

## **PARTNER OF LABOUR MOVEMENT**

### **Ministry of Health**

*Nominated by the Healthcare Services Employees' Union.*

Adopting a tripartite approach, the Ministry of Health (MOH), Healthcare Services Employees' Union (HSEU), and public healthcare clusters have partnered closely in building a future-ready healthcare workforce to meet Singaporeans' evolving care needs – focusing on workers' well-being, professional development, career progression and competitiveness of salaries.

In April 2022, MOH established the Tripartite Workgroup for the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment of Healthcare Workers as part of its consistent efforts to protect the safety and well-being of healthcare workers. With HSEU as one of the key members, the workgroup actively engaged multiple stakeholder groups and scanned best practices for valuable insights. These endeavours culminated in MOH launching the Tripartite Framework for the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment in Healthcare in Dec 2023. The Framework provides all healthcare institutions with a common definition of abuse and harassment, and a consistent set of standards to safeguard healthcare workers. It also engenders clear reporting procedures and follow-up actions to be taken against perpetrators to protect healthcare workers, offering these workers greater assurance against abuse and harassment. The launch of a national public education campaign, coupled with MOH's zero-tolerance policy against abuse and harassment, reflects MOH's commitment to enhancing healthcare workers' working environment and safeguarding their well-being.

To fortify the work prospects of healthcare workers amid an evolving healthcare landscape, MOH set up the Jobs, Skills and Training Tripartite Advisory Panel to identify opportunities and develop strategies with healthcare clusters and relevant agencies. MOH worked with the public healthcare clusters and spearheaded efforts to harmonise and scale job redesign initiatives for support care staff (e.g. Patient Service Associates (PSAs), healthcare assistants, basic care assistants) working in the public healthcare sector. This encompasses the harmonisation of job titles and job scopes, and the articulation of lengthened career progression pathways, which provide more development opportunities for those embracing the redesigned role. MOH, in partnership with the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), HSEU and community care employers, instituted the Tripartite Community Care Council for Skills and Training (T3C) to advise on the sector-wide upskilling of the community care workforce and implementation of competency-based and stackable training. T3C also advises on the accreditation of training of care professionals under the Healthcare Skills Framework, taking into account the upskilling needs of the local and mature workforce.

MOH has been working with MOH Holdings (MOHH) and the public healthcare clusters to conduct timely reviews to ensure the remuneration packages of healthcare workers across all levels remain competitive and fair. In 2021, MOH raised monthly base salaries for nurses in the public healthcare sector by 5 to 14 per cent phased over two years, while increasing the monthly base salaries of allied health professionals, pharmacists, and the administrative and ancillary staff, including support care staff, by 3 to 7 per cent. MOH and MOHH also worked with AIC to implement the Community Care Salary Enhancement (CCSE) to uplift the salaries of community care workers. To recognise their contributions and dedication during the pandemic, staff of publicly-funded healthcare organisations involved in the fight against COVID-19 were given the COVID-19 Healthcare Award of up to \$4,000. More recently in Feb 2024, MOH announced the introduction of a long-term retention scheme for nurses, the Award for Nurses' Grace, Excellence and Loyalty (ANGEL), to encourage nurses to build a lifelong career in nursing in the public healthcare sector.

These efforts underscore MOH's continued commitment to the tripartite partnership in support of healthcare workers in Singapore.