

Cultivating a common value system with CHEER™



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Introduction

The **Compassion, Humility, Empathy, Encompassing, and Respect** (CHEER) Programme aims to address 2 of the 6 major drivers of burnout proposed by Swensen (2020), 'organizational culture and values' and 'social support and community at work' by cultivating a common value system and habits among Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) in SingHealth through education and recruitment of CHEER Champions.

Background & Problem

The 2019 Employee Engagement Survey (EES) and Resilience in Academic Medicine (RAM) survey showed that AHPs rated lower satisfaction in areas of communication and working relationships, were at relatively higher risks of emotional exhaustion and depression and scored the second lowest for empathy. These survey findings signaled that AHPs are suffering from physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion and were at risk of burnout.

Solutions

To mitigate the burnout risks among AHPs, we aimed to contribute to transformation by improving the status of 2 of the burnout drivers, namely, 'organizational culture and values' and 'social support and community at work', by empowering staff with the right intra- and interpersonal skills.

In 2020, informed by the EES, RAM survey and FGD results, we established a feeling of urgency for change by highlighting the burning platform to various AH leaders. A team comprising educators and administrators were gathered to form a guiding coalition, with advisory support from the AH Group Director and Deputy Group CEO.

To develop educational activities that are relatable and transformative, and to impact real change, various organisational strategies and educational principles were adopted to design, develop, deliver and evaluate the CHEER programme (Figure 2), that is opened to all AH staff in SingHealth to empower individuals and teams to create a compassionate work environment by establishing the right mind-set and values, and by transferring knowledge and skills to communicate in a compassionate and respectful manner.

Figure 1. CHEER™ Project Timeline

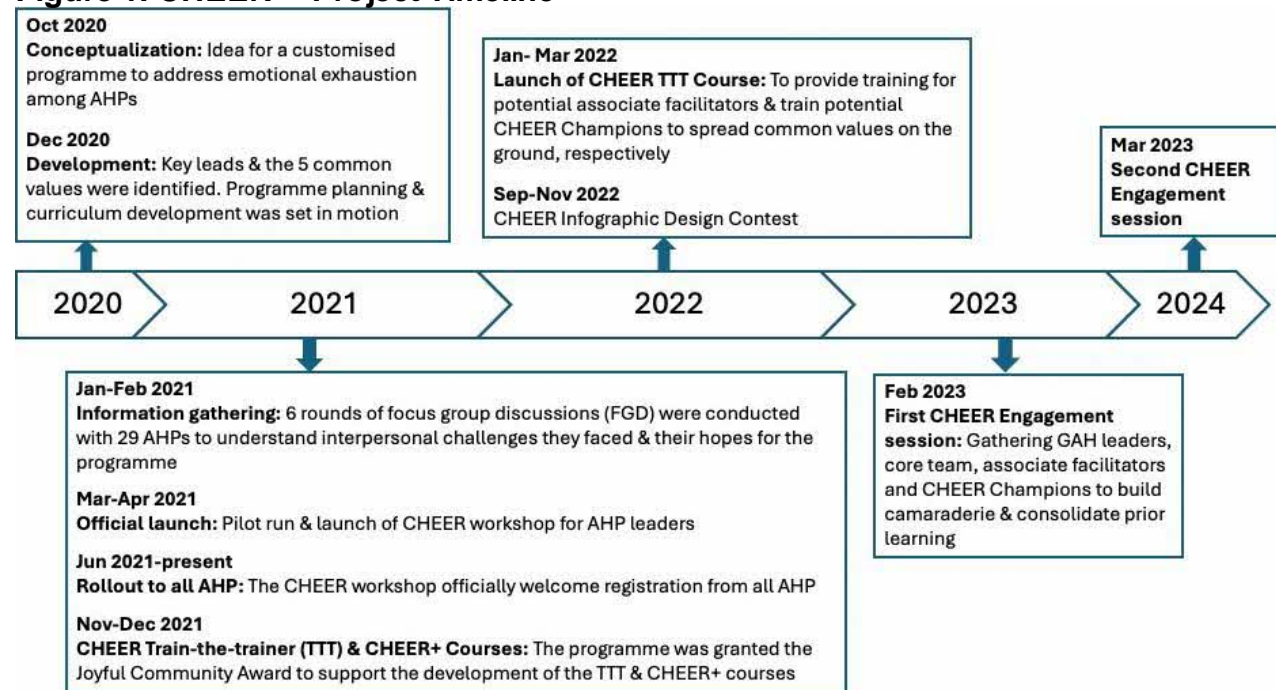
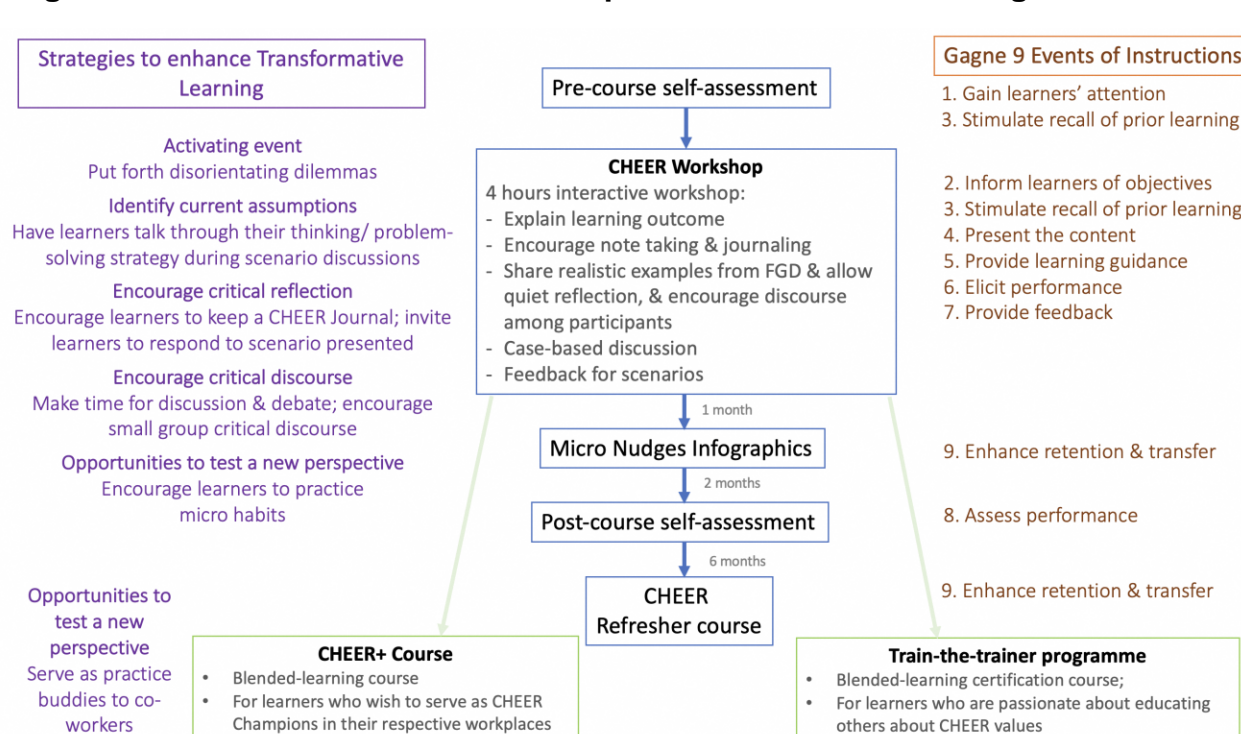
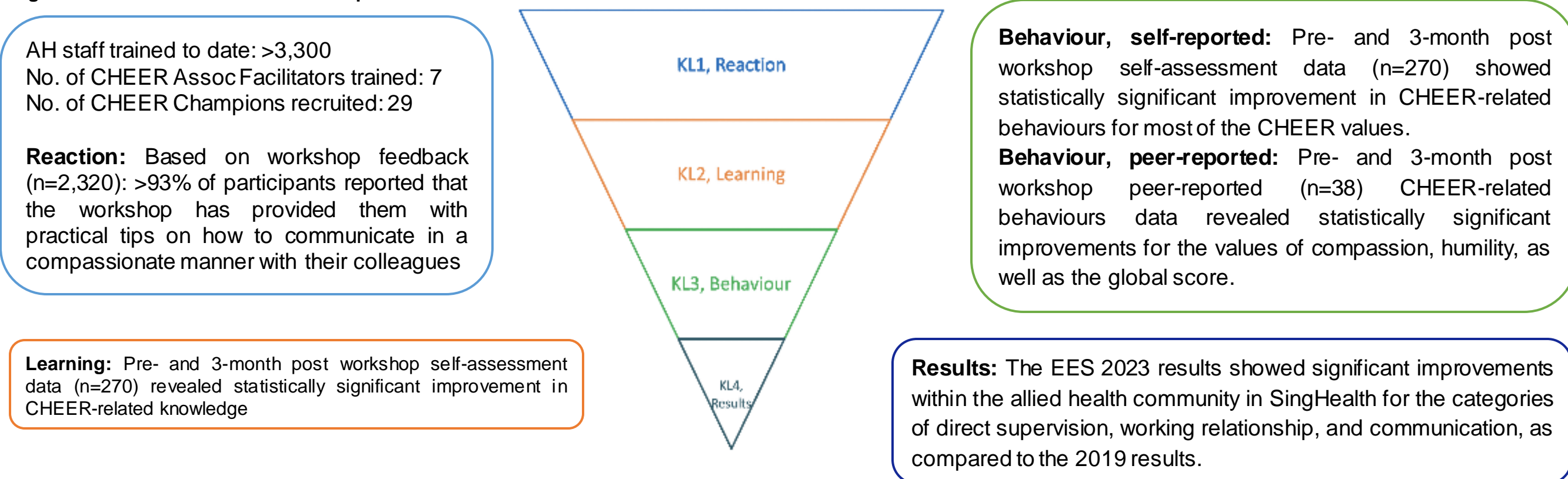


Figure 2. Theoretical framework & components of the CHEER Programme



Results

Figure 3. Outcome based on the 4 Kirkpatrick New World Model (K1 = Kirkpatrick I level)



Lessons Learnt

Implementing CHEER provided valuable insights into the process of cultural transformation within a large healthcare organization like SingHealth. The programme underscored the significant impact of leadership in driving organizational change. Effective leadership, characterized by sincere commitment and leading by example, was instrumental in encouraging staff buy-in and fostering a positive cultural shift. This is a programme design, developed and implemented by SingHealth staff, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment, leading to higher levels of sustained engagement and participation. Regular feedback loops and evaluation mechanisms allowed for ongoing refinement of the program, ensuring its relevance and effectiveness over time. CHEER highlighted the challenges and opportunities associated with sustaining cultural change initiatives. Creating a supportive organizational environment and embedding the program's principles into everyday practices were crucial for ensuring long-term success.