



# Community Mental Health in Singapore

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## Singapore

Singapore is a sovereign city-state in Southeast Asia located off the Southern coast of Malaysia. The country is a center of global commerce, business, and education.

Quick Facts ("Country Profile: Singapore", 2017):

- Singapore is 3.5 times the size of Washington D.C.
- The population of 5.6 million is ethnically and culturally diverse - Chinese (77%), Malay (12%), Indian (8%).



## Agency

Founded in 1978, AMKFSC Community Services Ltd. ("AMKFSC") is a community-based social service agency which provides a holistic range of services to support children, youths, families, and seniors at multiple touchpoints across Singapore.

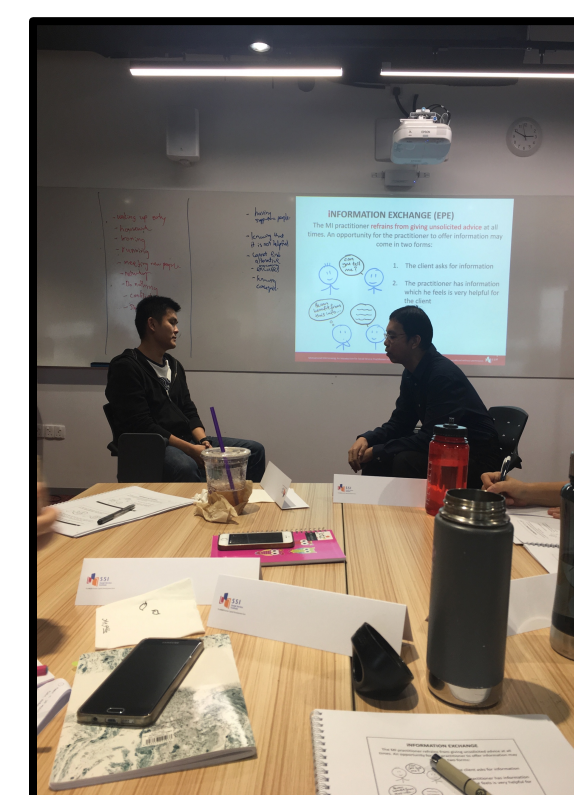
AMKFSC operates four family service centres (FSCs) across Ang Mo Kio, Sengkang, and Punggol in Northeast Singapore. The organization also provides other specialized services such as early childhood education, senior services, a youth centre, mental health support programmes and a family resource centre at Changi Prison.

## Placement

I was placed at Mindcare, AMKFSC's community mental health service. Mindcare was created in 2015 and the interdisciplinary staff includes social workers, psychologists, and psych nurses.

In my role, I was a Clinical Case Manager and primarily did casework and counseling for older individuals with severe and persistent mental illness.

Mindcare services were primarily facilitated in-home and through community-based interventions.



## Main Tasks

*Casework & Counseling:*

- Maintained caseload of 5 individuals and families.
- Facilitated in-home therapeutic interventions, monitoring, and symptom management.
- Completed biopsychosocial assessments, mental status exams, and other diagnostic screening.
- Collaborated with government and community social service, mental health, and health resources for support and referrals.
- Co-facilitated and observed support and psychoeducation groups.

*Program Development & Outreach:*

- Developed and presented a proposal for Peer Specialist training and roles at Mindcare.
- Supported community education and outreach efforts to de-stigmatize mental health in Singapore through #imOKru campaign.

## Skills & Curriculum Connections

- Foundational social work theory in engaging with multicultural clients: person-in-environment, strengths-based approach, motivational enhancement (empathy & collaboration), and considering mechanisms of privilege and oppression.
- Specific knowledge related to signs, symptoms, and assessment tools for mental health disorder diagnosis. Developed through SW521 and SW606.

## Lessons Learned

- The perception of mental health and related services are socially constructed and interpreted differently by intersecting identities.
- Severe and persistent mental illness has a significant impact on caretakers and family systems. It is pivotal to provide support programs and services for caretaker stress and concurrent issues.
- Singapore's Family Service Centre system is an ideal model for single, neighborhood-based entry point into social services.

## Project Highlight

Mindcare is spearheading the creation of an iPhone and Android phone application to educate the public about mental health issues and resources. The #imOKru campaign aims to de-stigmatize mental health issues and encourage help-seeking behavior in Singapore.



## References & Acknowledgements

Country Profile: Singapore. (2017). Retrieved on October 4, 2017 from <http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/singapore.htm>.

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