



ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2015

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VISION

To be a leading centre for the Transformation of Persons with Addictions.

MISSION

- Transform individuals with addictions through community-based recovery programmes.
- Support families through education and specialist services.
- Develop partnerships to facilitate reintegration into society.
- Advocate acceptance of people with addictions.

About WE CARE

WE CARE Community Service Limited (WE CARE) is a company limited by guarantee and registered under the Charities Act. It is a charity that provides programmes and services for people who are in recovery from addictions, and their family members. It holds an Institution of Public Character (IPC) status and is a full member of the National Council of Social Service. More information about our services can be found in our website at www.wecare.org.sg.

Unity Entity Number (UEN)	:	200506089N
Charity Registration No.	:	01888
IPC Reference No.	:	CFG060012
Operating Address	:	11 Jalan Ubi, Block 5 #01-41, Kembangan-Chai Chee Community Hub, Singapore 409074
Board of Directors	:	Ms Frances Cheang – Chairperson
(As at 31 Dec, 2015)		Mr Chong Kwang Shih – Hon Treasurer
		Dr Lim Yun Chin
		Dr Winslow Munidasa
		Mr Desmond Lum
		Mr Lee Wee Song
		Mr Andrew da Roza
		Dr Cheok Cheng Soon Christopher
		Mr S Surenthiraraj - Secretary
Management Team	:	Ms Tham Yuen Han – Executive Director
		Ms Yvonne Yuen – Head, Operations & Service
	:	Mr Sam Heng Wai – Office Manager
Auditor	:	Fiducia LLP

FOREWORD BY CHAIRPERSON

2015 marks the 10th year milestone in WE CARE's operations as a charitable organization, serving families and individuals affected by addiction. As we look back over past years, we recall the many obstacles which we have had to overcome. We have evolved from a fledgling social service agency operating out of a small rented facility in Redhill (with 3 seconded officers from the Institute of Mental Health), to the current premises (at Kembangan-Chai Chee Community Hub in Geylang) with a total of 8 full-time and part-time clinical and administrative staff, running professional counselling services and various clinical and wellness programmes.

We increased our outreach activities in 2015 in order to reach out to the wider community, increasing awareness about addictions, so that individuals and families will seek help earlier if they become aware of addictive behaviours in their loved ones. In 2015 we continued to build on community partnerships, sustaining the addict in recovery and providing support to families by giving them coping skills so as to break the intergenerational cycle of addiction in the family. We are pleased to report significant increases in individuals and families coming forward for our counselling services and clinical and wellness programmes.

We resumed our fundraising activities in 2015. Unfortunately there was much competition from other charitable organisations for donors' funds, all rushing to tap on the SG50 Care & Share grant matching scheme.

We are very thankful indeed for the generous donors who have been supporting our cause the last few years, and have continued to do so in 2015. They are: Marina Bay Sands, Singapore Island Country Club, the Grace, Shua & Jacob Ballas Charitable Trust, the Isaac Manasseh Meyer Trust Fund and the Abdullah Saleh Shooker Charity Fund. Our gratitude also goes to Andrew da Roza for his generous personal donation. We are also grateful to have found a new donor in 2015, in the Woh Hup Trust Fund.

We marked our 10th Anniversary with an inaugural fundraising event on 14 November 2015 – The Amazing WE CARE Race. Minister of Social & Family Development, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, was our Guest of Honour. The race brought together 19 teams from donor organisations, each racing against time to complete team challenge events held at various iconic locations around Singapore. We are pleased to have raised \$69,200 from this inaugural event. Our deepest appreciation to all sponsors and donors who made the event possible, principally, the Tote Board, KPMG, SingTel, Singapore Pools, Promises Pte Ltd, W Singapore, JF Hillebrand and Credit Suisse.

I would like to thank our stakeholders, the National Council of Social Service and its Community Chest, the Singapore Totalisator Board and the President's Challenge for their donations and programme grants, without which we would not have been able to run our programmes and activities.

I would like to thank our volunteers, especially those from our recovering community, for their continued dedication to WE CARE and its cause. These volunteers play a particularly

important role in giving newer members of our community, encouragement and belief that recovery is possible.

Our team of dedicated staff made 2015 a very successful year with significant increases in caseloads, as a result of our outreach activities and participation in the various programmes carried out during the year. On behalf of the Board I would like to thank them for their dedicated efforts to service and support our recovering community.

I would also like to thank my fellow Board members for their contributions to WE CARE. With the support of all, we continue to make progress on our journey towards being one of the leading centres for addiction recovery.

Frances Cheang
Chairperson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE - 2015

WE CARE started a new chapter in our history of serving the community when we shifted to the current premises at Jalan Ubi. If 2014 was the year where we built a new physical environment, then 2015 marks a new beginning in building up a wider community with more stakeholders and active supporters for our cause.

Towards this end, we set out to achieve three key strategic goals in 2015:

- To reach out to a wider audience to bring home the message about various forms of addiction, and the treatment options.
- To introduce new clinical programmes to cater to the wider community
- To improve remission rates among our recovering community by increasing visits and participation in our Drop-in Centre's activities.

The many new collaborations with agency partners in 2014 were instrumental in helping us achieve our 2015 strategic goals. We saw a steep increase in outreach activities where we engaged in 17 awareness talks, roadshows and exhibitions, reaching out to close to 1200 persons at various events. Of special mention are the monthly outreach sessions at NAMS and Lloyd Leas Community Service (both Men's and Women's camps). Through these partnerships, we were able to reach out to a targeted and relevant audience, many of whom eventually joined the after-care services at our Drop-in Centre, for themselves or their family members. As a result, we had a record 2,869 visits to the Drop-in Centre where close to 750 participants took part in various wellness programmes and centre events.

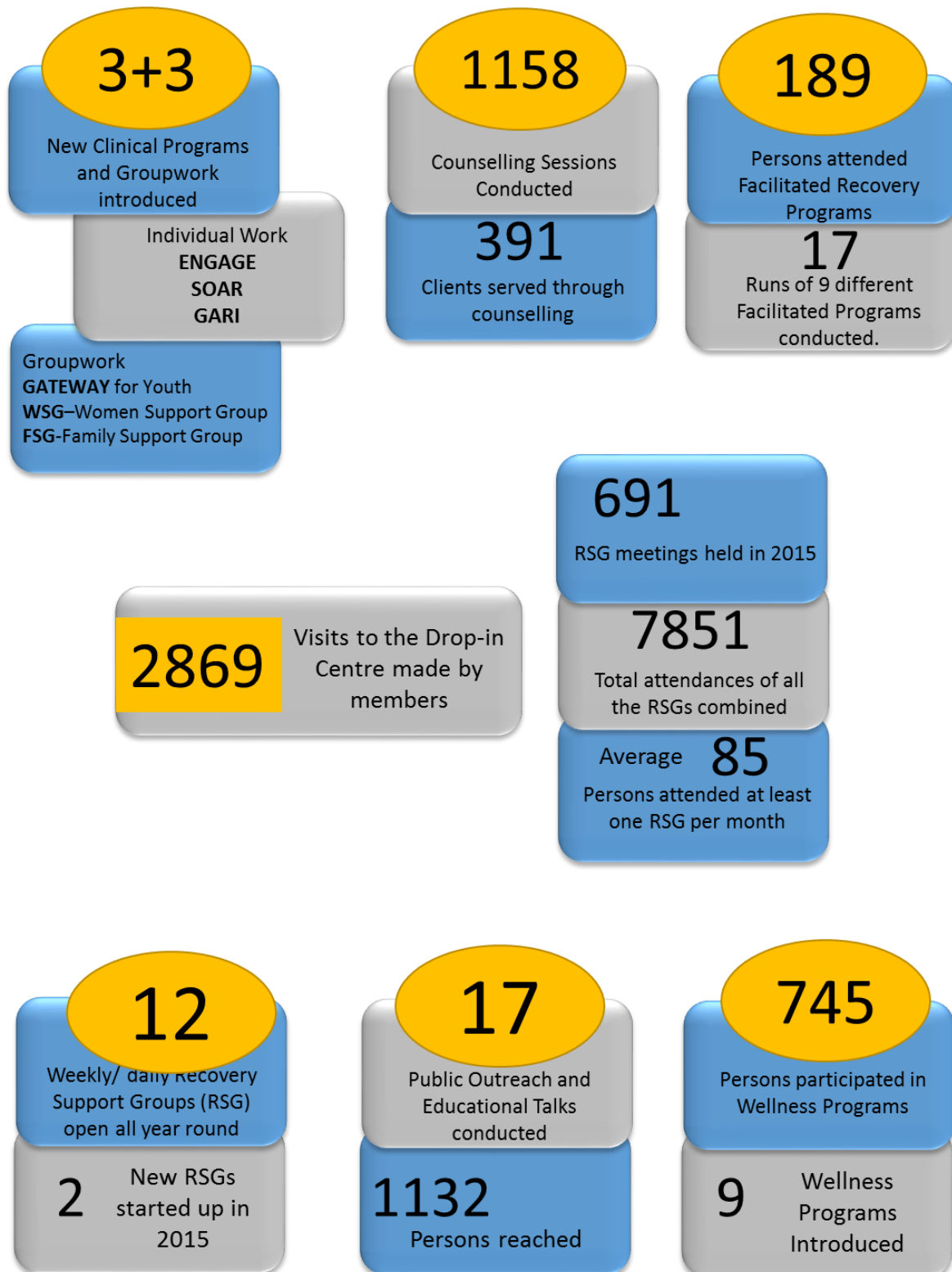
In line with the outreach work, we saw a marked increase in counselling caseload and case management. In 2015, we served 391 clients through individual and/or family work, double the caseloads served in 2014. We are very encouraged by the fact that at least 30% of the clients who took up counselling services with WE CARE in 2015, were people who found us on the internet and sought help of their own volition. As we often point out in educational talks, recovery from addiction is a life-long journey; the ability to recognise relapse and to seek help is a sign of enormous progress.

One of the most exciting programmes we introduced in 2015 is the group therapy programme for women recovering from addiction. Women who fall into addiction are often trapped in cycles of family dysfunction, struggle with more complex issues, and are less likely to seek help for themselves due to childcare and family commitment. Yet there are few, if any programmes, which are designed for women with such needs, that which allows them to explore issues and life choices in a safe, non-judgmental setting. We started the new Women Therapy Group in October 2015. As at end December, we had two cohorts of women who completed the programme. Though the group size was kept small by necessity, the conversations were deep and meaningful. Whilst some came not knowing what to expect, many completed the programme with tears of joy and solidarity. A response which resonated with many who joined the programme was: "This is the first time I get to share with others what I shared, the first time I did not feel shame talking about it. Thank you for this group."

Whilst the numbers and statistics validate the efforts that we have put in to achieve our goals, it is feedback such as this that serves to remind us of our purpose. Without the emotional connections and ties that bind us with the community that we serve, we are mere skilled technicians. For it is when we serve with our hearts, that we can reach out to the deeper recess of every individual that we touch. Only then will the process of healing and change begin.

Tham Yuen Han
Executive Director

2015 AT A GLANCE



KEY PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

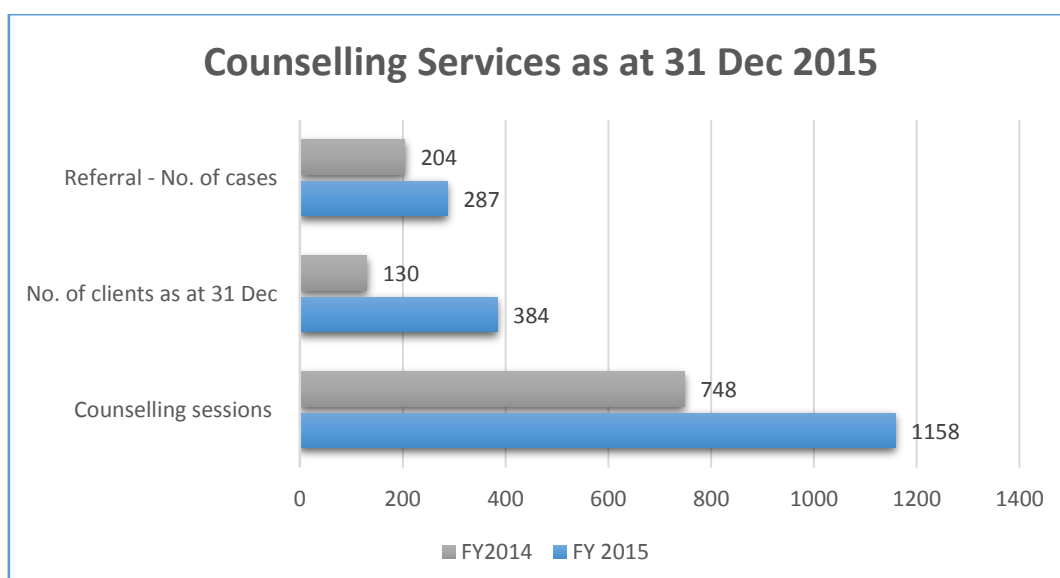
CLINICAL SERVICES AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

- A. Counselling Services & Programmes
- B. Recovery Support Groups (RSG)
- C. Recovery / Educational Programmes
- D. Drop-in Centre Programmes
- E. Public Education, Awareness Talks and Workshops
- F. Volunteers Recruitment and Management

A. Counselling Services & Programmes

In 2015, three new clinical programmes – ENGAGE, SOAR and GARI were introduced to meet the increasing requests from individuals, family members and significant others, for addiction treatment. Together with the existing clinical programmes (CSO, ATO and SAFE), WE CARE offered six different counselling services and programmes furthering its aim to help individuals overcome their addictions, and to reconnect with their families.

With a team of five full-time counsellors and a pool of associate counsellors, we attended to 391 clients in FY 2015 vs 130 in FY 2014; providing a total of 1158 counselling sessions in FY2015. At least 30% of the caseload are clients who found us on the internet or through our Helpline, whilst the rest are referrals from various partner agencies. We wish to acknowledge the support from our referral partners such as the State Courts, Lloyd Leas Community Services, NAMS, Nexus FRC, AMK FSC, Fei Yue FSC, Changi General Hospital, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Regent Law, among others.



i. *ENGAGE*

ENGAGE is a case management framework that provides support for walk-in clients as well as those referred from partner agencies (such as Singapore Prison, hospitals, law firms, FSCs, etc.). The goal of *ENGAGE* is to attend to psychosocial and rehabilitative needs of clients with a history of addiction. It caters to people who do not require in-depth or long term counselling.

ENGAGE comprises brief therapy over a period of three months. Under this programme, clients and their family members receive support in terms of intake clinical assessment, weekly counselling, and referral for shelter and/or financial services, where necessary. They are also introduced to various Recovery Support Group meetings and wellness programmes conducted at the centre for re-integration skills.

By the end of 2015, the number of clients and/or their family members who had enrolled in this programme stood at 148, far exceeding the projected annual target of 80.

ii. *SOAR*

SOAR, (“Substance or Alcohol Recovery”) is an individualised counselling treatment programme for persons with drugs or alcohol dependency problems. Clients who enrol in the *SOAR* Programme receive individual counselling in relation to their substance abuse or dependency problems, family session and support group sessions. This basic programme consists of minimal six individual sessions, two family sessions and four group sessions. The goal of this programme is to reduce relapse risks and deal with co-morbid conditions if any. Clients with more complex issue stay in treatment for at least 12 to 18 sessions. As at end 2015, 92 clients and their families were enrolled in *SOAR*.

iii. *GARI*

GARI (Gambling Addiction Recovery Intervention) is a counselling treatment programme designed for persons, or their family members, who have gambling problems. The programme components comprise of individual counselling sessions, family sessions, and support group meetings for the individual as well as family members.

As of end 2015, 17 client cases have been enrolled in the *GARI* Programme.

iv. *CSO Programme*

CSO (“Counselling for Significant Other”) is a counselling treatment programme designed primarily for family, friends, or significant other persons of a recovering person, or one who is still suffering from a substance or behavioural dependency problem.

Clients receive individual and family counselling support in relation to their issues and personal situation. Some have also joined the facilitated family support group meetings conducted at WE CARE. Through these sessions, they learn to develop skills to manage the chaos in their lives, explore relationship issues, and learn self-care, as well as how to lend support to their loved ones who are in recovery.

As of December 2015, the CSO have provided counselling and support to 16 families who needed professional help and guidance in dealing with an addict in their family.

v. *Atypical Theft Offending Programme (A.T.O.)*

ATO is a counselling treatment programme for compulsive stealing or shoplifting behaviour. Started in 2009 in collaboration with the State Courts, the goal of the ATO counselling programme is to help clients understand, manage and stop their compulsive stealing, and to effect lasting lifestyle changes. The programme is designed for individuals over 18 years with a compulsive shoplifting issue. It includes clinical assessment, individual counselling to help clients deal with compulsive urges, group therapy and workshops for family members to educate them on what is atypical theft, the symptoms and treatment modalities.

Clients are referred to the ATO programme by the Singapore State Courts, lawyers, psychiatrists and partner agencies such as FSCs. However, participation in the programme is fully voluntary and self-funded by clients. Clients who cannot afford payment are subsidized by WE CARE.

The treatment goal of the programme is to help client identify the stressors that trigger the compulsive behaviour, resolve underlying core issues that contribute to the condition and learn to adopt a more adaptive lifestyle in future without re-offending.

In FY2015, we managed a caseload of 56 referrals under this programme.

vi. *Project S.A.F.E.*

Project S.A.F.E., implemented in 2014, is a two-year pilot project providing holistic after-care intervention for drug offenders who have served short-term sentence for drug-related offences. The goal is to help ex-offenders selected for the programme prevent relapse to substance use, and to acquire reintegration skills with their families as well as at the workplace. The objective

of this programme is to prevent relapse in substance use, strengthen family resilience and prevent intergenerational offending.

In Phase 1 of this pilot project, counsellors at WE CARE worked with 10 families of ex-offenders on relapse prevention, marital counselling, family financial management, and parenting skills. A survey conducted by NCSS (the funding agency for S.A.F.E.), found that most of the participating families and ex-offenders reported that Project S.A.F.E. had been helpful. Phase 2, which commenced in mid-2015 with a larger caseload of 30 families, is expected to complete in 2016.

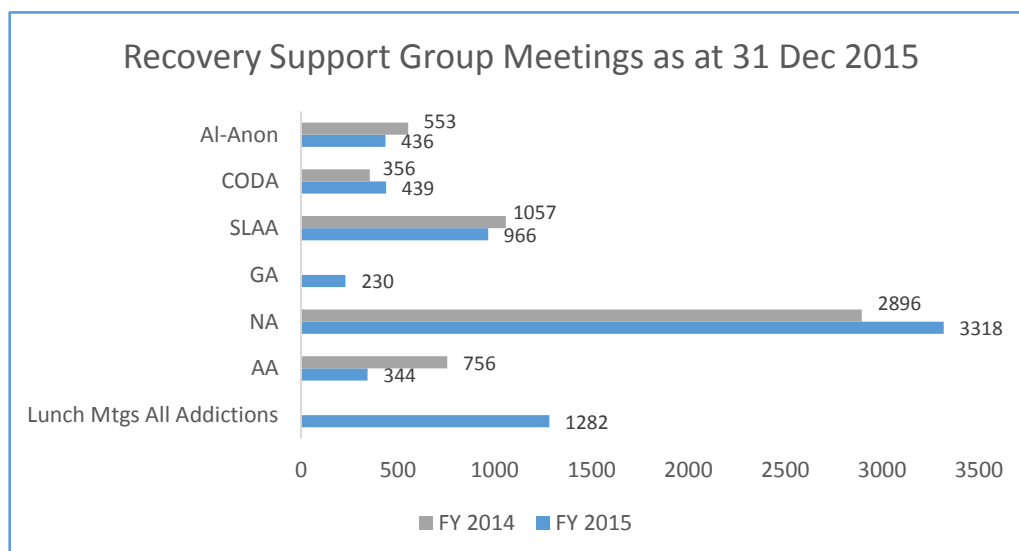
B. Recovery Support Groups (RSG)

Recovery support groups (RSG) are self-help groups comprising individuals who meet regularly (at least once a week) to share their struggles with addiction in a safe and non-judgemental environment. Members who have been recovering over a long term, act as mentors to newcomers when approached, and guide the latter on the road to recovery, especially in helping them to work the 12 STEPS programme.

Self-help Recovery Support Groups ongoing during the year include:

- AA - Alcoholics Anonymous (one meeting per week)
- Al-Anon (Family Support Group—helps families of addicts) (one meeting per week)
- CODA – Co-Dependents Anonymous (one meeting per week)
- GA - Gambling Anonymous (one meeting per week)
- NA - Narcotics Anonymous (two meetings per week)
- SLAA - Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (three meetings per week)

Total attendees for all RSG meetings in FY2015 were 7,851.



C. Facilitated Recovery Programmes

These are recovery programmes and group therapy, facilitated by addiction counsellors and are designed to help our clients gain deeper insights into issues and effect long-lasting behavioural and attitudinal changes. In FY2015, seven such programmes were made available; namely *AIM* (Anger Intensive Management), *FIRE* (Facilitated In-house Recovery Education), *FREE* (Families in Recovery through Education and Empowerment), *GATEWAY* (Youth Workshop), *STEPS* (Solutions To Every Problem Sober), *12-STEPS workshop*, and *USBA* (Understanding Substance and Behavioural Addictions).

We also introduced a new group therapy programme, the Women Support Group (WSG), designed specifically for women with various forms of addiction issues. It aims to provide a platform for females with substance/behavioural dependency problems to explore gender-specific issues in the safety of an all-female group. The first run of the WSG programme was started in September 2015 with 13 clients enrolled.

The table below shows the number of runs and attendance of programmes conducted in FY2015.

Programme	No. of runs	No. of attendance
AIM	1	30
FIRE	1	14
FREE	4	19
GATEWAY	1	13
STEPS	3	31
USBA	4	45
WSG(Women Support Group)	2	14

i. Anger Intensive Management (A.I.M.) Programme

This programme consists of education and process group sessions designed to address issues of anger, aggression and family violence. It helps participants develop anger management skills, while rebuilding and maintaining positive relationships with their families and learning to be a positive role model for their children. The focus is on helping persons who have difficulties controlling and/or expressing their anger, a major cause of recidivism. This skill-based programme allows participants to build a new set of coping behaviours to address one of their most problematic issues.

The programme is delivered in a structured eight sessions over four-weeks, each lasting two hours.

ii. Facilitated In-House Recovery Education Programme (F.I.R.E.)

The FIRE Programme is designed primarily for residents staying in halfway homes across Singapore. The main objective of this programme is to help ex-drug offenders in the transition phase of recovery, from drug addiction to a stable lifestyle. It consists of 13 sessions covering topics on addiction and relapse prevention.

In FY2015, WE CARE conducted one run of FIRE at our centre for the residents of Ashram.

iii. *Families in Recovery through Education and Empowerment*

FREE is an educational programme for family members and significant others of individuals suffering from addiction to drugs, alcohol or compulsive gambling. The programme aims to help family members and significant others to understand addiction, the process of recovery, relapse prevention and learn effective communication skills.

iv. *Gateway*

This workshop is designed for youths between the ages of 12 to 18 years. It aims to help young participants address substance use behaviours and explore the consequences of risky behaviours. It is also designed to help participants build coping skills and resiliency in order to make better choices and adopt a positive attitude towards a drug-free life.

v. *Solutions To Every Problem Sober Programme (S.T.E.P.S.)*

The 12-Step approach is one of the most widely used recovery approaches in dealing with alcoholism, drug abuse and various other addictive behaviours. This programme is offered to residents of halfway houses as a preparatory course for the 12-Steps programme. The programme is conducted only by recovering persons who have worked the programme and provides an opportunity for new persons to learn from the experience of someone who has maintained sobriety through the programme.

WE CARE conducted three runs of STEPS in FY2015, serving a total of 31 participants within various halfway homes.

vi. *12-Steps Workshop*

The 12 Steps is a set of principles that guide the recovery of those who suffer from addiction or other behavioural problems. Participation in 12 steps recovery programme teaches the participants about acceptance - a key to sobriety and serenity. The collective sharing process acts as a powerful deterrent from

destructive behaviour and is an effective means of dissolving the impulsiveness and desperation that participants may experience in early recovery.

The first 12 Steps Workshop began at WE CARE in January 2008. It has since continued to run twice a week as an in-house programme for our Drop-in members. In FY2015, the attendance at the 12-Steps was 836.

vii. *Understanding Substance and Behavioural Addictions Programme (U.S.B.A.)*

The focus of this programme is on relapse prevention. Conducted over five sessions, the programme aims to equip participants with the skills to draw up their personal relapse prevention plans. Family members can also participate in this programme, to learn about the nature of the addiction as well as the best ways to support their loved ones.

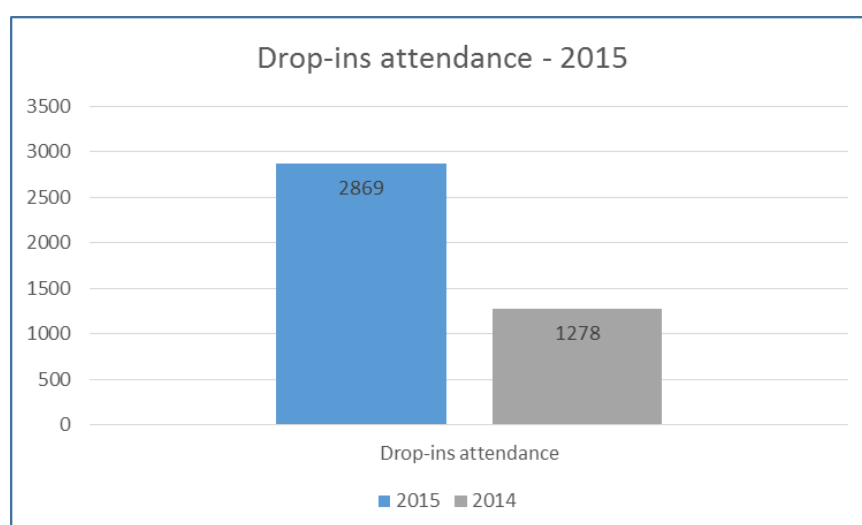
Four runs of USBA were conducted in FY2015 with a total attendance of 45.

D. Drop-in Centre Activities

i. Drop-in Centre

2015 was a very busy year for WE CARE. The number of drop-ins during FY2015 more than doubled that of FY2014, rising from 1,278 to 2,869. The feedback generally was very positive, with many clients maintaining that the centre at Kembangan was like a “home-away-from-home”, and that staff were warm and friendly.

The chart below illustrates the total attendance at the activities organised at the centre during FY2015.



Some highlight events in 2015 include:

- **January:** WE CARE Open House to mark the official opening of our new premises at Kembangan. Among the more than 100 guests were corporate sponsors, strategic partners, our clients, Drop-in members as well as new neighbours at the Hub.
- **June:** SEA Games Closing Ceremony. 50 drop-in clients were invited to witness this grand event.
- **July:** 17 drop-in clients went on an excursion to Gardens by the Bay courtesy of NCSS. We also held a durian party at the centre for 65 clients to celebrate Hari Raya.
- **August:** We celebrated National Day at the centre together with 71 Drop-in clients. We also hosted a workshop on AA for the public.
- **September:** 26 of our Drop-in clients participated in the Yellow Ribbon Run held this month.
- **October:** We hosted a retreat for 48 clients on RSGs including AA, NA, and SLAA.
- **November:** Another retreat, specifically for SLAA, was held this month, attended by 30 clients.
- **December:** We celebrated the end of another year with a party for drop-ins and their families. 70 persons attended this happy occasion.

ii. Wellness Programmes

The following programmes were organised in FY2015 for the benefit of our drop-in clients and their families:

- Enhancement programmes:
 - How to write a CV and job application letter
 - Tuition for children of Drop-in clients
 - Art & craft sessions
- Life Skills:
 - Basic English
 - Using the Computer
 - Phone Etiquette
- Sports:
 - Yoga
 - Badminton
 - Chiropractic service



We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our volunteers and volunteer trainers who gave their valuable time to share their experiences and knowledge with our clients.

E. Public Education, Awareness Talks and Workshops

Talks and outreach events were conducted throughout FY2015 to create awareness of our services, and to educate the public on how addiction develops, the recovery process, risks associated with addiction, and preventive measures to reduce risk.

A new series of awareness talks was initiated in collaboration with National Addictions Management Services (NAMS). Entitled “Families in Recovery through Education & Empowerment” (FREE in short), the aim of this series of talks is to create awareness among family members of drug users, that they have a critical role to play in helping a family-member on the road to recovery. The talks cover topics such as “Understanding addiction”, “The process of recovery”, “Relapse Prevention”, and “Effective communication skills”. The series started in September 2015 and ran every second Monday of the month. Four sessions were completed by the end of the year.

WE CARE was also one of the participating agencies that took part in the National Addiction Awareness Day held at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital on 22 November 2015. Close to 300 people attended the event, organized by the National Addictions Management Services (NAMS). An estimated 290 people attended 15 organized talks in the event.

Throughout 2015, WE CARE was active in many outreach activities. Two of such outreach events include regular sessions to the prison population as well as hospital patients seeking detoxification services:

- Monthly outreach sessions at Selarang Prison
- Twice monthly outreach sessions at NAMS

We would like to thank the following institutions and organizations that hosted our talks:

- Bedok Reformative Centre
- Credit Counselling Singapore
- Changi Women Prison
- Hillview Civilians Sports Club
- Hindu Centre
- Lloyd Leas Community Service, Men's & Women's housing units
- NAMS Detox ward
- Ngee Ann Polytechnic
- Marina Bay Sands

A group of 25 Korean students who specialise in addiction care, visited us on 21 January 2015. On 15 December, we again played host to visitors from Korea, this time our guests were four professionals (psychiatrist, psychologist and nurses). Both groups of visitors came to understudy the services provided by WE CARE as a community-based treatment and drop-in centre for addiction.

In March 2015, two lunch talks and three workshops were organised for counsellors, social workers and professionals in mental health and addiction fields. We were privileged to have Marjorie Nixon, (a pioneer in working with addictive disorders), return to Singapore from Wisconsin, USA to deliver a series of workshops for professionals in the social work and counselling fields. These include:

- i. *The Time of My Life* (Lunch Talk on 5 March 2015)
This talk addressed the effects of children growing up in families in which a parent or parents have addictions.
- ii. *Understanding Co-dependency* (Workshop on 17 March 2015)
This workshop enabled participants to gain a basic understanding of what co-dependency is, and to recognise the symptoms and behaviours of co-dependency.
- iii. *Addiction and the Older Adult* (Lunch Talk on 18 March 2015)

This session was aimed at sensitising helping professionals to the reality and issues of addiction among older adults.
- iv. *A Step At a Time* (Workshop on 23 March 2015)
Participants were introduced to the 12-Step programme.
- v. *A Taste of Freedom* (Workshop on Children and Youth on 26 March 2015)
This day-long workshop focused on the application of trauma-informed care as a model for counsellors when working with children with behavioural problems.

F. Volunteers Recruitment and Management

We would like to record our grateful thanks to all the individuals who selflessly came forward to volunteer their time, expertise, and energy to deliver the many programmes that we provide at WE CARE. Without their commitment, it would not have been possible to run our recreational and educational programmes, all of which are entirely conducted or facilitated by volunteers from all walks of life. Some volunteers are recovering individuals themselves, while others wished to contribute anonymously in one way or another towards the recovering community.

G. Fund Raising

Without a doubt, the fund-raising event of the year was The Amazing WE CARE Race, held on 14 November to mark our 10th anniversary.

19 teams (between four and six members each) completed the team challenge event race which covered iconic locations around Singapore. Challenges included painting a picture of Singapore blindfolded; completing a quiz before riding the Luge; savouring local wild delights at Lau Pa Sat; taking a picture of the Merlion with strangers and kite-flying at the Marina Barrage. Close to 250 individuals participated in this unique event. Winners were teams from KPMG, SingTel and other corporate partners. Prizes were also awarded for the “Best Dressed Team” and the team with the “Best Team Spirit”. A total of \$69, 200 was raised from this event.

Our deepest appreciation to all the sponsors and donors who made the event possible, including Tote Board, KPMG, SingTel, Singapore Pools, Promises Pte Ltd, W Singapore, JF Hillebrand, Credit Suisse, just to name a few. A special word of thanks to the guest-of-honour, Minister for Social & Family Development, Tan Chuan-Jin, who flagged off the 19 teams at the start of the race. Last but not least, we owe the volunteers a tremendous applause for working tirelessly behind the scenes to make this event possible.

We also wish to acknowledge with gratitude, all the other sponsors, donors and volunteers who supported us throughout the year. If not for their generous contributions and encouragement, we would not have been able to carry out many of our activities and programmes for the benefit of our clients.

Real People, Real Changes

In this section of our Annual Report, we bring you stories of real people whose lives have undergone transformation since they stepped into WE CARE.

Although their names have been changed to protect their privacy, their stories are nevertheless real, and were first published in the 2014 issues of our Bulletin.

1. "Recovering Journey" by Benson (June 2015)

Once a solution, drugs became a problem. This addict needed a new solution.

"I started using drugs after my first love committed suicide. She left no answers behind. As a result, I fell into depression. Using drugs became a way for me to cope with the loss and unresolved feelings. I attempted to stop numerous times. Each time ended up using drugs again.

When I was in NAMS for detoxification and when I checked out, there was too much free time. An empty mind is a devil's workshop. I know that I'm in a risky position if I have too much time. I remembered I had met a speaker from WE CARE who did outreach at NAMS and had her card. I was touched by her sincerity, and paid WE CARE a visit.

WE CARE is a comfortable place. Since my first visit, I drop in daily. I attend workshops and engage in physical activities like badminton and gym with fellow drop-ins. I enjoy myself, while time passes so quickly when we laugh and joke. In the evening, I attend recovery support groups, like Narcotics Anonymous, and learn skills to stop myself from relapsing.

Recovery is difficult to do alone. My wife commented that it's tough to find a place that is warm and safe. At WE CARE, I found hope and learned to love. The staff at WE CARE make me feel like a friend and family member. I feel at ease here. This fellowship is my solution to a better life today. Now my wife is expecting after trying for a baby for the past six years. With the support I get from WE CARE staff and drop-in members, I'm ready to move to my next step of recovery."

2. "Making a choice, taking the actions...one day at a time" by Haitham (June, 2015)

Learning to say "no" meant reaching out for help.

"I'm 45 this year and I have never been free of my alcohol and drug dependency for more than two weeks. I never could say no to alcohol and drugs. I took drugs and drink when I was bored or lonely. And then I took more to get high. When I was high, I engaged in petty crimes. I have since learnt at WE CARE, not to take that first drink or resort to drugs. So far, I have been clean for 90 days. I realize I can't continue saying "no" if I continue self-destructive habits.

When I visited WE CARE, I felt supported and understood. I was taught hand-painting by a drop-in at WE CARE. I painted a few more drawings while spending time at WE CARE. Hand-painting allows me to express my mood and I feel great on completion of a new work. Meanwhile, I went for counselling and attended recovery support meetings. WE CARE gave me the tools to help solve my problems. I learn life-skills that are important to my recovery. In the past, I have difficulty to say 'no'. I am now able to say "no" to prevent a relapse, because I ask for help.

I am learning how to reach out for help when I have a disagreement with my family members. I was feeling frustrated, yet I was willing to try a new action. I am calling my non-using friend. By sharing, I feel less burdened and am able to live another day without drinking or taking drugs. I have made the choice to stay drug-free."

3. "Gift of sobriety" by James (September 2015)

"When everything seems like an uphill struggle, just think of the view from the top".

I started drinking at 20 years old out of curiosity, and with the encouragement of friends. I started drinking more to see if I would get drunk. Eventually I knew I was addicted and started binge drinking which lasted for days. My marriage failed as a result of my drinking.

The drinking continued for more than 10 years. It was a constant struggle and I eventually admitted myself to IMH for several periods of in-patient treatment. It was there that I first came across WE CARE and I have been attending their workshops and drop-in centre activities regularly.

The people at WE CARE, both the counsellors and other drop-ins, understood what I was going through, providing support and encouragement without judgement. I have a vision for what my life can be. It would have been very lonely and difficult to stay on my road of recovery without WE CARE. It's a haven where I can spend my time without worrying about undesirable influences from people who may encourage me to drink.

4. "No control" by Jonathan (September 2015)

Breaking the cycle of addiction and relapse.

I was first introduced to sleeping pills when I was 16. In the early years, it was just about curiosity and experimentation. When I started working, the pressure and frustration of dealing with demanding clients, coupled with the feeling of being unappreciated at work, drove me to seek comfort in sleeping pills. It helped me stay calm and relaxed, and kept me on an even keel in the most difficult situations. Eventually popping pills spiralled into addiction. I suffered memory lapses and was no longer in control of the consequences of my actions.

On many occasions, my wife tried to persuade and encourage me to kick the habit – but each time, to no avail. Finally, she brought me to WE CARE. WE CARE saved me, but it was too late to save my marriage. During the divorce proceedings, my mother fell ill and needed to undergo surgery. It was a difficult period for me and I started getting suicidal thoughts. After staying clean for nine months, I once again, succumbed to my addiction. Thankfully, the counsellors at WE CARE continue to be my pillar of support.

I lived for over 22 years in a cycle of addiction and relapse. I have now been clean for the past seven months. WE CARE is my safe haven. I attend the NA support group meetings daily, enjoy the camaraderie with the other drop-ins and can approach the counsellors for advice at any time. Through the counselling sessions and programmes at WE CARE, I have learnt to cherish my life and to be grateful for life's little blessings.

5. "Honesty" by Lynn (December 2015)

Admitting the problem is the first step towards the solution.

I started drinking more than 20 years ago, initially at work-related events and social gatherings. I was also frequently out for dinner with friends –it didn't matter where –as long as they could have a meal and I could have my drinks. After a while, some friends began to notice that I was making it a daily affair; stopping by a pub for a few drinks, before heading home – even if I was alone. Sometimes they would comment, "Lynn likes her drinks" but I would always brush them off. It never occurred to me that I had a drinking problem, as I was still functioning well at work and in my daily affairs.

After I moved out to live on my own, I would buy alcohol to drink at home after work. The drinking got progressively worse, and before long, I could finish a bottle of hard liquor in two to three days. When I first noticed the tremors, I felt uneasy. It was such a bewildering concept to me, that I could actually be an alcoholic. I was in denial and drank more to quell the withdrawal tremors.

One day my sister confronted me and suggested I take an online alcoholic self-test. I scored full marks. I had to be honest and admit alcohol was a problem. That was a huge blow to me but with her encouragement, I discovered WE CARE. The counsellors recommended that I enrol in the detox program at IMH. I was reluctant because of the perceived stigma, and I believed I could overcome it on my own. Paradoxically, during this period, I ended up drinking more, as I struggled with my addiction. Eventually, at the continued encouragement of the counsellors and the drop-ins at WE CARE, I enrolled in and completed the detox program.

Even though I still have friends who are very supportive of my recovery, I continue to drop in daily at WE CARE. I know I have a problem. I find the non-judgemental environment and support from fellow recovering persons with similar experiences, gives me the courage and conviction to try and stay on the course of recovery. I am currently also trying to repair the relationships and regain the trust of my family members.

6. "Staying on the right path" by Peter (December 2015)

Complicated addiction, one way forward.

"I led a very comfortable life, working with my father and siblings, in our successful textile business. In 1992, I was influenced by some friends to speculate in the stock market. Even though my investments were based mostly on hearsay, my portfolio flourished.

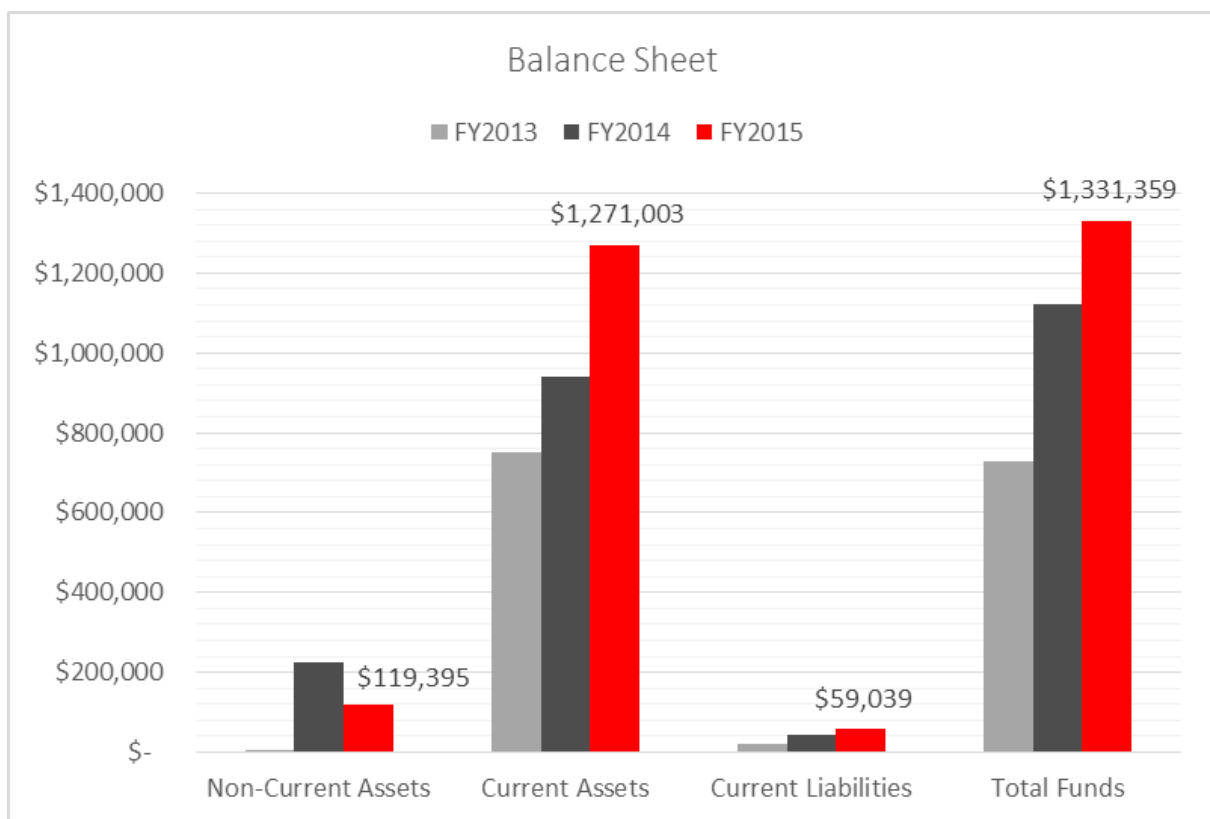
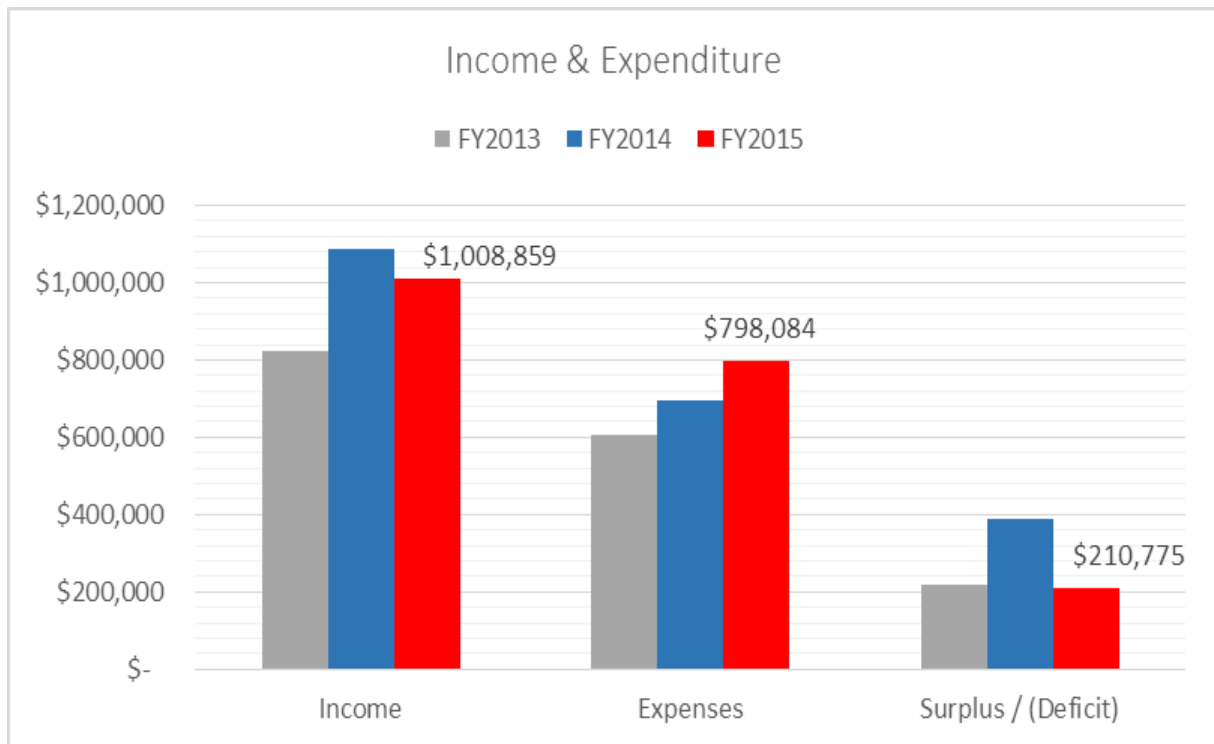
Then in 1997, the Asian Financial Crisis sent my world into a tailspin. For the next few years, I tried to hide the losses from my family and started revolving the loans on my 13 credit cards. Needless to say, eventually the banks came knocking and my father had to settle my six-figure debt. Everyone was so angry and disappointed with me. Who could blame them?

You would think that I would have learnt my lesson –but what can I say? Before long, I started receiving credit cards from several banks again, even though I did not apply for them. As I was banned from investing in the stock market, I started punting heavily on 4-D. It took me only a few months to rack up five figure losses.

Once again, my father came to my rescue and I was admitted to IMH. I was suffering from depression, anxiety and had suicidal thoughts. Upon my discharge, I was introduced to WE CARE for counselling. WE CARE has kept me on the straight and narrow. The staff are kind, friendly and helpful, and I am able to approach any one of them if I ever feel the need to talk. The centre is very calming and comfortable. It felt like home. There are many recovery support groups meetings for all type of addictions. By attending these daily sessions, I am constantly reminded to keep a positive mind, to be honest and humble and to be willing to take action to change my ways.

I have finally come to realise how foolish I have been. I am working hard to stay on the right path and hope to be reconciled with my wife and son one day.

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We extend our heartfelt **thanks and** appreciation to the following individuals and organizations, (and to a few who chose to remain anonymous), who generously made donations in cash during the review period.

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