INSIGHTS TO EFFECTIVE VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT
A PILOT STUDY

"Volunteers as a form of organisation resource should be viewed with greater strategic importance. It's heartening to see the Volunteer Manager Funding Scheme has enabled participating organisations to have dedicated volunteer management roles to effectively deploy resources available to them and increase their capacity to serve more service users."

– Ms Charmaine Leung
Group Director,
Fund-Raising & Engagement Group
National Council of Social Service

"I volunteer in several organisations. I find that those with a (dedicated) Volunteer Manager use the volunteers' skills more effectively, so we feel we are contributing and not just a placeholder. A Volunteer Manager lets me know what the organisation needs and helps me see how I fit in overall."

– Richard
Long-term Volunteer
Beyond Social Services

FOREWORD

Sim Gim Guan
Chief Executive Officer
National Council of Social Service

An active spirit of volunteerism and care from the community, for the community – that is the heart of the SG Cares movement, launched by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on 13 January 2018, and what National Council of Social Service (NCSS) strives to achieve together with our social service organisations, corporate and community partners. This finite gift of time, however, needs to be managed effectively to benefit volunteers, social service organisations, and ultimately the service users who are in need.

With this in mind, NCSS rolled out the second year of the pilot Volunteer Manager Funding Scheme (VMFS) with 10 volunteer managers and conducted a study to document achievements and learnings. With strategic management and mobilisation of volunteer resources, the participating organisations were able to enhance manpower utilisation and complement staff to provide quality service solutions through sustained volunteerism. The pilot study also registered a greater level of satisfaction and awareness among volunteers and corporate partners, which are key factors to deepening and sustaining such collaborations across the social service ecosystem.

Beyond these key findings, the pilot study has underscored the benefits of having a dedicated volunteer manager and having a volunteer management framework in place. Apart from ensuring that volunteers are engaged and contributing in ways that are meaningful to them, the study highlights best practices, strategies and examples to optimise resources, synergise efforts across people, private and public sectors, and most importantly, improve the service delivery to our service users.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the 10 participating member organisations, volunteer managers from AMKFSC, AWWA, Beyond Social Services, HealthServe, Lakeside Family Services, Lions Befrienders, Montfort Care, Rainbow Centre, RSVP Singapore and TOUCH Community Services, and all other partners who helped put this report together. The experiences and perspectives offered valuable insights that will help both NCSS and the sector to continually improve the volunteer management journey, build a sustainable culture of volunteerism and truly demonstrate the SG Cares spirit.

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Introduction & Context

Understanding Volunteering in Singapore

Volunteering in Singapore has been on a continual rise in both numbers and commitment.

In 2016, 1 in 3 people in the country engaged in volunteering (35%) as compared to 1 in 10 in the year 2000 (9%) [1]

Volunteer man-hours nearly doubled [1]

2014 — 66 million hours

2016 — 121 million hours
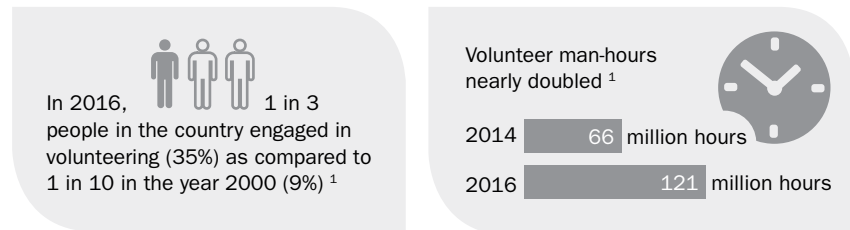
Social service organisations also benefited from the trend, with 38% of 242 social service organisations reporting more than 100 regular volunteers–those dedicating a minimum of 24 volunteer-hours with at least 4 engagements in a year.[2]

SENIORS

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The majority of these volunteer hours were spent in these three cause areas.

In addition to giving time, current volunteers—individuals who volunteered in the last 12 months—also donated five times more in funds than non-volunteers. The average amount donated by a current volunteer was SGD 1,441, compared to SGD 285 by a non-volunteer.[1] The level of corporate giving also grew impressively. In 2017, 39% percent of all corporate giving in Singapore was through volunteering, with 30% of corporate givers offering paid volunteer leave to employees.[3]

By contributing both time and funds, volunteers form the backbone of service delivery for a large number of social service organisations in Singapore. However, effective volunteer management is needed to ensure that both volunteers and the organisations benefit from their experiences. To underscore the point, volunteer and human resource management was rated by Executive Directors as a very important aspect (top 3) for effective service delivery and more crucial to improving service delivery than attaining a high number of volunteers.[2] On average, 71% of large social service organisations (defined as those with more than 100+ regular volunteers) have volunteer management roles.

An organisation with a dedicated Volunteer Manager is likely to perform 10% better in volunteer management, including recruiting, training, recognising and retaining volunteers.

[1] Individual Giving Survey by National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) 2016
[2] National Council of Social Service
[3] 2017 Corporate Giving Survey by NVPC

Volunteer Manager Funding Scheme

While most social service organisations recognised the need for volunteers and effective volunteer management, not every social service organisation believes in it nor has the ability and the resources to manage volunteers efficiently or effectively. Individuals and corporate organisations often volunteer without the guidance of dedicated Volunteer Managers. In discussions with social service organisations, NCSS found that the staff managing volunteers often wore many hats– from programme management to operations to administrative support. More often than not, staff in the volunteer management role were untrained, under-resourced, and managed volunteers on an ad-hoc basis.

Trained and dedicated volunteer managers in a social service organisation could address key challenges in three areas:

MANPOWER SHORTAGE

An increased number of effective volunteers would help supplement organisational staff in increasing service capacity and quality of services.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Volunteer managers would help to implement better recruitment processes and help create a more positive experience for volunteers, helping retention.

ALIGNMENT OF VOLUNTEER SKILLS & NEEDS WITH THE ORGANISATION'S NEEDS

A more robust volunteer management process would better align volunteer skill sets and their needs with the social service organisations' strategic needs.

NCSS' next step to address these areas was to pilot the Volunteer Manager Funding Scheme (VMFS) in 2016. The VMFS aimed to test the impact of a dedicated Volunteer Manager on social service organisations, by funding the role for two years. NCSS selected 10 social service organisations from a pool of more than 80 submissions to receive funding for a dedicated Volunteer Manager position from October 2016 to September 2018. The VMFS' main objectives were for social service organisations to:

- Optimise the use of regular volunteers to support service delivery
- Augment their manpower on a sustainable basis
- Implement the volunteer management framework for effective volunteer management

The social service organisations selected differed in the type of causes they support and organisational size. Three out of the ten social service organisations created a new Volunteer Manager role, while the remaining seven organisations chose to fund existing staff. For the existing staff, the volunteer management function was newly added to their role.

Leadership and Volunteer Managers from Montfort Care

Selection Criteria

Organisations were selected based on the following criteria:

SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT

Full support from the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and senior management.
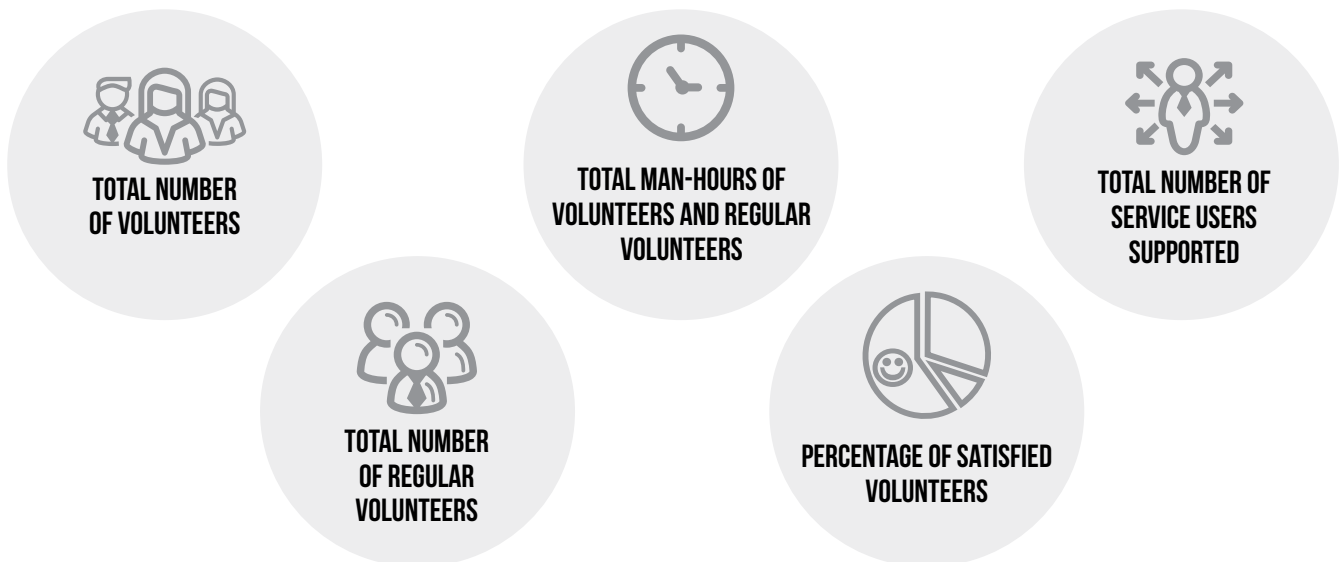
SCALABILITY

Organisation's ability to scale services to generate productivity improvements, for example increasing the number of service users or generating cost efficiencies.

IMPACT TO THE SECTOR

Organisation's alignment with and willingness to advocate NCSS initiatives, for example championing volunteer management for sector-wide impact.

Performance Metrics

Performance was tracked against the following metrics:

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

TOTAL MAN-HOURS OF VOLUNTEERS AND REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

TOTAL NUMBER OF SERVICE USERS SUPPORTED

TOTAL NUMBER OF REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

PERCENTAGE OF SATISFIED VOLUNTEERS

Data Tracking & Supplemental Surveys

NCSS worked with the 10 VMFS participants to track the key performance indicators (KPIs). Throughout the VMFS, NCSS visited each agency to observe and discuss the organisation's volunteer management practices, conducted mid-point check-in at the one-year mark and hosted regular engagement sessions to foster networking, support and resource sharing amongst the 10 social service organisations. Additionally, at the end of the funding period, in-depth interviews were conducted with each organisation's Executive Director (or equivalent) and Volunteer Manager to obtain learnings and details on best practices and achievements.
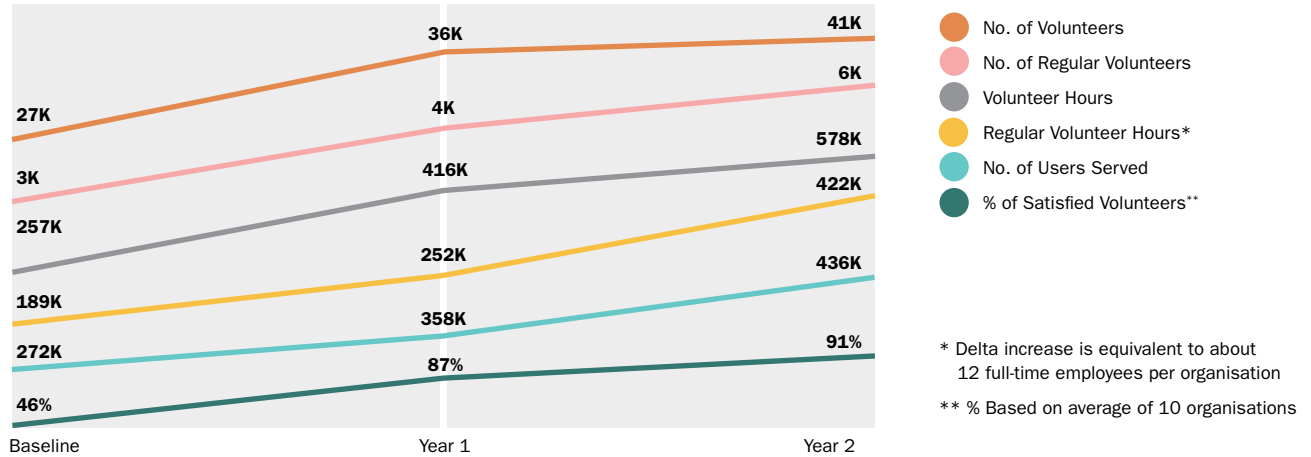
In addition to metrics tracking, three surveys were conducted at the end of the funding period with the findings shared throughout the report:

1. Survey of 518 volunteers across the 10 VMFS participating organisations to understand their satisfaction levels for recruiting, training, recognition, and feedback.

2. Survey of Volunteer Managers and the EDs / CEs of the 10 funded organisations to understand the value of the Volunteer Manager role.

3. Survey of a control group of non-VMFS funded organisation EDs / CEs and Volunteer Managers (or the person acting in the Volunteer Manager role) in 10 service organisations. The 10 non-funded organisations were similar in size to the VMFS participants.
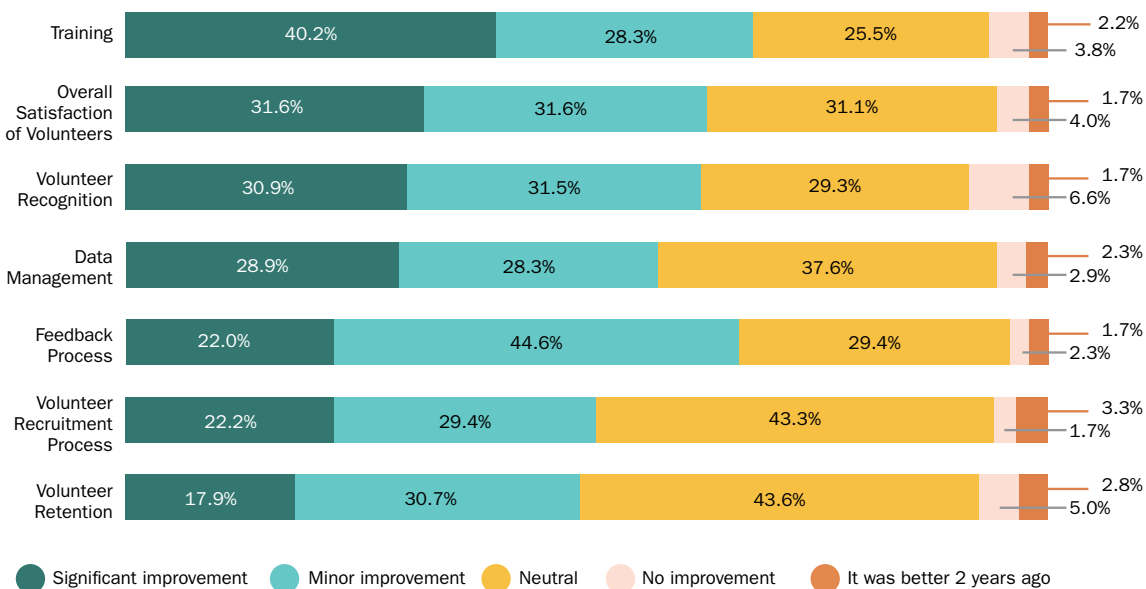
Key Performance Indicators Data Report

Overall, the VMFS achieved its KPIs which it set out to achieve. Significant improvement across all metrics were demonstrated at both aggregate level and at individual social service organisation level. Across the 10 funded social service organisations, the growth at the end of the funding period vis-a-vis the baseline is showcased here.

Exceptional performance on every measured indicator

	Baseline	Year 1	Year 2	
No. of Volunteers	27K	36K	41K	🟠 No. of Volunteers
No. of Regular Volunteers	3K	4K	6K	🩷 No. of Regular Volunteers
Volunteer Hours	257K	416K	578K	⚪ Volunteer Hours
Regular Volunteer Hours*	189K	252K	422K	🟡 Regular Volunteer Hours*
No. of Users Served	272K	358K	436K	🟢 No. of Users Served
% of Satisfied Volunteers**	46%	87%	91%	🟢 % of Satisfied Volunteers**

* Delta increase is equivalent to about 12 full-time employees per organisation

** % Based on average of 10 organisations

Long-term volunteers—defined as volunteering over two years at an organisation—were also surveyed to rate improvements within the organisation. More than 60% reported improvements across every aspect of the Volunteer Manager's function.

Volunteer Feedback on Improvements

	Significant improvement	Minor improvement	Neutral	No improvement	It was better 2 years ago
Training	40.2%	28.3%	25.5%	2.2%	3.8%
Overall Satisfaction of Volunteers	31.6%	31.6%	31.1%	1.7%	4.0%
Volunteer Recognition	30.9%	31.5%	29.3%	1.7%	6.6%
Data Management	28.9%	28.3%	37.6%	2.3%	2.9%
Feedback Process	22.0%	44.6%	29.4%	1.7%	2.3%
Volunteer Recruitment Process	22.2%	29.4%	43.3%	3.3%	1.7%
Volunteer Retention	17.9%	30.7%	43.6%	2.8%	5.0%

● Significant improvement ● Minor improvement ● Neutral ● No improvement ● It was better 2 years ago

Feedback on improvements by volunteers in the 10 VMFS funded organisations

VMFS Participants & Achievements

The following sections of this report highlight the key achievements of the VMFS, including:
- Participants' results against the key performance metrics
- Benefits to the participants from employing a dedicated Volunteer Manager
- Best practices for deploying a Volunteer Manager
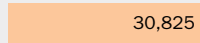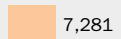- Lessons learned for the future

AMKFSC Community Services Ltd.

🌐 www.amkfsc.org.sg

A leading community-based social service agency, which provides a comprehensive range of services to support various service users over multiple touchpoints across Singapore. AMKFSC operates four family service centres in Ang Mo Kio, Sengkang and Punggol, and offers other support services such as student care centres, senior service, specialised services for youth and young persons, and community mental health and wellness programmes.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

2018	2,523
2016	980

157% GROWTH in number of volunteers

2018	30,825
2016	7,281

323% GROWTH in number of volunteer man-hours

- Created standard operating procedures for volunteer management.
- Moved from Excel spreadsheet for volunteer tracking to a more robust volunteer management system to track volunteer hours.
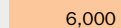
AWWA Ltd

🌐 www.awwa.org.sg

A social service organisation serving more than 10,000 of the disadvantaged across life stages. Services include early intervention for preschoolers, education and disability support for children with special needs, assistance to low income families, caregivers, and health and social assistance for vulnerable seniors.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

2018	726
2016	67

984% GROWTH in number of regular volunteers

2018	10,000
2016	6,000

Served **67%** more users

- Implemented training & development framework for all volunteers.
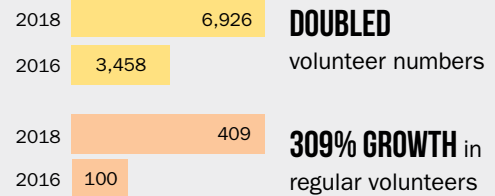- Created e-orientation modules to improve volunteer training efficiency.

Beyond Social Services

www.beyond.org.sg

Beyond Social Services helps children and youth from less privileged backgrounds break away from the poverty cycle. They take a long-term view of their work and keep in touch with their members until they reach adulthood. By being an advocate, enabler and motivator, Beyond rallies residents in public rental housing to work closely with other stakeholders in nurturing young people to lead purposeful and meaningful lives.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

2018	6,926
2016	3,458

DOUBLED volunteer numbers

2018	409
2016	100

309% GROWTH in regular volunteers

- Created and launched **BEYOND SELF ACADEMY**, an exchange platform for training that nurtures volunteers to fulfil Beyond Social Services' vision of a vibrant volunteer driven culture to improve volunteer attraction and retention.

- Used social media to recruit and market, as well as to feature stories of regular volunteers to demonstrate how to contribute even with limited time or skills.

- Supportive of the strategic value of volunteer management and looking to keep the Volunteer Manager role going forward.
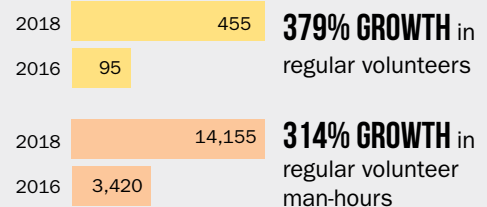
HealthServe Ltd

www.healthserve.org.sg

HealthServe serves disadvantaged migrant workers in Singapore through healthcare, counselling, casework, and social assistance. The organisation advocates for and raises awareness for the needs of migrant workers and bridges communities through meaningful partnerships and effective volunteers.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

2018	455
2016	95

379% GROWTH in regular volunteers

2018	14,155
2016	3,420

314% GROWTH in regular volunteer man-hours

- Started using cost efficient technology to track volunteer activities and hours leading to improved efficiency and accuracy in record-keeping.

Lakeside Family Services

Lakeside Family Services runs two Family Service Centres and two Student Care Centres in Jurong providing highly subsidised, quality services to underprivileged children, youths, families, and seniors, regardless of race, language or religion. Lakeside works with families in distress because of multiple issues and provides support through a multi-pronged approach, including financial assistance, counselling, children and youth developmental programmes, home and employment assistance. Last year, Lakeside journeyed with over 1,500 families and over 4,000 of their members and other individuals through their services.

www.lakeside.org.sg

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Year	Value
2018	1,908
2016	909

110% GROWTH in number of volunteers

Year	Value
2018	7,000
2016	4,200

67% more users served

- Created and implemented a QR code system for registering and tracking volunteers leading to a larger, more accurate database.
- Began following a 5-step human resources model for volunteer retention.

Lions Befrienders Service Association (Singapore)

Formed in 1995 by the Lions Clubs of Singapore, Lions Befrienders has more than 20 years of history in working with stakeholders to provide friendship and care for seniors to age in place with community participation, enabling them to enjoy enriching lives.

www.lionsbefrienders.org.sg

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Year	Value
2018	22,466
2016	5,898

281% GROWTH in number of volunteers man-hours

- Launched a two-tiered volunteer training programme with a pathway for volunteer growth, including a Befriender Certification, which upskills volunteers in areas of communications and engagement.
- Aligned the organisational needs with volunteer needs and recruitment for better volunteer satisfaction and retention.
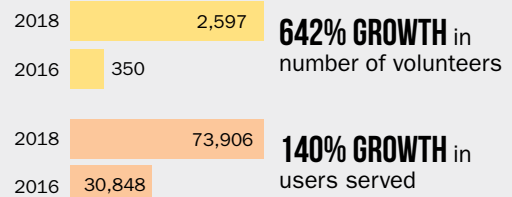- Formalised volunteer feedback with an online satisfaction and feedback survey.

Montfort Care

A network of programmes committed to improving the lives of individuals, families, and the community facing transitional challenges. The team of social services professionals provides community-based social services to empower lives and strengthen communities. Services offered include three Family Services Centres, child protection service, cyber wellness programme, and programmes to support active and frail seniors to age-in-place.

🌐 www.montfortcare.org.sg

ACHIEVEMENTS:

2018	2,597
2016	350

642% GROWTH in number of volunteers

2018	73,906
2016	30,848

140% GROWTH in users served

- Built stronger corporate relationships aimed at long-term engagement, through funding and volunteering, meeting both the needs of Montfort Care and the corporate partners.

- Standardised processes to improve efficiency, including centralising data collection forms and building a data management system that tracks hours and acts as a centralised communication platform to notify volunteers about available programmes.

- Created an opportunity for the sharing of best practices among different centres' coordinators allowing them to discuss challenges, solutions, and training resources.

Rainbow Centre, Singapore

Rainbow Centre envisions a world where persons with disabilities are empowered and thriving in inclusive communities. The organisation works with partners to create opportunities for persons with disabilities to make the most of their abilities and participate meaningfully in society. Through practical education, meaningful support, and effective training programmes, Rainbow Centre strives to increase the quality of life for persons with disabilities and their families.

🌐 www.rainbowcentre.org.sg

ACHIEVEMENTS:

2018	663
2016	362

83% GROWTH in regular volunteers
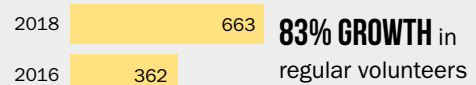
- Refined the volunteer recruitment programme.

- Revised volunteer job descriptions to clarify roles, time commitment, and set expectations for both the organisation staff and the volunteers.

- Standardised training, structured orientation, and created an observation period for classroom volunteers.

- Organised Engagement Tea, where volunteers share inspiring or challengingng experiences and feedback about their volunteer work.
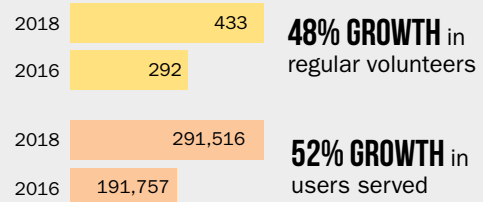
RSVP Singapore The Organisation of Senior Volunteers

www.rsvp.org.sg

The organisation of senior volunteers, RSVP actively engages seniors in purpose-driven volunteerism. With over 1,000 members and 1,500 ad-hoc volunteers, RSVP Singapore supports more than 200,000 service users each year including the mentally disadvantaged, at-risk children from low income families, and socially isolated seniors through its community service programmes.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

2018	433
2016	292

48% GROWTH in regular volunteers

2018	291,516
2016	191,757

52% GROWTH in users served

- Created OpenHouse@RSVP, a monthly job fair-style recruitment event with booths dedicated to different volunteer activities.

- Began a "funneling" system for volunteers that allows the organisation to better match volunteers interests and time commitment to RSVP's needs.

- Implemented a volunteer management system that allows the organisation to map the location of the volunteers and mobilise them by locale.

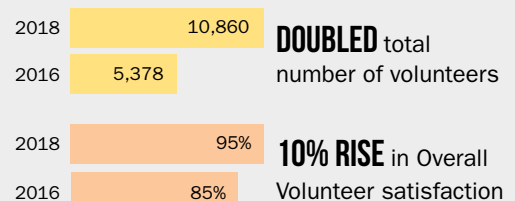- Developed a training manual for the volunteer management system to train programme staff.

TOUCH Community Services Limited

www.touch.org.sg

TOUCH Community Services is a not-for-profit charitable organisation, dedicated to meeting the needs of children from low-income or single parent families, youth-at-risk, needy families, people with special and healthcare needs, and frail elderly. Through its network of 18 services, TOUCH is committed to serving people of all ages, races, religions and backgrounds. Each year, its programmes and services meet the needs of more than 31,000 service users.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

2018	10,860
2016	5,378

DOUBLED total number of volunteers

2018	95%
2016	85%

10% RISE in Overall Volunteer satisfaction

- Standardised volunteer orientation and training to ensure consistent understanding of TOUCH's work

- Ramped up volunteer recognition efforts using social media to profile volunteers' work, as well as featuring their stories in the monthly corporate e-newsletter, TOUCH Base.

Overall, the VMFS pilot scheme significantly improved the volunteer management function for the 10 participating social service organisations. Even though different organisations found different ways in which a dedicated Volunteer Manager could contribute, each organisation found that their volunteer numbers increased and that new and productive processes to manage volunteers were created. Ultimately, this helped to lay the potential foundation to improve the quality of life for the service users and increase the capacity of each organisation.

Challenges & Best Practices

When interacting with the VMFS participating organisations, NCSS found the following key challenges in volunteer management:

1. Difficulty in securing regular volunteers to commit at least 24 hours and 4 times per year
2. Need for a more efficient way of tracking numbers and management of volunteers across different programmes/centres (i.e. need for volunteer management system/technology)
3. Turnover in Volunteer Managers

Organisational & Volunteer Management Challenges

While Volunteer Managers were brought in to address these volunteer management challenges, they also faced their own challenges inside and outside the organisation. Challenges faced by Volunteer Managers across multiple organisations include:

LACK OF INTERNAL SUPPORT. Support for the Volunteer Manager role from the Board and management team through to the programme staff is critical for success. The role must be recognised and properly resourced by the Board and executive team. Volunteer Managers also spoke of needing to work towards an internal mindset shift with regard to their role and the role of volunteers within the organisation. They expressed difficulty in getting the entire team to see that volunteers are part of the ecosystem and can contribute in a meaningful way.

UNTRAINED VOLUNTEERS. Trained volunteers who understand what to expect from the volunteer experience tend to have more longevity in the organisation. Training takes time and resources, but is critical to success.

ALIGNMENT OF NEEDS & EXPECTATIONS. Volunteer Managers shared that it is critical to match an organisation's needs and the volunteers' skills, desires, and agenda by placing volunteers in suitable roles. At the same time, when volunteers have expectations that may not align with the organisations, Volunteer Managers stressed the need to not turn them away, but to open a discussion to manage expectations for future activities.

OBTAINING FEEDBACK. Social service organisations required feedback on the volunteer experience in order to make it meaningful for the organisation and the volunteers and to encourage repeated volunteering. Organisations and Volunteer Managers found obtaining feedback a challenge, particularly with corporate volunteers.

Best Practices Developed

To address the challenges above, the VMFS participants created a variety of innovative, replicable and scalable best practices for volunteer management that can be deployed by organisations across the social service sector over the past two years. These best practices involved four key areas:

1. Recruitment
2. Data Management & Standard Operating Procedures
3. Training
4. Recognition & Retention

These practices could be used by dedicated Volunteer Managers in any social service organisation to achieve greater impact for the organisation, and for the organisation to recruit and retain volunteers.

Recruitment

Recruiting the right volunteers is a big challenge. While there are ample individuals and corporate partners offering volunteer time, making sure they are the right fit for the tasks required starts with successful recruitment. From writing detailed job descriptions to open house fairs to three-month mentoring periods to curated corporate volunteer engagement, the VMFS participants incorporated changes to make their recruitment processes more robust. The result has been an increase in both overall (49% average growth from 2016) as well as regular volunteer numbers (140% average growth from 2016).

40,776

27,429

6,382

2,657

Baseline   Year 2

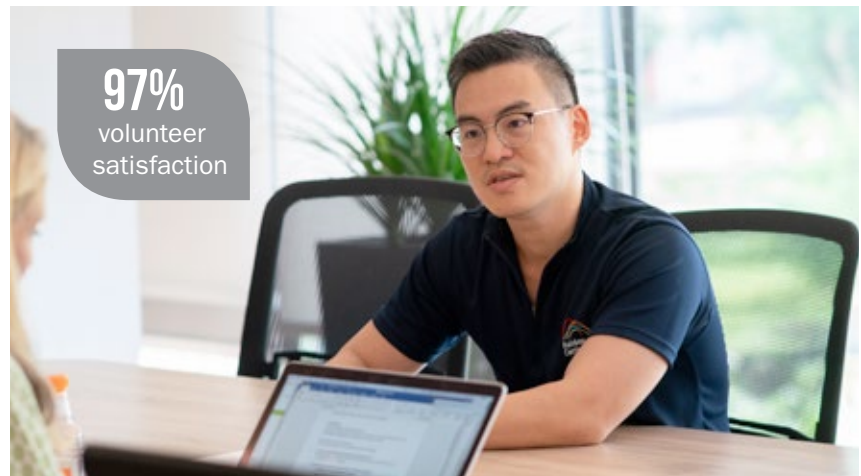● No. of Volunteers
● No. of Regular Volunteers
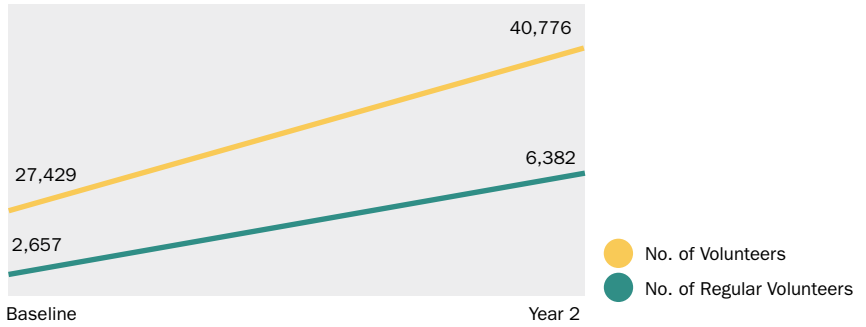
Increase in volunteer numbers over 2-year funding period.

Rainbow Centre Begins Recruitment Program & Solidifies Job Descriptions

While Rainbow Centre needed more and more volunteers to support its programmes and services as the organisation grew, it did not have the resources to actively recruit volunteers. As such, the Centre faced a lack of volunteers for its programmes, as well as a lack of clarity on volunteer roles. With a dedicated Volunteer Manager supported by the VMFS, they were able to use social media, SG Cares, and roadshows to recruit volunteers. In year one of the pilot programme, they nearly doubled their overall number of volunteers from 1,253 to 2,269 and increased their total volunteer hours from 40,599 to 60,357.

From a process standpoint, they revised volunteer job descriptions to clarify roles, time commitment, and set expectations for both sides. These steps have led to more satisfaction from staff with regard to volunteer quality and from volunteers with regard to their placements. In fact, 97% of volunteers report being satisfied with their work at Rainbow Centre.

97%
volunteer satisfaction

RSVP's Open House Recruitment Funnels Interest for Better Retention of Volunteers

In the past, recruitment at RSVP meant staff had to conduct a one-to-one interview with a potential recruit and discuss all the options for volunteering. As a multi-service organisation with many different types of activities and commitment levels, this was time consuming and labour intensive. It meant that RSVP could only reach a handful of potential recruits per month. Looking for a broader, more efficient approach to recruitment, RSVP created OpenHouse@RSVP, a monthly job fair-style event with booths dedicated to different volunteer activities. The organisation casts a broad net inviting all seniors who might be interested in giving their time and talents to the community. During Open House, current volunteers share their experiences with the aim of inspiring others to become volunteers. They have had 30-40 attendees for each session.

After an Open House session, the recruitment process becomes a "funnel." Interested attendees go through a free half-day workshop about how to be an effective volunteer. About 80% of those attending Open House move on to RSVP's volunteer training which aims to show what they can expect from the experience, but also what RSVP and other social service organisations expect from them. Many of them become episodic volunteers, whom RSVP calls upon for event-based or one-off activities throughout the year. The rest continue on as regular volunteers in their weekly programmes.

OPENHOUSE@RSVP

HALF-DAY FREE WORKSHOP

RSVP'S VOLUNTEER TRAINING

EPISODIC VOLUNTEERS/ REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

80%
of attendees move on to volunteer training

After the workshop, RSVP will place potential volunteers as observers in an actual volunteering session with another social service organisation. They will also be paired with an experienced volunteer or volunteer team leader. This further aligns expectations, with about 50% of these converting to regular volunteers and quite a few of the rest becoming episodic volunteers, creating a ready volunteer pool. Open House led to an additional 2,191 regular volunteer hours, meaning RSVP could support an additional 29,928 service users by the end of the second year.

Lions Befrienders Aligns Organisational Needs with Volunteer Recruitment and Needs

Lions Befrienders believes that volunteer satisfaction and retention starts at the very beginning with recruitment. By firmly understanding organisational goals and recruiting the right volunteers in service of meeting the goals, volunteers will be more satisfied and more likely to convert to regular volunteers. Recruitment begins with a screening process to orient volunteers to their programme and set expectations for both sides. A Befriender Executive guides new Befrienders and provides a channel for feedback and questions. During the first three-months the volunteer management team offers support by calling new Befrienders to check on their well-being.

As an organisation that services seniors who may not be fluent in English, language skills are a key component to providing their services. When recruiting, Lions Befrienders looks for volunteers who speak both Mandarin dialect and English/Mandarin. However, if volunteers do not speak Mandarin dialect, the organisation conducts dialect training sessions for them and encourages volunteers to learn from the seniors they are serving.

Volunteer satisfaction & retention begins with recruitment.

With regard to volunteer needs and expectations, the team noticed the general profile of volunteers is skewing younger. So they created an online recruitment and sustenance platform for its tech-savvy younger recruits. They kept the call-in registration available as well to cater to the needs of mature volunteers who are less tech-savvy.

Montfort Care Builds Corporate Relationship

Montfort Care struggled to build long-term corporate relationships because without a dedicated Volunteer Manager, they did not have the bandwidth to manage them properly. Prior to the VMFS, Montfort Care worked with corporate partners in one-off activities, such as food distribution or a single service visit, all geared around corporate objectives and needs. But Montfort Care understood this was not a long-term solution to meet their service needs. When Keppel Care Foundation approached Montfort Care for a corporate project, having a dedicated Volunteer Manager allowed Montfort Care to propose a one-year commitment designed to meet the objectives of both sides - to improve the outcomes for their service users.

Working together, they created a nutrition programme for seniors where a registered nurse developed nutritious, inexpensive and personalised recipes for each service user's needs. Then, Keppel volunteers visited the seniors and they shopped together for ingredients for the receipe, using a voucher system supported by Keppel.

Montfort's dedicated Volunteer Managers created a bespoke corporate partnership.

MontfortCare

Those whom the world rejects must move you the most

St. Louis-Marie Montfort

Data Management and Standard Operating Procedures

Capturing the details of new volunteers, getting a sense of volunteer activities on an ongoing basis, assigning the volunteers to the right roles based on their preference and experience, and enabling centralised volunteer communication all fall in the area of data management and standard operating procedures (SOPs). Now, more than ever, social service organisations feel the need to evolve and adopt technology to enable efficient processes. 75% of the Volunteer Managers under the VMFS have started new initiatives in the last two years in the area of data management compared to only 10% in non-VMFS organisations. Having a dedicated Volunteer Manager vastly enables improvements in this area.
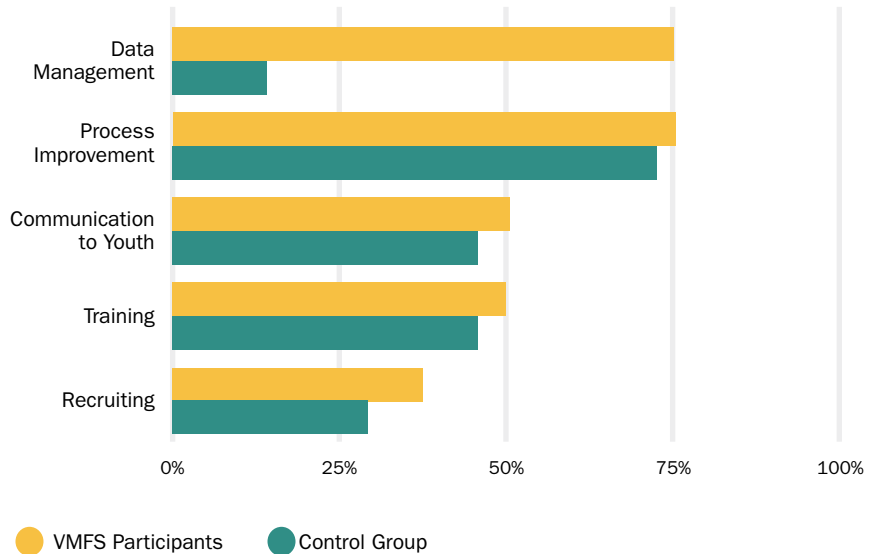
New projects initiated by VMFS participants' Volunteer Managers vis-a-vis the control group

HealthServe Uses Technology for Better Data Management

HealthServe began using Google sheets as a cost-effective and efficient way to track volunteer activities and hours. A potential volunteer keys details into a volunteer interest form on the organisation's website which populates a Google Sheet. Volunteers' phone numbers are used as an identifier. At the beginning of each session, a volunteer scans a QR code, which links to a Google Form where they input the number of hours they volunteer. HealthServe worked with an IT volunteer to develop the system.

> Use of QR codes to link to expanded database for better tracking of volunteer hours.
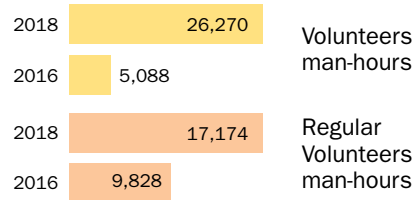
The Google Sheet database has helped the Volunteer Manager find out who their most active and committed volunteers are, allowing for recognition and appreciation of volunteers that was not possible before, due to a lack of data.

Lakeside Family Services Leverages QR Codes To Register New Volunteers

Lakeside Family Services works with large groups of volunteers. While this is useful for one-off events, the organisation also needs regular volunteers. Lakeside viewed the large number of volunteers as a recruitment opportunity, but needed a way to contact the individuals, because most often the only contact for a group is with the leader, leaving the organisation unable to follow up with anyone else.

Looking for a practical, efficient, low-manpower, low-cost way of collecting volunteer contact information, Lakeside developed a QR code registration form for free. All volunteers now scan a QR code posted at the activity check-in desk. This links to a data collection form that pulls info into their database. There is no physical form, meaning it's quick and easy, and there is no need for Lakeside staff to enter data, thus improving accuracy.

This greatly expanded their database, allowing them to reach out to more volunteers for both one-off and regular opportunities.

Year	Value	
2018	26,270	Volunteers man-hours
2016	5,088	
2018	17,174	Regular Volunteers man-hours
2016	9,828	

Montfort Care Standardises Processes to Improve Efficiency

Montfort Care, with its multiple service centres, has a decentralised volunteer management system with each centre responsible for recruiting, training, and sustaining their own volunteers. With programme staff stretched thin and no way to track volunteers throughout the organisation, Montfort Care saw a role for an internal resource for programme staff who manage volunteers. The Volunteer Manager acts as a bridge between the centres and headquarters.

Each centre appoints a coordinator to work with the Volunteer Manager. The first step was to shift the mindset among those dealing directly with volunteers to understand that volunteers are partners in service delivery and staff must maintain the relationship and recognise volunteers for their work. Part of that comes from tracking volunteers' contact information and hours. To support this, the Volunteer Manager instituted standard operating procedures including data collection forms and a data management system, into which respective volunteer coordinators enter the volunteer activities and movement in the system. In addition to tracking hours, this allows for centralised communication to volunteers about available programs.

The Volunteer Manager also created a platform for the sharing of best practices among coordinators allowing them to discuss challenges and solutions that others may be facing. In addition, it allows centres to share training resources.

The Volunteer Manager coordinates volunteer activities and best practices across different centres.

Rainbow Centre Standardises Volunteer Training Operating Procedures

In looking for gaps in their standard operating procedures, Rainbow Centre (RC) saw a need to standardise training, structure orientation, and create an observation period for classroom volunteers.

Through their Training and Consultancy department, RC began offering standardised training in two modules—*Disability Awareness* and *Understanding Challenging Behaviours*. RC structured their orientation process by developing a deck of standard slides, which includes the organisation's vision/mission and volunteer policies. Sometimes they include a sharing session with an experienced volunteer.

It was a challenge to align the expectations of classroom volunteers with the expectations of teachers. By creating an opportunity for potential volunteers to observe service users prior to placement, volunteers better understand the expectations around their tasks and the service users' needs, creating a better experience for both sides.

Training

Overall, training was the area with the greatest improvement across the VMFS with 68.5% of long-term volunteers experiencing training improvements over the last two years. 82.5% of all volunteers found the training useful (42% extremely useful). Standardising volunteer training, creating e-learning modules to save time, ongoing training for experienced volunteers and launching a training academy are some of the key initiatives over the last two years implemented by VMFS participants.

41.9%	40.6%	15.6%	

1.7%
0.3%

- ● Extremely Useful
- ● Slightly Useful
- ● Neutral
- ● Not useful
- ● Quite redundant
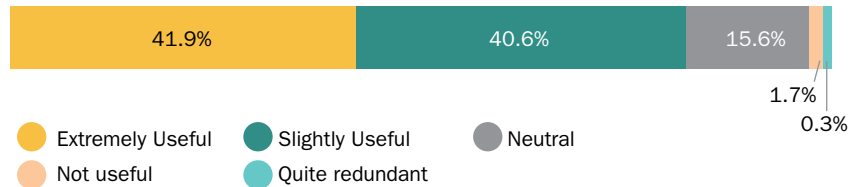
Response from VMFS participants' volunteers on *the usefulness of training programs*

TOUCH Community Services Standardises Volunteer Orientation

As a multi-service organisation, TOUCH Community Services works with a varied group of volunteers who help to support its 18 services across the island. Previously, each service area would create their own orientation and training process, which may lead to inconsistencies and quality control concerns. Having in place a standardised orientation system across all 18 service areas allows staff to ensure that volunteers have a consistent understanding of how TOUCH serves the community. Where required, services would also customise specific areas of training to ensure that volunteers are adequately prepared for their roles. This approach ensures that all volunteers have the same quality onboarding experience.
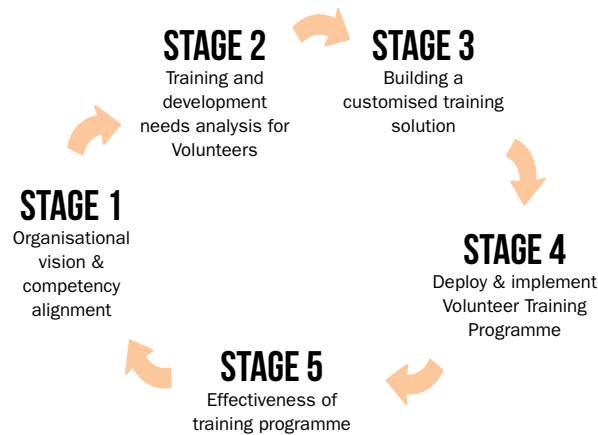
TOUCH categorises its volunteers and aligns specific training guides for each.

Type of Volunteers	Initial Training	
Ad-hoc Volunteers	**Briefing** · Introduction to TOUCH · Code of Conduct	· Roles and Responsibilities · Safety briefing
Service-based Volunteers	**Orientation Programme** · Introduction to TOUCH · Policies and Processes · Handling service users · Code of Conduct · Assignment of buddy or mentor	· Roles and Responsibilities · Communication · Demonstration · Safety briefing
Skill-based Volunteers	**Briefing** · Introduction to TOUCH · Policies and Processes · Handling service users · Code of Conduct	· Roles and Responsibilities · Communication · Demonstration · Safety briefing

TOUCH Training Framework

AWWA Implements Training & Development Framework for All Volunteers

AWWA conducted an organisational-wide training and development needs analysis for all volunteers (stage 1). With that information, AWWA assessed their current volunteers' need for training and development (stage 2). Next, they created customised training solutions for individual volunteers (stage 3). In stage 4, the organisation implemented the volunteer training programme. The last stage is to evaluate the programme. The programme is evaluated every three months by a volunteer survey measuring overall experience satisfaction, effectiveness of training programme, and effectiveness of the trainers.

In the latest post-training evaluation in 2018, AWWA reported receiving a 4 out of 5 rating by 100% of the trained volunteers on the four key areas. They were, a. Usefulness of the training in their volunteer work, b. Meeting the training objectives of the volunteer, c. Improving confidence in handling service users and d. Applying the skills from the training to their day-to-day volunteering work.

STAGE 2
Training and development needs analysis for Volunteers

STAGE 3
Building a customised training solution

STAGE 1
Organisational vision & competency alignment

STAGE 4
Deploy & implement Volunteer Training Programme

STAGE 5
Effectiveness of training programme

AWWA Organisational Framework for Volunteer Training

Domain	Core skills needed to perform this role	Training required for volunteer	Stage of completion
Self-Care	Implementation of Sensory Diets	Module 1: Sensory processing and its implications on self-regulation, attention, learning and emotional functioning	12 hours practicum
Learning	Carrying out of activities for development of hand skills	Module 2: Activities for the development of hand skills	12 hours practicum
	Implementation of motor exercises for praxis and motor planning	Module 3: Praxis and motor planning	10 hours practicum
Gross Motor	Developmental gross motor exercises	Module 4: Gross motor developmental milestones	10 hours practicum
	Transferring child	Module 5: Postural care	10 hours practicum
	Facilitation of hydrotherapy	Module 6: Facilitating hydrotherapy	16 hours practicum
	Carry over of intervention strategies in the class and home environment	Module 7: Range of motion exercises	16 hours practicum
	Maintenance and conditioning including gait training	Module 8: Balance and gait training	16 hours practicum

AWWA Sample Individualised Training Plan for Therapy Aide Role

AWWA Creates E-Orientation Modules
to Improve Training Efficiency

Looking for a more efficient and systematic way to orient volunteers, AWWA turned to technology, creating e-orientation modules covering the basics of dos and don'ts for working with service users, event-specific information, confidentiality, and administration. While the content-heavy modules took time to develop, AWWA felt strongly that the time was well worth it in manpower savings alone.

Prior to e-orientation, AWWA staff would go directly to a corporate partner's site to conduct an orientation. This posed several challenges including scheduling, significant time commitment, and difficulty in reaching every volunteer who would participate in an activity. Technology eliminates scheduling conflicts as the volunteers can do the training when it's convenient. It saves on staff time, as AWWA estimated each orientation could take up to three hours, including travelling time to the service user site. And, if the AWWA staff had to return to a site because the entire group could not participate in a single session, that doubled or tripled the amount of staff time required.

Each volunteer who registers for the system is given a unique number, enabling AWWA to track progress of the training. Each module takes about 30 minutes to complete. A big portion of the e-learning is devoted to ensuring volunteers are comfortable and understand what to expect from the service users.

Lions Befrienders Creates Pathway
for Volunteer Growth

Lions Befrienders created two levels of training for volunteers allowing for growth as the volunteer is likely to stay with the organisation. Initially, all volunteers attend a one-time induction workshop consisting of four hours of classroom training including role play, case studies, and discussion.

After volunteering a minimum of one year, those who wish to explore "breakthrough goals" for the service users may go for advance training to obtain a Befriender Certification. Breakthroughs refer to anything that the service user has not done before and may be as simple as going out for a walk or watching a movie. The objective is to encourage service users to take small steps outside their comfort zones to become less socially isolated.

Befriender Certification training is offered once a year. It consists of an eight-hour classroom training session, followed by coaching and review sessions over the next six months. It has been available for two years and 20 people have taken up the certification challenge. Service users benefit from the additional support are obvious. For the Certified Befriender, the benefits include learning new engagement and communications skills.

Beyond Social Services' Beyond Self Academy Nurtures Volunteers

Beyond Self Academy, an exchange platform for training, nurtures volunteers to fulfil Beyond Social Services' vision of a vibrant volunteer-driven culture. The Academy leverages volunteers' strengths and passions to respond to community needs, creating bonds between people from all walks of life and fostering a strong sense of community. The Academy's goal is for participants to pay forward their new skills to Beyond Social Services through volunteering. The Academy's training calendar is accessible for existing and potential volunteers. The curriculum is geared towards community needs and all training enables volunteers to contribute to one or more of the following roles:

- **Project:** one-off or ad hoc experience, such as door-knocking, gifts distribution
- **Programme:** 2-4 hours weekly for a minimum of 6 months, such as learning programmes, interest groups
- **Relationship:** 2 hours weekly for a minimum of 6 months, such as befriender
- **Leader:** professional expertise providing strategic direction, such as board members or management committee

The curriculum has five different exchange areas:

Volunteers/Staff ↓ **Volunteers**	Volunteers and staff train other volunteers with specific community action skills.	• Teaching math models for primary school children • Basic befriender training • Photography 101 • Creativity Workshop
Volunteers ↓ **Local Communities**	Volunteers train members of the local community in specific areas.	• Financial knowledge • Music skills • Literacy • Swimming
Local Communities ↓ **Volunteers**	Local community members train volunteers in their areas of proficiency.	• Baking • Cooking • Stretching the dollar • Flower arrangement
Local Volunteers ↓ **Local Communities**	Local volunteers are drawn from the community where Beyond works.	• Football • Dance • Baking • Sewing
Volunteers ↓ **Staff**	Volunteers offer Beyond staff skills-specific training in their areas of expertise.	• Financial Planning • Work plans • Project management • Crisis management skills • Using apps to organise work

Recognition & Retention

From small initiatives such as recognition on social media to large ones such as launching a volunteer retention programme and changing the feedback process, the VMFS organisations realised that recognising and retaining great volunteers is as important as recruiting them. In fact, 80% of the volunteers surveyed from VMFS organisations feel appreciated as a volunteer (27% feel greatly appreciated).

27.0%	52.9%	17.4%		

1.5%
0.4%

● Greatly Appreciated/Very important
● Appreciated/Important
● Neutral
● Not much appreciated/Not so important
● No appreciation at all/Not important at all
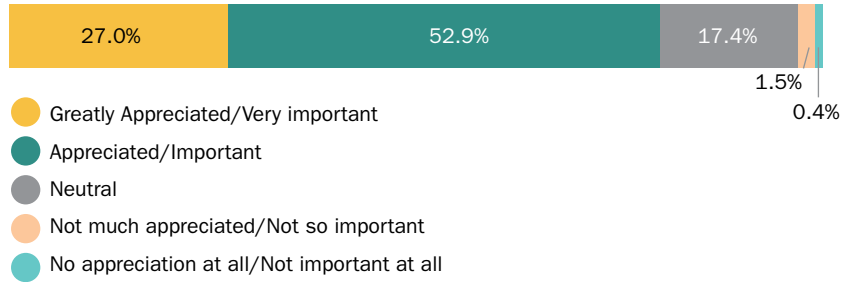
Response from VMFS participants' volunteers on *feeling of being appreciated*

Lions Befrienders Collects Feedback Via Online Survey

In the past, Lions Befrienders collected only informal feedback through volunteer team leaders or would check-in with volunteers on an ad-hoc basis when they met them in person. Realising this was not the best way to collect information, especially when they were looking at ways to improve the volunteer experience, Lions Befrienders created an annual online satisfaction survey using a simple Google Form two years ago. It was free and effective.

Their volunteers were eager to share their feedback. Many of them commented that they would like more activities where they can participate in groups with their service users and other volunteers. This prompted the organisation to open the annual Befriender Day to service users and offer activities at the event where they could engage with one another and with volunteers.

Lakeside Uses Human Resources Model for Retention

With five simple steps, Lakeside Family Services created a stewardship model for retaining volunteers.

1 **ORIENTATION FOR VOLUNTEERS**
All volunteers receive a basic orientation to align both their and the organisation's expectations. A clear understanding of what they will be doing and why is key to a positive and rewarding volunteer experience.

2 **SHIFT STAFF ATTITUDE TOWARDS VOLUNTEERS**
The Executive Director and Volunteer Manager have done a lot of internal work to change staff mindset around volunteers. Moving away from the feeling that volunteers are a burden and create more work for staff with little benefit, towards the belief that volunteers are "treasure" and a key to the organisation's success.

3 **FEEDBACK FROM VOLUNTEERS**
They ask volunteers for an evaluation of their experience through an annual year-end volunteer survey. The Volunteer Manager also conducts impromptu programme visits during volunteer debrief sessions. Volunteers feel they are listened to and the information allows Lakeside to make improvements and adjustments to experiences.

4 **STAY IN TOUCH**
Lakeside has a multi-pronged approach to keeping in touch with volunteers, including emails about new opportunities to get involved, regularly checking in via WhatsApp about important dates likes exams and birthdays, and generally asking after volunteers' well-being. The organisation also uses social media like Facebook and Instagram to connect with volunteers.

5 **BIRTHDAY NOTES**
Continuing to improve their retention practices, starting in January 2019, Lakeside plans to send all registered volunteers an electronic birthday note to let them know how much they are appreciated. For regular volunteers, they will go a little further by sending a handwritten note. It's a small gesture, but aims for big improvements in volunteer satisfaction.

Rainbow Centre Engages Volunteer Over Tea

Rainbow Centre discovered that volunteers like to hear about one another's experiences, share inspirational stories, and talk about how to overcome challenges in their volunteer work. In 2018, it held 2 engagement teas for volunteers. During these sessions, those with experience are encouraged to share with newer volunteers. Staff is on hand to help with engagement and listen for feedback as well. It's an opportunity for volunteers to feel a sense of connection (especially for those who may be volunteering individually), learn from one another, and feel empowered to thrive in their volunteering roles.

Social Media Increases Volunteer Engagement & Recognition at TOUCH Community Services and Beyond Social Services

TOUCH Community Services has in place a structured volunteer recognition programme including 5- and 10-year service awards and an annual volunteer appreciation event. Under the VMFS, TOUCH ramped up its volunteer recognition efforts using social media to profile volunteers' work, as well as featuring their stories in the monthly corporate e-newsletter, *TOUCH Base*.

Beyond Social Services features stories of volunteers on social media to help people see how they can contribute with limited time or with skills. They also use social media for recruitment and marketing awareness. It's a new programme, but they are hopeful it will yield good results.
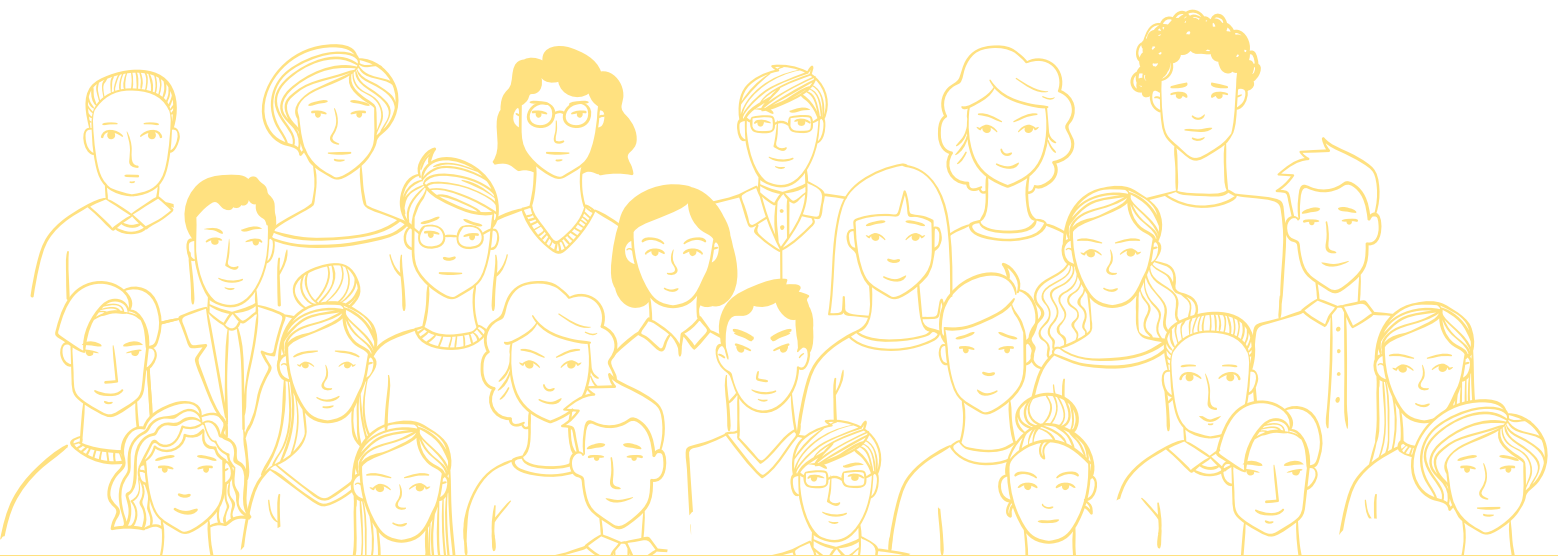
Best Practices Summary

In surveying volunteers, it became clear that when an organisation has a plan in place for volunteer management that includes orientation, training, recognition, and feedback processes, retention rates are higher. Volunteers are also happier and will passionately recommend the organisation to others looking to give in the social service sector. The survey found that 68% of volunteers in the VMFS organisations have in turn introduced people as potential volunteers. Strategic volunteer management therefore reaps rewards in time, talent, and in many cases cost savings across the organisation.

12.9%	54.8%	32.2%

● Quite Frequently ● Sometimes ● No

Have any friends or family, whom you introduced to your social service organisation, begun volunteering there?

Next Steps

Next Steps for National Council of Social Service

NCSS will continue to work with social service organisations and partners to create more volunteering opportunities as well as to aggregate volunteer demand for greater collective impact in the social service sector. Recognising that effective volunteer management extends beyond funding, NCSS plans to further support the sector's volunteer management goals in the following ways:

Leveraging capability to catalyse meaningful volunteerism

- Implement a structured volunteer management framework to help social service organisations scale up members' capabilities and capacity to take in more regular volunteers

- Unlock new volunteering opportunities through redesign of volunteer roles

- Develop partnership models and match potential corporate partners to social service organisations who are volunteer ready
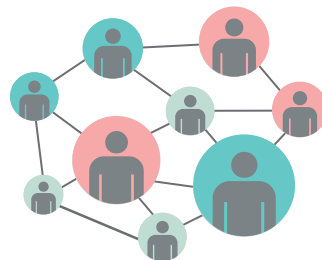
Enlarging capacity to multiply volunteers activation

- Develop competency framework, training roadmaps and directory to up skill Volunteer Managers

- Connect Volunteer Managers through networking and facilitate collaborations

- Create a vibrant online community to engage volunteer management practitioners and share best practices and experiences

Building conviction for volunteerism

- Pilot a series of e-learning courses and training directory for volunteers to equip and empower volunteers with better knowledge

- Publish curated volunteering opportunities on SG Cares App and giving.sg

- Develop an AI-enabled Social Broker using artificial intelligence to improve efficiency and accuracy in matching corporates to social service organisations for more regular volunteering opportunities.

While NCSS was focused on supporting social service organisations through the VMFS, the long-term vision is to impact individual service users and the larger community by empowering organisations to do better. By strengthening the volunteer management function, social service organisations are able to improve their service delivery, individual and corporate volunteers will feel more engaged and satisfied, and the community at large will be more involved in improving the social aspects of society. NCSS will continue to work closely with social service organisations on this journey to create positive change for all and build greater collective impact in volunteerism towards a caring, collaborative and impactful social service ecosystem.

Next Steps for VMFS Participants

Having a dedicated Volunteer Manager over the last two years has created positive change for each of the 10 participating organisations—from improving service quality to having happier, more satisfied volunteers. At the conclusion of the two-year VMFS, almost all the participants said they would find a way to continue to fund a Volunteer Manager position in at least a partial role. Some of the other specific steps the organisations are taking include:

- Adding volunteer management roles to their funding proposals
- Fully commit to resourcing and funding the volunteer management role as part of their organisational structure
- Continue to resource the role through fundraising oportunities
- Use dedicated Volunteer Managers as centralised resources to coordinate volunteer activities across their different centres, to prevent loss of continuity and consistency.

Volunteers are a precious resource to social service organisations and it is incumbent upon each organisation to provide the best environment it can for its volunteers, so that they in turn can better contribute to the organisation's activities. As the results of the VMFS pilot have shown, having a dedicated Volunteer Manager is something each should strongly consider, to allow it to better achieve the end goals of creating a good environment for volunteers to return to and creating greater impact for its service users.

APPENDIX A:
PREPARING FOR A VOLUNTEER MANAGER

Laying the Foundation

The most successful organisations in the VMFS had management support, specifically Board and senior management support, before designating the Volunteer Manager. Laying a strong foundation is critical to preparing your organisation to embark on a successful volunteer management programme. This includes:

- **Leadership Commitment:** The Board and senior management team must be aligned in the necessity of the role and should support resource requests including technology, training, and support from other staff members. The organisation leadership must be committed to making a change and lead by example in demonstrating how the organisation engages and deploys volunteers.

- **Manager Support:** The direct manager of the Volunteer Manager must be aligned with other organisation leaders in supporting and resourcing the position.

- **Programme Team Education:** The programme team, who may have been directly working with the volunteers, need to understand the Volunteer Manager's role and support it. Some programme staff may feel threatened that they are losing control over their volunteer resources and will need to be reassured that having a Volunteer Manager in place will help deploy and retain volunteers more effectively.

- **Plan for Growth:** The position should be treated as all positions in the organisation with a plan for growth and advancement. This should include training and a plan for funding the position over the long term. From the survey conducted between the VMFS organisations and the control group, all the organisations in the VMFS already had a plan for the Volunteer Manager's growth versus a control group, resulting in their Volunteer Managers having greater clarity about their career plans:

a) Do you have a career progression plan for your Volunteer Manager for the next 12-36 months?

b) Do you (Volunteer Manager) have clarity on your career progression over the next 24-48 months?
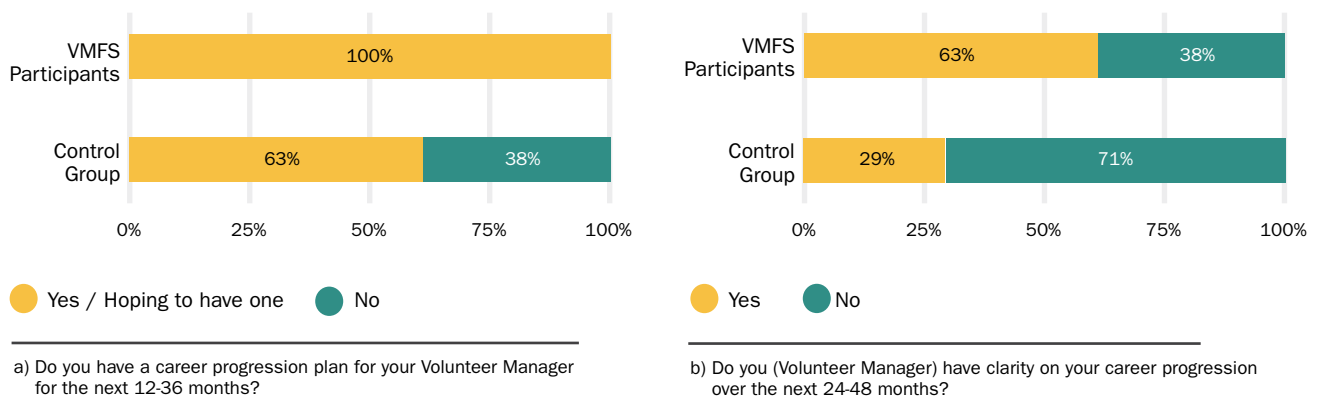
- **Outlining Success Metrics:** While recruitment, training, retention, and other manpower management are all included in the scope of work of a Volunteer Manager, the job scope may seem overwhelming. Before you bring in a Volunteer Manager, define what success will look like. For example, setting up data management processes, increasing satisfaction levels, or strategic growth of corporate volunteering engagements. Outlining success metrics provides focus, ensuring the most necessary work occurs first.

- **Review Current Volunteer Management Practices:** Before the Volunteer Manager comes in, it would be useful to review how the organisation currently handles the key volunteer management areas of recruitment, data management and standard operating procedures, training, recognition and retention. This review could focus on how to improve these practices to more efficiently and effectively deploy volunteers to give the Volunteer Manager a good start.

- **Align Expectations:** Align organisational and volunteer expectations and needs to ensure both sides are satisfied. If an organisation thinks volunteers should be performing a specific function, it should make that clear to the volunteers. And, if volunteers come to an organisation with specific needs or ideas, it is imperative that the organisation understand these and decide whether or not they can accommodate them.

Preparing for the Volunteer Manager even before you hire leads to a greater chance for success, translating into additional volunteer hours and more satisfied volunteers.

Successful Volunteer Manager Traits

COMMUNICATOR
Excellent communicator across all levels of the organisation and with all types of volunteers and service users.

FLEXIBLE
Able to handle multiple areas of work and change course as necessary in response to organisational and volunteer needs.

STRATEGIC THINKER
Align the organisation's needs with the volunteer's skills to ensure that the organisation is most efficiently deploying volunteers. Help the organisation gain focus and clarity in how to better deploy and engage with volunteers and better integrate volunteers into the organisation. Think beyond just deploying volunteers to fill positions, think about how the organisation can use volunteers to fill roles in meaningful and productive ways.

INNOVATOR
Look for innovative ways to use resources such as volunteers and technology to meet the organisation's strategic needs.

CHEERLEADER
Champion volunteers as a key resource within the organisation. Ensure staff buy into using volunteers as a strong resource rather than as a hindrance to their work.

COLLABORATOR
Work collaboratively with executive board, management team, programme team and volunteers.

MULTITASKER
Must be organised and able to multitask, as this position interacts with functions across the social service organisation.
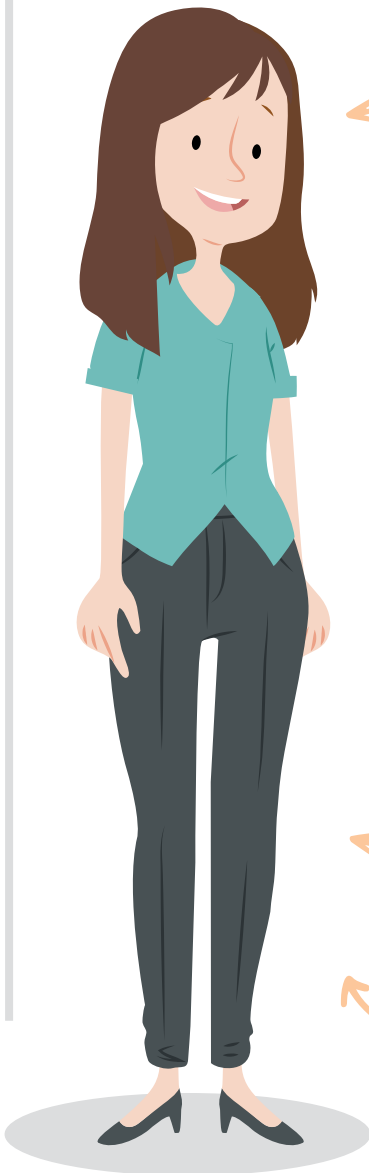
APPENDIX B:
RESOURCES TO SUPPORT VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Enlarging Capacity

Volunteer Management Framework	Volunteer Roles Redesign
NCSS developed resources like the **Volunteer Management Toolkit** and **Volunteer Management Playbook** to support social service organisations in improving their volunteer management capacity and implementing service-based volunteerism. NCSS has helped more than 40 social service organisations implement volunteer management framework to uplift their capabilities to recruit, engage, and retain volunteers more effectively and to foster sustained volunteering efforts on the ground.	NCSS partners social service organisations to identify their needs, co-create and redesign a variety of **service-based volunteer roles to best meet these needs** and match busy schedules of corporate volunteers on a sustained basis. 6 replicable partnership models were developed to match Large Companies, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, Public Agencies, Institutes for Higher Learning, Schools and Informal Groups with social service organisations more effectively to form sustainable and impactful volunteer partnerships.

Enhancing Capabilities

Volunteer Management Professional Development	Volunteer Managers' Networks
Volunteer Manager Circuit Training Programme NCSS organises the Volunteer Manager Circuit Training Programme to uplift capabilities and confidence of volunteer management practitioners by equipping them with the relevant skills, knowledge and practical tools to undertake challenges and be future ready. **Professional Certificate in Volunteer Management** In collaboration with the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), this course provides an overview of key concepts and skills on non-profit leadership and volunteer management in global and local contexts.	NCSS organises regular Volunteer Managers' Networks with more than 100 volunteer management professionals engaged each session. It aims to nurture a **learning community of professionals and build relationships** through the sharing of best practices and experiences by practitioners and industry leaders.
	Friends of the Caring Community
	An **online community** of more than 200 like-minded members was formed in October 2017 on *GatherHere*, powered by Workplace@FaceBook. It aims to be the go-to platform for Volunteer Managers to seek support and share resources.

Leveraging Enablers

E-Learning Courses for Volunteers	Volunteer Management System
NCSS piloted a series of e-learning courses for volunteers in partnership with Social Service Institute, complementing social service organisations' training efforts, to **equip and empower volunteers** to work effectively with vulnerable groups. It has trained more than 1,500 volunteers to-date.	NCSS negotiated a **3-year sponsorship package** with Trampolene, from August 2017 to July 2020 for NCSS's member organisations to subscribe to their volunteer management system *VooP*. More than 20 social service organisations are currently on board VooP in various stages of deployment to manage their volunteers more effectively and efficiently.
AI-enabled Social Broker	**Training Directories**
NCSS is prototyping an **AI-enabled Social Broker** using artificial intelligence to help social service organisations facilitate better matching between volunteer groups and relevant regular volunteering opportunities.	NCSS developed training directories for volunteers to enrich their volunteering experiences, and for Volunteer Managers to develop their professional volunteer management career.
Our Singapore-SG Cares Fund	
This SG Cares supported fund encourages registered Non-profit Organisations (NPOs) and groups of individuals who are keen on initiating projects that bring the community together. Find out more at *www.sg/oursingaporefund*.	

Interested organisations can contact us at *Volunteer_Resource@ncss.gov.sg* **to find out more about any of the above Initiatives.**

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the following individuals and organisations in this report.

ABOUT NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE (NCSS)

NCSS is the umbrella body for over 450-member social service organisations in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in enhancing the capabilities and capacity of our members, advocating for social service needs and strengthening strategic partnerships, for an effective social service ecosystem. Community Chest and Social Service Institute (SSI) are part of NCSS. For more information, please visit: **www.ncss.gov.sg.**

ABOUT SG CARES

SG Cares is a national movement, co-led by National Council of Social Service and National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre, dedicated to building a more caring and inclusive home for all. The movement invites all who live in Singapore to put values into action through active volunteerism, ground-up efforts and everyday acts of care. It also aims to build capability across various sectors and organisations to grow opportunities for volunteering. By inspiring and supporting one another, we can show the world that we are a nation with a big heart. **www.sgcares.sg**

In support of

NCSS
National Council
of Social Service

SG Cares

Scan for more volunteer
management tools and resources
or visit *ncss.gov.sg/volunteer*