

CONJUNCT CONSULTING CASE STUDY SERIES

AWWA: IMPACTING LIVES OF ELDERLY WITH ITS SENIOR COMMUNITY HOME

AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY



SUMMARY



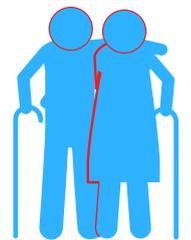
With an increasing ageing population and declining birthrates, Singapore has a significant demand for elder care, which not only provides the cohesiveness of a home environment but also promotes independence for dignified ageing.

AWWA's Senior Community Home is the first community home which is housed within a HDB block and thus aims to meet both those needs. Their approach encourages the integration of its elderly residents within their wider community and has been in operation since 1976. AWWA conducted an impact assessment of its Senior Community Home to measure the collective impact of the service on the lives of its residents. This case study presents a detailed account of AWWA's approach in developing and implementing this customized impact assessment framework and the subsequent results and learnings.

SINGAPORE'S AGEING POPULATION AT A GLANCE

Singapore's ageing population will double itself by 2030 increasing from 440,000 in 2015 to over 900,000 (Population White Paper, 2013). The age distribution of the resident population aged 65 years and over formed 12.4 percent in 2016 (MOH, action plan for successful ageing, 2016). Singapore's fertility rate has also been on the decline since its independence. Fertility rates fell from 4.6 births in 1965 to below the replacement level of 2.1 births per woman in 1977 and has remained below the replacement level ever since. This long period of low fertility, combined with an increasing life expectancy, is making for a rapidly ageing society. By 2030, more than one out of four persons in Singapore will be elderly i.e above 65. In addition to this, the overall dependency ratio fell from 73.9 in 1970 to 40.8 in 1990 as a result of the decline in young dependents. (state of the elderly in Singapore, 2008-2009).

2030



900,000

Elderly

ABOUT AWWA

AWWA is a Singapore based social service organisation, which started, in 1970. AWWA serves over 6000 individuals annually across all life stages. It provides a vast range of services to the community which include early intervention for preschoolers, education and disability support for children with special needs, assistance to low-income families, caregivers support, and health and social care to vulnerable seniors.



6000

Beneficiaries



SENIOR COMMUNITY HOME SERVICE

AWWA's Senior Community Home (SCH) was established in 1976 to support low income seniors without family support. One of its overarching goals is to support its residents to remain integrated within the community in which they live. SCH achieves this goal of supporting its residents in maintaining their physical and psychosocial health by providing guidance, counselling and engaging them in regular activities. This collective approach empowers residents to independently take charge of their daily living needs, whilst creating a communal environment that encourages mutual care and support. When SCH first opened its doors back in 1976, it welcomed 20 senior residents. It currently occupies levels two to four of the rental HDB block with 134 residents living in 52 flats. Full capacity is 140, however replacement of discharge cases may not happen back to back due to the need to assess applicant suitability and complete necessary administration work. AWWA receives about (7) seven referrals per month for its Senior Community Home.

1976



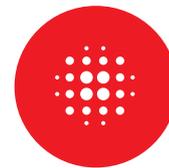
134
Residents

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

Since its establishment in 1970, AWWA has continued to strive for service and organisational excellence both in quality and implementation. This drive for excellence led AWWA to collaborate with Conjoint Consulting to assist them to develop a customised impact assessment framework to measure the impact of its Senior Community Home Service. The purpose of this collaboration was to provide AWWA with the evidence based research needed to articulate their impact better and improve the overall effectiveness of SCH. The results would also provide valuable insights into key service areas and highlight any areas in need of rejuvenation. The impact assessment project was therefore conducted over two phases, firstly building the framework and secondly, pilot testing and conducting a full assessment to validate the outcomes of SCH.



PROJECT ROADMAP



DEVELOPMENT OF FRAMEWORK

Developing a customised framework for AWWA's SCH required a number of specific steps, which encompassed SCH's unique service approach and impact goals. To date, impact models to evaluate the well-being of seniors have generally been limited. Therefore, rigorous internal and external primary and secondary research was conducted to help determine the most suitable indicators for SCH. The process included the following steps:

INTERNAL SCAN : REVIEW OF INTERNAL DATA AND EXISTING PROCESSES



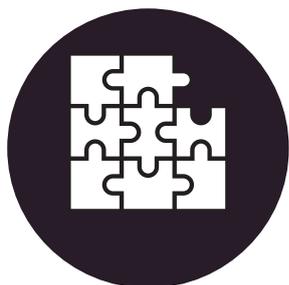
- Impact goals of SCH were reviewed and key success indicators identified.
- AWWA's existing survey and data collection process was analysed. This process lacked community integration as a domain.
- Interviews were conducted with all key stakeholders of SCH.
- Interviews were conducted with field experts from the non profit industry to collect data on best practice methods for impact assessment tools.
- Collective results highlighted that the overarching impact goals were independence, empowerment and community integration.

EXTERNAL SCAN: SECONDARY RESEARCH & INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICE



- Impact assessment models from across the world were researched.
- Netherlands impact assessment framework was identified as the most suitable reference.
- Industry best practice models including AWWA's existing survey, government surveys and surveys used by other similar non-profits were examined.
- Key performance indicators were identified and aligned to the impact goals of SCH.
- Prioritisation of key criteria and feasibility of data collection methods were evaluated and determined.

DEVELOPING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IMPACT FRAMEWORK



- Independence, Empowerment and Community Integration were identified as the three pillars and together with nine specific domains constitute the Quality of Life framework.
- Quality of Life should be measured using both subjective and objective indicators. Subjective: based on individual's state of satisfaction with life and Objective: based on conditions, facilities and processes.
- Quantitative and qualitative indicators are measured separately.

PROJECT ROADMAP



Development of Framework

PILOT TEST OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK



- The data collection process comprised a user friendly survey and a dashboard to analyse the data.
- The survey was conducted electronically and consisted of 12 (CORE) open ended and closed questions. Comments boxes were also included to build a more comprehensive picture.
- The 12 CORE survey questions were organised into 3 survey blocks with each block representing one of the 3 framework pillars. Questions included both quantitative and qualitative data.
- A pilot test was carried out with a representative sample size to validate the framework and overall data collection process.
- Due to the need to conduct face to face interviews, AWWA selected a group of volunteers, who were trained to conduct the surveys.
- The results of the pilot test allowed for specific tweaking of the framework and overall process to ensure a fully streamlined process which would meet SCH's impact goals.

FULL IMPACT STUDY WITH SCH RESIDENTS & AWWA'S IMPACT TOOLKIT



- A full assessment was executed with all residents of the Senior Community Home and results analyzed.
- Feedback from AWWA's volunteers were included to improve the survey collection process.
- Volunteers conducted the surveys over the course of two weekends.
- The survey results were then inputted into the dashboard for data analysis and overall impact measurement.
- AWWA's impact assessment toolkit included a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) manual, templates for measuring long term impact and a user friendly dashboard for on-going data analysis.
- The overall toolkit, including the framework would allow AWWA to continue to independently execute and measure the impact of its SCH on a continuous basis.

RESULTS

SCH satisfaction score across the 3 pillars was as follows: 85% for Independence; 77% for Empowerment and 64% for Community Integration. A detailed analysis on the key drivers behind each satisfaction score was completed. The results were compared across demographics such as age groups; length of stay; employment status; physical and mental independence.

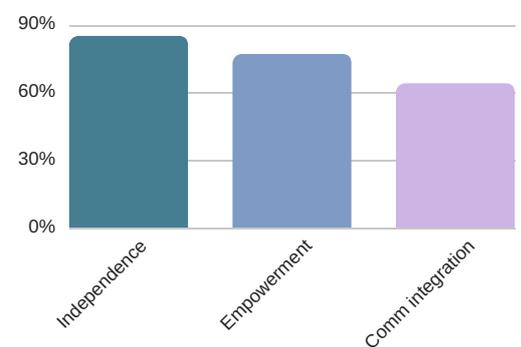
The results proved that a majority of seniors living in SCH felt that they had the freedom to maintain physical & mental well-being & live life meaningfully. Most respondents agreed that SCH has helped them to develop a sense of community belonging & promoted socialisation & active participation.

A few concerns were highlighted such as a 10pm curfew and some hesitation among residents to provide honest feedback. A slight disparity appeared between residents and staff with regards to expectations for community integration. AWWA have since recognised these concerns and are implementing solutions to address them.

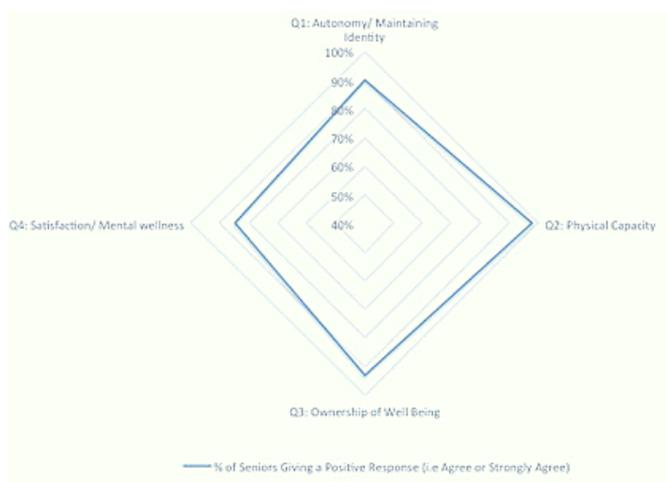
Customized Framework for AWWA's Community Home Service



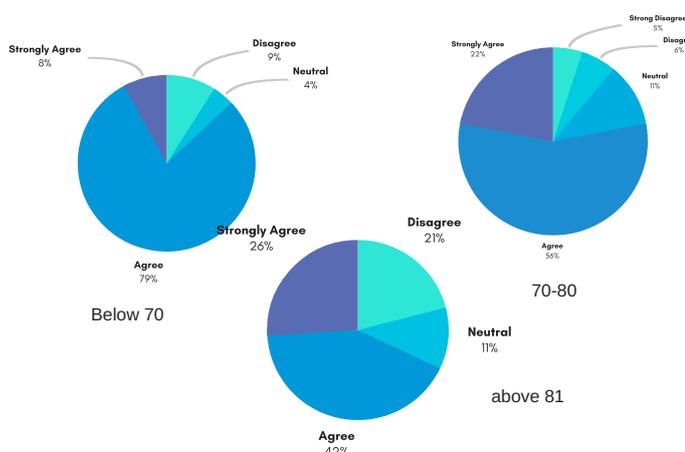
Overall performance of the three pillars



INDEPENDENCE



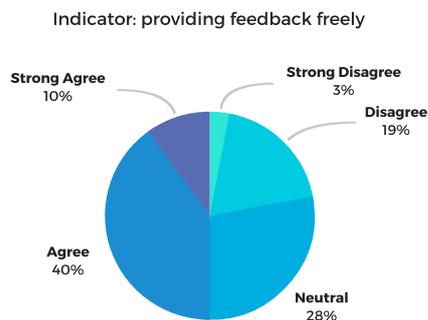
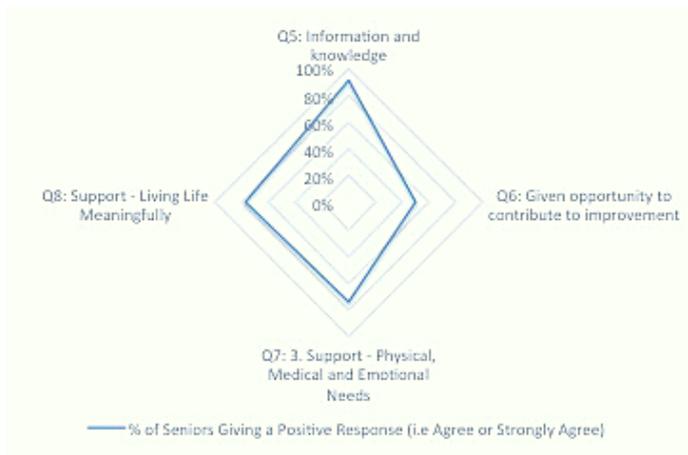
Indicator: independence variation across age segments



KEY INSIGHTS

- Independence was the best performing pillar with a satisfaction score of 85%. This implies that SCH is doing well at achieving its goal of creating an environment of freedom to maintain physical and mental well-being for its residents.
- 98% of seniors agreed or strongly agreed that SCH creates an environment where they are able to take care of themselves without help.
- 90% residents felt positive about their sense of freedom and independence. However, there were some negative responses with regards to the 10pm curfew.
- Some disparity was identified between different age groups and satisfaction with freedom. Seniors aged 71-80 and above proved less satisfied with their freedom in comparison to seniors from other age groups. 92% of seniors below 70 reported being satisfied with the freedom at SCH.

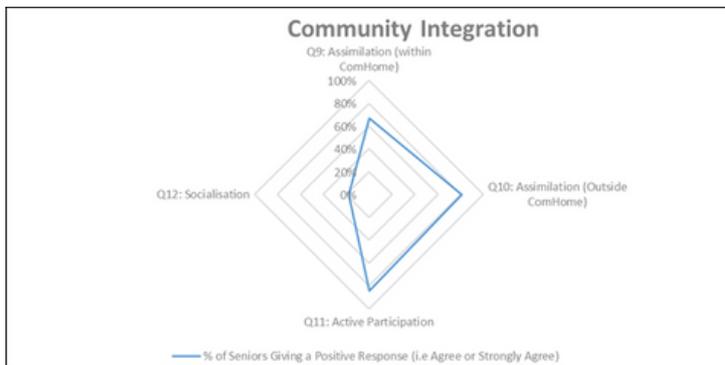
EMPOWERMENT



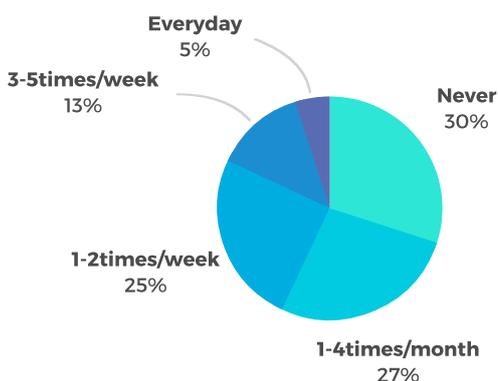
KEY INSIGHTS

- Empowerment proved a satisfaction score of 77%.
- This score implies that SCH is improving the well-being of a large majority of seniors by encouraging and enabling them to represent their interests and support them to live a meaningful life.
- 91% of seniors stated that they were aware of the activities happening in SCH. This reflects the high performance of Information and Knowledge domain.
- Only 50% of seniors agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to offer both positive and negative feedback freely in SCH.
- This domain was also the biggest factor that decreased the overall Empowerment satisfaction score.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION



Indicator: frequency of interaction in the neighbourhood



KEY INSIGHTS

- 67% seniors felt that they were assimilated with both the community within SCH and the wider community outside.
- 81% felt that they belonged to the larger neighbourhood around SCH.
- 84% of seniors participated in SCH activities at least 3 times a week and 18% of seniors met people or friends outside of SCH at least 3 times a week.
- 30% of seniors indicated that they never socialise with the wider community, while 27% indicated they socialise 1 - 4 times a month. SCH have thus identified the need to find solutions to encourage greater active participation for these specific seniors.
- Seniors in the 71-80 age group proved the cohort most integrated, followed by seniors below 70. Seniors above the age of 81 were the least integrated.



LEARNINGS

Conducting an impact assessment helped AWWA to evaluate the goals and processes driving their Senior Community Home service. AWWA identified specific elements of SCH to modify which would promote better understanding between SCH residents and AWWA staff. The assessment helped to realign the goals of SCH with service quality and delivery. It provided a comprehensive toolkit which will support on-going assessments for continuous improvement in ensuring the quality of life for seniors.

FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE DELIVERY OF SCH CARE MODEL

SCH has been running for more than forty years. Conducting an impact assessment allowed AWWA to review its current processes and ensure alignment with AWWA's vision and desired impact goals for the service. The customized framework is a tool to support AWWA in the management of its Senior Community Home, acting as a guide in the planning and execution of its service strategy. The overall result leads to better outcomes for the residents, while supporting independent ageing within the community.

EQUIPPED WITH TOOLKIT TO RUN INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENTS

AWWA will continue to use the framework and toolkit to independently monitor the performance of SCH on a regular basis. The Framework supports the evaluation of long-term impact goals and improved outcomes for its beneficiaries. The dashboard is a user friendly method of analyzing data and is supported with SOP guidelines and training materials. This ensures that any new personnel will be able to conduct assessments efficiently.

COMMUNICATING THE IMPACT AND IDENTIFYING AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

By developing an Impact Assessment Framework, AWWA is equipped to conduct an ongoing evaluation of its service. The process provides the channel to draw insights for evidence based improvements and strategic resource planning. The framework provides robust data across different segments and hence allows for a deeper understanding of issues relating to seniors. AWWA will be better able to communicate these insights to various stakeholders. There is limited information currently available for measuring the effectiveness of senior care, therefore this framework is particularly relevant and useful for future studies.

SCH TEAM MORE INTENTIONAL ABOUT MEASURING OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The SCH operations team work relentlessly to provide excellent quality care to its residents. Without a framework, there is a risk that some focus might shift towards service outputs rather than outcomes. This study encouraged the SCH team to shift some focus from daily routine operations and helped them become more intentional about impact. This was achieved by building capabilities both through knowledge and tools. Ongoing assessments will ensure that SCH continues to meet their defined impact goals and be aligned with AWWA's vision and mission.



LEARNINGS

CUSTOMIZED FRAMEWORK CHALLENGED AWWA TO REVIEW ITS CARE MODEL AND ASSUMPTIONS WITH NEW PERSPECTIVES

The study challenged AWWA to think beyond the well-established line of thought and consider areas, which hadn't yet been identified from their previous evaluation process. As a result, AWWA realigned its strategy, which included new partnerships to strengthen SCH's mission and service objectives. The framework provided AWWA with new perspectives to work with and reflect upon.

One of the key achievements from this project was the development of a successful customised framework for AWWA's Senior Home Care Service. Extensive primary and secondary research, combined with best model case studies of global senior care frameworks was used to complete this process.

BENEFICIARIES AT THE CORE OF THE AWWA COMMUNITY HOME SERVICE

Insights from the impact study allowed AWWA staff to identify channels which empowered residents to express opinions and share feedback more effectively. Similarly, the study highlighted that resident's expectations for community integration differed to that of AWWA. With the disparity now identified, staff were able to implement solutions to address the issue.

Stories from the Home

"I like this home. It's better to have a shelter than to have nowhere to go, and this is better than a nursing home. I have the freedom to go in and out."

Retired tutor Ruby Seah, 66

"We're good friends, just like sisters. She's the older sister, I'm the younger one. I respect her. If there are things to be moved and she doesn't have the strength to move them, I'll help."

Madam Cheong (85) and Madam Choo (80) have lived at the AWWA home for 21 years and 8 years, respectively



CONCLUSION



AWWA commissioned this project with the desire to measure the impact of its long running Senior Community Home Service more effectively. The results of the project have been numerous and have served AWWA in many ways. AWWA now has evidence based data to measure outcomes and determine if the objectives of SCH are being met. Specific areas for service improvement were identified and addressed. Resource planning has become more strategic and targeted. SCH impact goals are aligned with the organisational vision and mission of AWWA.

Services like AWWA's SCH can sometimes be at risk of falling into complacency, having been in successful operation for many years. Conducting impact studies such as this one helps to alleviate this risk and strengthen the trust and relationship between the benefactor and the beneficiary. AWWA's outcome-driven approach to evaluate impact and quality of service will ensure that they stay focused in creating a service model that promotes independent living. Moving forward AWWA will be able to continuously measure impact and communicate the results to all relevant stakeholders. This can only continue to support and strengthen AWWA's unique senior care model and promote ageing in place.