

Media Release

15 awards presented at the first Social Service Professional Awards in recognition of diverse contributions to the social service sector

The President's Award, the highest honour conferred to social service professionals, was presented by President Tharman Shanmugaratnam

Singapore, 2 July 2025 Held in conjunction with the Social Service Summit organised by the National Council of Social Service (NCSS), the inaugural Social Service Professional Awards recognised the contributions of 13 individuals and two teams from diverse backgrounds for their contributions to the social service sector. The sector-wide awards also align with the Year of Celebrating Social Service Professionals.

2 Guest-of-Honour President Tharman Shanmugaratnam presented the President's Award for Social Service Professionals, the highest award conferred to social service professionals to three individuals: **Ms Priscilla Lim Shiow Huey, Medical Social Work Lead, Singapore National Eye Centre; Ms Chan Lay Lin, Principal Medical Social Worker, Institute of Mental Health; and Mr Jambulingam Rajamanickam Karthikeyan, CEO, AWWA Ltd.** Minister for Social and Family Development Masagos Zulkifli presented the Excellence, Merit and Team Awards.

3 “Our professionals are at the heart of the social service sector. Today, more than 20,000 of them in over 30 job roles contribute their commitment, expertise and service to our society. In this SG60 year, as we reflect on the past 60 years and envision our path ahead, it is vital to honour their many contributions, which have been instrumental in shaping Singapore into a more compassionate and caring nation,” said Minister Masagos.

4 The Social Service Professional Awards recognise the contributions of dedicated social service professionals (SSPs) in Singapore, including those in the fields of social work, youth work, psychology, counselling, therapy, care work, and corporate services. They comprise four categories: President's Award, Excellence Award, Merit Award and Team Award.

- **President's Award:** Recognises SSPs with more than 15 years of experience and have made significant contributions to the social service sector.
- **Excellence Award:** Recognises SSPs with more than 8 years of experience, who have delivered excellent service, demonstrated strong leadership ability and achieved impact on the lives of clients and/or the community.
- **Merit Award:** Recognises SSPs with more than 3 years of experience, who demonstrated potential for leadership development and have made a difference in the lives of clients and/or the community.
- **Team Award:** Recognises team-based efforts that contribute to the improvement of service delivery in the social service sector.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Ms Angel Lim
Manager, Strategic Communications
National Council of Social Service
Tel: 9733 6029
Email: Angel_Lim@ncss.gov.sg

Ms Nicola Powell
Director, Corporate and Brand
H/Advisors Klareco
Tel: 8161 6783
Email: nicola.powell@h-advisors.global

About the National Council of Social Service (NCSS)

NCSS is the sector developer for social services in Singapore. Its mission is to develop a sustainable social service sector that improves quality of life, by driving partnerships, transformation and sustainability of social services. Community Chest and Social Service Institute (SSI) are part of NCSS. For more information visit www.ncss.gov.sg.

Annex A – Social Service Professional Awards award recipient list

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| President's Award for Social Service Professionals | Lim Shiow Huey Priscilla Medical Social Work (MSW) Lead, Senior Master MSW (Practice Manager) Singapore National Eye Centre (SNEC) <p>Priscilla leads the Medical Social Work (MSW) Department of SNEC. As the institution's Peer Support Coordinator, she is responsible for training and developing the peer support programme, and is involved in staff wellness and protection initiatives. At the cluster level, she represented the Medical Social Work profession at Group Allied Health (GAH), the strategic office that oversees the 31 Allied Health professions across SingHealth, and leads the SingHealth MSW IT Community of Practice, while serving as a member of GAH innovation.</p> <p>One key achievement is her invention of the eye drop guide in collaboration with IHL, which is patented, commercialised, and sold in multiple countries, including Singapore. She develops training materials for staff and community partners, and collaborates on new services and programmes internally, with the aim of sharing these with community partners in the long term. She conducts research with multi-disciplinary teams and has contributed to several journal articles and books.</p> <p>She is currently organising an upcoming low vision awareness event in collaboration with various community partners to promote national inclusivity.</p> | Social Work |
| | Chan Lay Lin Principal Medical Social Worker Institute of Mental Health <p>Lay Lin serves as a principal medical social worker and systemic psychotherapist at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). In 2009, Lay Lin set up and formalised systemic psychotherapy as a treatment service under the auspice of the Psychotherapy Services in IMH.</p> <p>She now helms the department in mental health social work training and education, where she continues to emphasise the critical role in applying a systemic approach to mental health social work. She brings with</p> | Social Work |

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| | <p>her three decades of experience working in the community and medical sectors, having served in two family service centres, and in both general and tertiary hospitals.</p> <p>Lay Lin's passion is in couple therapy, family violence, grief work, and qualitative research.</p> | |
| | <p>Jambulingam Rajamanickam Karthikeyan Chief Executive Officer AWWA Ltd</p> <p>As CEO, Karthik leads AWWA's operations, which span over 27 services that operate out of 17 locations. He drives AWWA's overarching strategy to ensure that it remains an agency of excellence that maximises the participation of clients and their networks of support through holistic care driven by over 1000 skilled professionals.</p> <p>Having joined the Organisation in 2007, he was instrumental in strengthening AWWA's allied health capacity and capability by setting up the Allied Health Professional Group – a therapy hub that serves thousands each year through internal AWWA services and external services in the social service and healthcare sectors. He was also a key driver of AWWA's Inclusion Strategy for more than a decade now, which includes setting up of Singapore's first Inclusive Preschool Kindle Garden, establishing an inclusion resource site include.sg, initiated AWWA Inclusion Experts Series – a sharing platform for the sector on inclusion practices and piloted a new community care model for persons with Dementia called Care Beyond Walls.</p> <p>As an advocate of co-creating solutions to meet evolving social service gaps, Karthik was appointed as a member of the both the third and fourth Enabling Masterplan Steering Committees, and has contributed to the development of policies, programmes, services and other support for persons with disabilities. Additionally, for close to a decade, Karthik has taught specialised modules on Special Education (Learning and Behavioural Support), and Training in Special Needs to equip educators with the skills to support students of differing abilities in mainstream school settings through the National Institute of Education. He is also an appointed faculty member of Centre for Healthcare Innovation (CHI) and a Council Member of Allied Health Professions Council (AHPC).</p> | Corporate Services |

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| Excellence Award for Social Service Professionals | Mohamed Fareez Bin Mohamed Fahmy Chief Executive Officer Allkin Singapore <p>AAs CEO of Allkin Singapore, Fareez provides strategic and executive leadership across the organisation's diverse service areas, including family services, children and youth development, eldercare, mental health, and community reintegration.</p> <p>Fareez oversees organisational strategy, financial sustainability, and operational effectiveness, while championing Allkin's core values: accountability, mastery, kindred spirit, fortitude, sparkle, and care. In this role, Fareez ensures that Allkin's integrated, community-centric approach continues to thrive – strengthening partnerships, fostering innovation, and nurturing a culture of grounded in practice excellence and relational care.</p> <p>As an accomplished social worker with nearly two decades of experience in the social service sector, Fareez's career spans a wide spectrum of roles across direct practice and management, with a strong emphasis on embedding care and compassion into service design, organisational culture, and community engagement.</p> <p>A strong advocate of narrative therapy and community-based approaches, Fareez believes that sustainable change stems from dialogue and shared ownership. This philosophy has shaped his leadership style and professional journey.</p> <p>As an International Faculty Member of the Dulwich Centre, Fareez has contributed to the advancement of social work practice both in Singapore and abroad through training and publications. Recognised for his contributions to the field, Fareez received the Promising Social Worker Award in 2011 and the Prime Minister Social Service Award in 2012. He continues to mentor and inspire the next generation of social work practitioners, driven by a vision of building inclusive, people-centred communities.</p> | Social Work |
| | Sadhana Devi D/O Daevnrd Rai Chief Representation Officer Pro Bono SG | Corporate Services |

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| | <p>As the Chief Representation Officer at Pro Bono SG, Sadhana oversees the organisation's legal practice with a focus on upholding the highest standards of excellence, accountability, and innovation in community law.</p> <p>She transitioned from private practice to pro bono criminal defence lawyer at Pro Bono SG a decade ago. Her portfolios have since grown to involve building and maintaining strong relationships with stakeholders, policymakers, and partners to shape policies and frameworks that make access to justice more effective, inclusive, and resilient for underserved communities.</p> <p>Sadhana also leads the administration of Community Legal Services unit, which provides direct legal assistance to individuals who would otherwise be unable to afford legal support. She oversees legal and operational delivery of these services through legal clinics, Pro Bono SG's various schemes, and its Community Law Centres based in the heartlands.</p> <p>At the same time, she continues to represent clients in court through Pro Bono SG's initiatives. This includes working on cases under the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme (CLAS), Legal Clinics, and special intervention programmes supporting migrant workers, transnational families, women, and other vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Through her leadership and practice, she strives to cultivate a legal ecosystem that is not only professionally rigorous and sustainable, but also grounded in empathy, equity, and the collective pursuit of justice for all.</p> | |
| | <p>Heng Chai Ling Charlene Deputy Director, SOS Academy Samaritans of Singapore</p> <p>Charlene Heng is currently the Deputy Director of Samaritans of Singapore Academy, with the mission of leading the Organisation towards becoming a Centre of excellence for suicide prevention training and capability building.</p> | Care and Programme |

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| | <p>Charlene played a key role in positioning SOS as a SkillsFuture-recognised Training Provider and AIC's awarded Learning Institute for Suicide Prevention and mental health training. In recent years, the Academy has trained over 2000 social services, mental health and community healthcare professionals.</p> <p>Understanding that suicide prevention is a whole-community effort, Charlene and team developed the 'Be-A-Samaritan' Programme (BAS) in 2022. Over the last three years, BAS has trained close to 6000 participants, and 27 trainers in the Train-the-Trainers programme, who can teach the BAS curriculum to scale its impact within the community.</p> <p>Prior to her current role, Charlene headed the Core Services and Volunteer Management of SOS, where she spearheaded SOS's 24-hour CareText service and Crisis Support Team with the support of NCSS. The 24-hour text-based service now responds to over 20,000 chats a year, with 70-80% aged 10-29.</p> <p>Charlene is committed to deepening collaboration across the sector to scale suicide prevention training, with the goal of ensuring its long-term sustainability and broader reach in the coming years.</p> | |
| | <p>Ng Lip Chin Principal Occupational Therapist Ren Ci Hospital</p> <p>As an Occupational Therapist, Lip Chin provides direct client care and mentoring junior colleagues to enhance their clinical competencies. Beyond clinical work, she is also involved in strategic development initiatives and collaboration with stakeholders to strengthen services across community hospitals, nursing homes, and day rehabilitation centres.</p> <p>As Faculty Head of Rehab at Ren Ci Learning Academy, she identifies and analyses learning needs in the sector and designs courses to build capacity – notably co-developing a Specialist Diploma in Gerontology with Temasek Polytechnic. She also contributes as an associate faculty with Singapore Institute of Technology (Occupational Therapy) through lecturing and supervising students on clinical placements.</p> | Occupational Therapy |
| | <p>Koh Pei Wen, Pauline Principal Physiotherapist</p> | Physiotherapy |

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| | <p>SPD</p> <p>Pauline has redefined rehabilitation care at SPD through her innovative approach that extends beyond conventional therapeutic interventions. Since joining SPD in 2013, she has established numerous groundbreaking programmes that integrate clinical excellence with practical applications, significantly enhancing rehabilitation outcomes for persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Under her leadership, SPD has implemented several transformative initiatives, including the Transition to Employment Programme and the comprehensive Spinal Cord Injury Self-Management Programme. Her strategic collaborations with organisations such as Resorts World Sentosa for adaptive diving programmes and Tower Transit Singapore for public transport navigation training have expanded the horizons of rehabilitation services. These partnerships exemplify her commitment to holistic rehabilitation that addresses both therapeutic needs and community integration.</p> <p>In her capacity as SPD's inaugural Principal Physiotherapist, overseeing 110 Allied Health Professionals, Pauline has instituted evidence-based frameworks that have elevated rehabilitation standards. Her innovative methodology includes the integration of peer support systems and client co-training programmes, reflecting her recognition of the vital role that lived experience plays in rehabilitation. Her research contributions, recently published in The Journal of Spinal Cord Medicine, continue to influence rehabilitation protocols both domestically and internationally, establishing her as a leading authority in Singapore's community care sector.</p> | |
| <p>Merit Award for Social Service Professionals</p> | <p>Cai Chengying Deputy CEO Pro Bono SG</p> <p>Chengying's journey from corporate litigator to access-to-justice advocate exemplifies her commitment to serving Singapore's vulnerable communities. A secondment to Pro Bono SG, where she provided criminal defence services to the underprivileged, was what sparked a career transition to reshape legal aid services in Singapore.</p> | <p>Corporate Services</p> |

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| | <p>At Pro Bono SG, she spearheaded several transformative initiatives, most notably the establishment of Community Law Centres in the heartlands. This pioneering programme, which has served over 2,000 individuals since 2023, is supported by the NCSS 4ST Partnership Fund. Her strategic approach to integrated legal care has successfully mobilised nearly \$3 million in funding support and fostered crucial partnerships across the social service sector.</p> <p>Under her stewardship, Pro Bono SG achieved significant milestones, including its first Charity Transparency Award and a Special Commendation for Risk Management from the Charity Council. Her leadership in rebranding the organisation from "Law Society Pro Bono Services" to "Pro Bono SG" has enhanced its public visibility and accessibility. Currently overseeing legal support to non-profits, supporter engagement, communications, and impact evaluation, Chengying continues to bridge the gap between legal services and community needs.</p> | |
| | <p>Natasha Mitter Senior Clinical Psychologist, Head of Clinical Team The Salvation Army</p> <p>Natasha leads the Clinical Team at The Salvation Army Children & Youth Group, where she oversees psychological well-being and therapeutic care for vulnerable young people and families. As Head Clinical Psychologist, she has pioneered innovative approaches to trauma-informed care, integrating psychological theory with practical interventions across both residential and community settings.</p> <p>Her decade-long commitment to the social service sector has yielded significant achievements, most notably the establishment of the first Clinical Team within The Salvation Army and the development of Re:Ignite, a comprehensive therapeutic life-skills and mental health resiliency programme specifically designed for children and youth in residential care. These initiatives exemplify her dedication to creating evidence-based interventions that address the complex needs of vulnerable young people during critical developmental transitions.</p> <p>Her leadership extends beyond direct clinical work to include capacity building among frontline professionals and the integration of psychological perspectives into organisational frameworks. Through her work at The Salvation Army, she continues to champion the resilience of young people who have faced</p> | Psychology |

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| | significant adversity, while fostering a culture of reflective practice and evidence-based care in the social service sector. | |
| | <p>Wang Peiqi Tiffany AHP Head, Service Delivery; Head of Psychology MINDS</p> <p>With 13 years of experience as a psychologist, Tiffany has established herself as a leader in advancing care for persons with intellectual disabilities (PWIDs). As head of an Allied Health Professionals Hub overseeing more than 120 professionals, she has orchestrated significant improvements in service delivery, resulting in a 16% increase in client reach and serving over 3,500 individuals within six months.</p> <p>Her innovative approaches to client care are exemplified through initiatives such as "The Easy Way Out," a comprehensive caregiver guide, and the Golden Gatherings programme, which ensures integrated therapeutic support for elderly residents at MINDSville Home. Under her leadership, the psychology department has achieved impressive outcomes, including an 80% staff retention rate and a 30% increase in monthly client engagement.</p> <p>Most recently, she spearheaded the creation of the Healthy and Safe Relationships Community of Practice, a collaborative initiative with CPH, NUS, and MSF that has united over 60 professionals in knowledge sharing. Her contributions to workforce development, including her work with the Singapore Psychological Society and the Social Service SkillsFuture Tripartite Taskforce, demonstrate her commitment to elevating professional standards across the social service sector.</p> | Psychology |
| | <p>Lim Woon Tyen Tammy Senior Music Therapist Assisi Hospice</p> <p>Tammy is a pioneering music therapist who founded and leads the music therapy program at Assisi Hospice, where she has transformed music therapy into an integral part of holistic palliative care. She has</p> | Care and Programme |

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| | <p>seamlessly integrated music-based interventions across inpatient, daycare, homecare, and bereavement services, establishing a new standard in holistic palliative care.</p> <p>Tammy's innovative approach is exemplified through several signature initiatives, including a specialised programme for patients with chronic lung diseases that combines breathwork with musical elements to manage anxiety and breathlessness. Her creation of the Volunteer Musician Program has successfully bridged the gap between community musicians and hospice care, while her "Music, You, and Me" workshop equips healthcare professionals with practical music-based strategies to enhance patient care.</p> <p>As an advanced practitioner of the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM), Tammy provides vital training and supervision to practitioners across Southeast Asia. Her leadership of the Community of Practice in Palliative Care under the Association of Music Therapy Singapore (AMTS) further demonstrates her commitment to advancing professional standards in the field. Through these contributions, she continues to shape the landscape of palliative care in Singapore, ensuring that music therapy remains an essential component of compassionate end-of-life care.</p> | |
| | <p>Fong Jun Yong Joey Assistant Manager, Care & Advocacy Specialist (Team Lead) Industrial and Services Co-operative Society Limited</p> <p>Joey is a passionate case manager with over six years of experience supporting the reintegration of more than 500 ex-offenders. At ISCOS, he heads the Case Management Portfolio for community-based programmes and mentors a team of case managers and desistors, championing a strengths-based, client-focused approach. He has introduced innovative approaches that combine clinical insight with hands-on support, redefining how post-release transitions are managed.</p> <p>One of Joey's standout initiatives, Project ReConnect, reflects his innovative approach to rehabilitation. This programme adopts a peer-led model where reintegrated individuals co-facilitate digital and life skills training for newly released offenders, building both competencies and hope through shared experience. His restructuring of the Skills Assistance and Support Scheme (SASS) also led to better employability outcomes by shortening certification timelines from two years to six months, accelerating job readiness and help offenders to work towards their ambitions. Joey believes that who delivers the programme is just as</p> | <p>Care and Programme</p> |

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| | <p>important as what is delivered. By empowering reintegrated individuals to lead, he promotes mutual growth and shifts the focus from risks to potential.</p> <p>His involvement in the Yellow Ribbon Project and CARE Network, and international representation at the ACA Congress in the U.S., reflects his dedication to evidence-based rehabilitation practices. In recognition of his efforts, he received the Minister for Home Affairs Operational Excellence (OE) Award. Through his leadership, Joey seeks to strengthen collaboration with community partners to build a throughcare ecosystem where former offenders grow into peer mentors and professionals who contribute meaningfully to society.</p> | |
| Team Award | <p>Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee Xin Ru Cynthia (Senior Assistant Director, Allied Professional Services, Rainbow Centre) • Huang Jingda Ryan (Senior Psychologist, Rainbow Centre) • Charlene Tan (Senior Medical Social Worker, Institute of Mental Health) <p>Project: Integrated Social Health Case Management Pilot</p> <p>Integrated Social Health Case Management Pilot (ISH) was a pioneering cross-agency initiated by Rainbow Centre (RC) with the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). It brings together social workers and psychologists for persons with disabilities to receive coordinated and effective care through one dedicated case worker, plugging the critical gap in receiving services across both medical and community services.</p> <p>Through the pilot, the team contributed significantly to the sector by developing a structured model of care, streamlined cross-agency case management processes, and strengthened collaboration frameworks. This created a blueprint for other agencies looking to implement person-centred case management for clients with complex needs across social and health settings.</p> <p>RC continues the ISH pilot's work through the Disability Case Management Programme (DCMP), providing integrated, person-centred case management. The team's success has allowed them to launch a bigger program, DCMP-Plus, which now supports up to 75 people. The team has modelled the way for collaborative work, helping to improve how social services and healthcare can work together in Singapore.</p> | - |

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| | <p>Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridget Monica Das (Senior Principal Social Worker & Head of Department, Ren Ci Hospital) • Sonia Oo Cheu Yin (Medical Social Worker, Ren Ci Hospital) • Lim Boon Shine (Medical Social Worker, Ren Ci Hospital) • Goh Yiqing (Senior Medical Social Worker, Ren Ci Hospital) • Loh Mei Ling Brenda (Medical Social Worker, Ren Ci Hospital) • Poh Shu Ning (Senior Art Therapist, Ren Ci Hospital) • Jolene Yee Xian Fang (Music Therapist, Ren Ci Hospital) • Xie Xiao Yun (Volunteer Management & Development Manager, Ren Ci Hospital) • Yeo Siew Mui (Twinkle Hearts Volunteer) • Lim Sze Min (Twinkle Hearts Volunteer) • Tan Ying Jie Angela (Methodist Church Volunteer) • Poh Siok Ching (Methodist Church Volunteer) <p>Project: Shared Memories</p> <p>Shared Memories (SM) is a structured initiative that supports caregivers, facilitates legacy work and strengthens family bonds for residents of Ren Ci's Chronic Sick Unit (CSU). Due to disability, residents experience loss of autonomy and communication barriers while their families struggle with grief and alienation. SM was created to address these challenges and help them reconnect.</p> <p>Their team of medical social workers, music and art therapists, alongside community volunteers, help to create meaningful experiences through facilitating reminiscence sessions and creative arts therapy. They've also expanded by partnering with churches to incorporate spiritual care, enabling residents to connect with their faith.</p> <p>Through regular knowledge-sharing and co-design with volunteers, the team continuously refines their approach to ensure religious and cultural sensitivity while creating sustainable, community-driven initiatives that extend beyond conventional medical treatment.</p> | - |
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| | Since 2019, this collaborative effort has supported 48 residents and 128 family members. Their success demonstrates how cross-sector collaboration can transform care environments into more humanising and enriching spaces. | |
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Social Service Professional Awards eligibility criteria and categories

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| Eligibility Criteria | <p>Upon submission of the nomination, nominee must meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possess the required years of experience in social service at the time of nomination deadline as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ President's Award: More than 15 years ○ Excellence Award: More than 8 years ○ Merit Award: More than 3 years ○ Team Award: More than 3 years (for each team member) 2. Be performing/providing direct social services in job roles which include, but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Care and Programme (e.g., Programme Management, Volunteer Management, Care) ○ Corporate Services (e.g., Human Resource, Administration, Finance, Information Technology, Centre Management) ○ Counselling ○ Psychology ○ Social Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For nominees in the social work profession, social workers from all sectors (e.g., healthcare, early childhood etc.) who meet the minimum years of work experience will be eligible. ○ Therapy (Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech and Language Therapy) ○ Youth Work 3. Be currently employed and endorsed by a social service agency (SSA) performing/ providing direct social service |
| Nomination period | 3 February to 31 March 2025 |
| CATEGORIES | |

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| President's Award | <p>The President's Award for Social Service Professionals is the highest award to social service professionals conferred by the President of the Republic of Singapore.</p> <p>This Award recognises social service professionals, with more than 15 years of experience, who are committed to excellence and innovation, demonstrated outstanding leadership ability, and have made significant contributions to the social service sector. The awardee will receive \$10,000 cash prize, a certificate and a trophy.</p> |
| Excellence Award for Social Service Professionals | <p>The Excellence Award will be conferred by the Minister for Social and Family Development.</p> <p>This Award recognises social service professionals, with more than 8 years of experience, who have delivered excellent service, demonstrated strong leadership ability and achieved notable positive outcomes and impact on the lives of clients and/or the community. The awardee will receive \$5,000 cash prize, a certificate and a trophy.</p> |
| Merit Award for Social Service Professionals | <p>The Merit Award will be conferred by the Minister for Social and Family Development.</p> <p>This Award recognises social service professionals, with more than 3 years of experience, who demonstrated potential for leadership development in the profession and have made a difference in the lives of clients and/or the community. The awardee will receive \$1,000 cash prize, a certificate and a trophy.</p> |
| Team Award | <p>The Team Award will be conferred by the Minister for Social and Family Development.</p> <p>This Award recognises team-based efforts that contribute to the improvement of service delivery in the social service sector, focusing on client-centric, cross-profession and cross-agency contributions.</p> <p>There must be a minimum of 2 individuals per team across at least 2 professions and/or agencies. All nominees in the team must each have more than 3 years of experience in social service at the time of nomination deadline.</p> <p>The awarded team will receive \$10,000 cash prize and a trophy per team and a certificate for each team member.</p> |