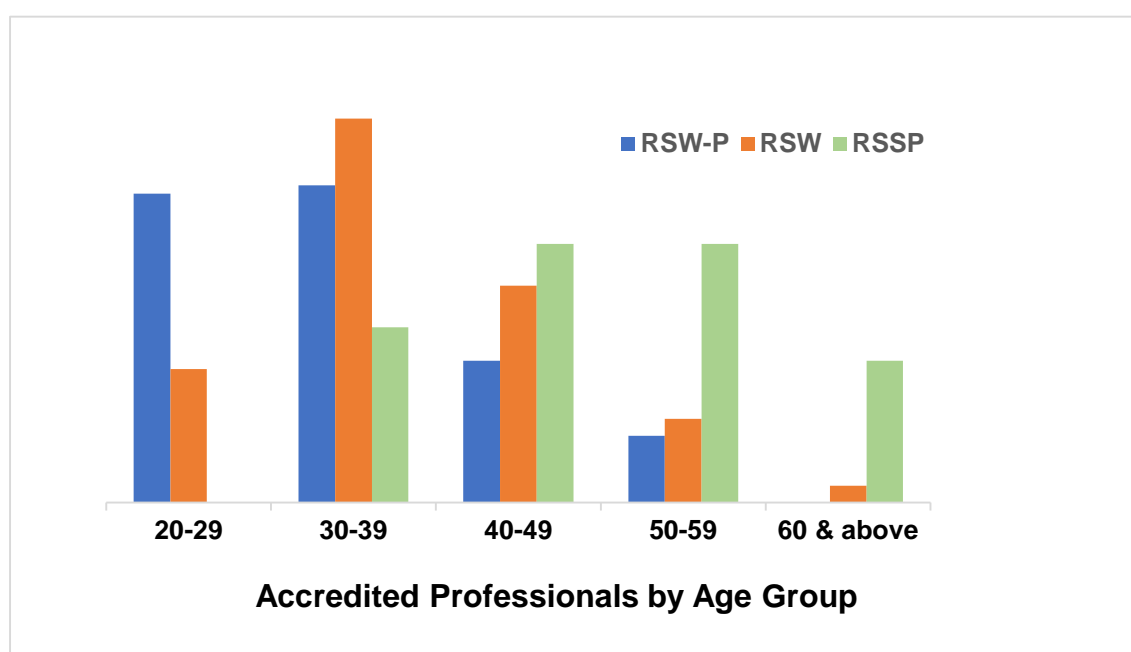
## PROFILE OF ACCREDITED PROFESSIONALS

The social work and social service professionals are young and female dominated, with the majority in the age group of 30 - 39, followed by those in the 40 - 49 age group. Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents (PRs) make up 97% of the pool across the three accreditation types. Table 5 shows the profile of accredited professionals by gender, age and nationality.

**Table 5:** General Profile of Accredited Professionals as at 31 December 2016

Profile	Number and Percentage for Each Group						Total	
	RSW-P		RSW		RSSP		No.	%
	No	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Gender								
Male	75	32	279	22	61	32	415	25
Female	160	68	977	78	130	68	1267	75
Age								
20-29	88	37	199	16	0	0	287	17
30-39	89	38	581	46	40	21	710	42
40-49	40	17	332	26	59	31	431	26
50-59	18	8	121	10	60	31	199	12
60 and above	0	0	23	2	32	17	55	3
Nationality								
Singapore Citizen & PR	217	92	1217	97	191	100	1625	97
Non-Citizen	18	8	39	3	0	0	57	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1256</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1682</b>	<b>100</b>

**Chart 5A:** Total number of Accredited Professionals by Age Group



## **COMPLAINTS**

In June 2016, Secretariat received a written complaint against two accredited professionals by their former client on incidents that had occurred more than two years ago. In accordance to the Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures, the complaint was referred to the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) appointed by SWAAB. After due consideration, SWAAB accepted the PIC's recommendation that no further action be taken on the grounds that the two-year period stipulated in the procedures had lapsed, the complainant had availed herself of other channels for redress, and the issues raised were not serious enough to warrant further attention.



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