

President Halimah Yacob and Minister for Social and Family Development Masagos Zulkifli with (from left) Ms Janet Liam, assistant senior social worker and assistant manager at Fei Yue Community Services; Ms Karen Kwa, senior principal medical social worker at Tan Tock Seng Hospital; and Ms Peggy Lim, senior social worker at Touch Community Services, in the Istana on Friday. Ms Kwa received the Outstanding Social Worker Award while Ms Liam and Ms Lim received the Promising Social Worker Award. ST PHOTO: GIN TAY

Social workers at the heart of our community: President

Woman on team that developed respiratory support service among award recipients

Syarafana Shafeeq

After a hospital patient on respiratory support expressed his longing to go back to his family, Ms Karen Kwa became motivated to find a

way for such patients to be cared for at home.

The medical social worker, 44, co-led the team that developed the Home Ventilation and Respiratory Support Service in 2009, which lets patients receive the ventilation

support they need at home.

The service also helps to free up intensive care unit beds.

On Friday, the senior principal medical social worker at Tan Tock Seng Hospital received the Outstanding Social Worker Award, the highest accolade conferred to social workers in Singapore.

The 23rd Outstanding Social Worker Award ceremony, held at the Istana, also recognised two other social workers with the

Promising Social Worker Award to celebrate newer workers who have made a positive social impact.

Ms Kwa said she was inspired at a young age to make helping others her profession after hearing stories of how her father helped inmates while working in the prison service.

Feeling tired on some days is inevitable, said the social worker of more than 20 years, but what keeps her going is serving people. "Knowing that big or small things I do can help to make a difference in their lives certainly helps me recognise the value of my work."

President Halimah Yacob, who was guest of honour, said social workers are at the heart of our community, and need to adapt to an ever-changing landscape. "In the coming years, we will confront geopolitical uncertainties, inflationary pressures and technological disruption. Domestically, we will face a rapidly ageing population and slowing social mobility.

"Social workers will continue to play an important role to uplift individuals and families in need."

Madam Halimah said this year's recipients exemplify how social workers are forward-thinking and future-ready in supporting those in need, spearheading impactful projects to better deliver care.

The award is organised by the Singapore Association of Social Workers and supported by the Ministry of Social and Family Development and ExxonMobil Asia Pacific.

Assistant senior social worker and assistant manager at Fei Yue Community Services Janet Liam received the Promising Social Worker Award.

Ms Liam, 35, led Project Baby in 2020 – a programme that better supports incarcerated pregnant women in understanding care options for their unborn child, and provides emotional support.

She said: "We wanted to create a programme that best meets their needs, not just in terms of caregiving plans but also their emotional well-being, and create a safe space for them to share their challenges as a mother – on top of being in a prison environment."

Senior social worker at Touch Community Services Peggy Lim also received the Promising Social Worker Award. Ms Lim, 30, developed a mental health intervention project that utilises technology to teach young people how to better regulate their emotions.

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Weather

SINGAPORE
24/32 °C

THUNDERY SHOWERS





mainly over northern, eastern and central Singapore in the afternoon.

OUTLOOK

Sunday, Monday:
 Pre-dawn hours and early morning thundery showers.

AIR QUALITY

PSI 26-52 (Moderate)
24-hour reading as at 5pm yesterday

 Rise 6.49am Set 6.52pm	 Rise 3.32am Set 3.53pm
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TIDES

Today: 1.09am (1.2m), 8.07am (2.5m), 2.03pm (1.7m), 7.50pm (2.3m).
Tomorrow: 2.11am (1.2m), 8.41am (2.6m), 2.56pm (1.4m), 8.54pm (2.5m).