

SWAAB ANNUAL REPORT 2024

For the year ended 31 December 2024

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Dear Social Workers, Social Service Practitioners, and Friends,

The Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board (SWAAB) works to advance professional standards of practice and to enhance the professional growth and development of social workers in Singapore. This report provides an overview of the accreditation system and other activities undertaken by the Board in the year 2024.

As we look back on 2024, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the steady progress we have made in strengthening the Social Work profession in Singapore. It has been a year marked by implementation, consolidation, and meaningful engagement across our community. Together, we have advanced our shared mission of upholding high professional standards, ethical practice, and continuous learning. This year, we reached a key milestone—accrediting 3,031 Social Workers and Social Service Practitioners, surpassing our goal of 3,000 accredited practitioners. This achievement reflects not only the Board’s commitment to professional excellence but also the strong support and trust of our Social Work community.

A significant focus in 2024 was the successful launch and implementation of the Revised Accreditation Framework introduced on 15 January 2024. The revised framework included several key enhancements: an Online Ethics Quiz, an updated Supervised Practice Declaration Form for accreditation as a Registered Social Worker (RSW), and a revised Continuing Professional Education (CPE) structure. These additions were introduced to strengthen accountability, reinforce ethical foundations, and support ongoing professional development.

Our community also came together to celebrate the values that define our profession at Social Work Day 2024 on 1 March 2024. Themed “Transforming Futures through Collective Wisdom”, the event was graced by the Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for Health, Mr Masagos Zulkifli, with close to 300 Social Workers and friends in attendance. The event provided an opportunity for reflection, learning, and recognition of the contributions made by Social Workers across various practice settings.

These achievements would not have been possible without the collective effort and commitment of many. I extend my heartfelt thanks to my fellow Board Members, Workgroups, Accreditation Secretariat, the Singapore Association of Social Workers, Ministry of Social and Family Development, and all partners and practitioners who have supported the work of the Board throughout the year.

As we look ahead, I encourage all accredited practitioners to stay grounded in your values, uphold ethical standards, and continue investing in your growth. The work we do is often complex and challenging, but

it is also deeply meaningful. Whether you're in the early stages of your career or have been in practice for many years, your dedication makes a difference—in the lives you touch and the communities you serve.

Let's keep learning, supporting one another, and building a strong, credible Social Work profession that continues to meet the evolving needs of society.

Yours sincerely,
Long Chey May (Ms)
Director-General of Social Welfare
Chairperson
Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board

ABOUT SWAAB

The Social Work Accreditation and Advisory Board (SWAAB), formerly known as the Social Work Accreditation Board (SWAB), was formed on 1 January 2009.

SWAAB oversees the accreditation framework for Social Workers and social service practitioners (SSPs) in Singapore. SWAAB also reviews mechanisms to maintain professional Social Work practice, provide thought and professional leadership on the development of Social Work practice and professional development of Social Workers and SSPs in Singapore, and provide consultations and inputs to Government on issues affecting the profession.

The accreditation framework is owned by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF). Since the accreditation system was launched on 1 April 2009, the system has been administered by the Accreditation Secretariat of the Singapore Association of Social Workers (SASW).

The accreditation system contributes to the longer-term goal of advancing the practice standards of Social Workers and SSPs in Singapore. The accreditation system aims to:

- a. Ensure professional standards of Social Work practice.
- b. Promote continuing education and training of Social Workers and social service practitioners.
- c. Uphold professional conduct and ethics.
- d. Improve the professional image of Social Workers and social service practitioners.

SWAAB sets accreditation requirements and provides leadership in the professional development of Social Workers. Eligible Social Workers and SSPs can apply for accreditation as Registered Social Worker-Provisional (RSW-Ps), Registered Social Workers (RSWs) or Registered Social Service Practitioners (RSSPs).

The accreditation of RSSPs was introduced for a limited period of three (3) years up till 30 June 2012 to recognise experienced practitioners in the social service sector but who do not have a recognised qualification in Social Work. RSW-Ps and RSSPs can apply to be converted to RSWs upon achievement of the required supervised practice hours and recognised Social Work qualifications respectively.

Each approved accreditation application has a validity of two years and may be renewed upon achievement of 60 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits within the two-year period.

SWAAB promotes professional standards and good conduct of registered Social Workers and SSPs. Registered Social Workers and SSPs are issued with certificates of accreditation and expected to always exhibit professional conduct, upholding professional standards and positive public image of the profession. The Board maintains the register and may reprimand, suspend, or remove from the register a registered practitioner found to have breached professional conduct.

This SWAAB Annual Report documents the activities and highlights of SWAAB and the accreditation system for the year ended on 31 December 2024.

SWAAB MEMBERS AND WORKGROUPS

The Chairperson and members of SWAAB are appointed by MSF. The Chairperson and members for the new term of office from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025 are:

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Chairperson	Ms Long Chey May	Director-General of Social Welfare	MSF
Adviser	Ms Ang Bee Lian	Senior Adviser	MSF
Member	Ms Tan Sze Wee	Executive Director President	Rainbow Centre SASW
Member	Ms Elaine Loo	Probation & Community Rehabilitation Service, Rehabilitation and Protection Group	MSF
Member	A/P Lee Geok Ling	Head, Department of Social Work	National University of Singapore
Member	A/P Teo Poh Leng	Head, Bachelor of Social Work Programme	Singapore University of Social Sciences
Member	Ms Lilian Mark	Senior Principal Medical Social Worker	Institute of Mental Health
Member	Ms Tabitha Ong	Director, Adult Protective Service	MSF
Member	Dr Vincent Ng	Chief Executive Officer	Allkin Singapore Ltd
Member	Mr Lee Seng Meng	Executive Director	SHINE Children & Youth Services
Member	Ms Bridget Monica Das	Head, Psychosocial Services	Ren Ci Hospital
Member	Mr Mohd Ali Bin Mahmood	Community Development & Social Work Consultant	BROMOHD – The Practice
Member	Dr Sylvia Mun	Senior Lecturer, Social Work Programmes	Singapore University of Social Sciences
Member	Ms Katherine Baptist	Freelance Trainer	N.A.
Member	Ms Chow Choy Yin	Chief Executive Officer	Trans Family Services

Various workgroups and committees were formed to focus on specific areas and events to support the overall purpose of SWAAB. The workgroups and their members are as follow:

Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Member	Ms Agnes Chia	Chairperson	Professional Ethics Committee, SASW
Member	A/P Lee Geok Ling	Head, Social Work Department	National University of Singapore
Member	Mr Mohd Ali Bin Mahmood	Community Development & Social Work Consultant	BROMOHD – The Practice
Member	Dr Vincent Ng	Chief Executive Officer	AMKFSC Community Service Ltd

Review of PIC Processes and Practices Workgroup

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Member	Ms Agnes Chia	Chairperson	Professional Ethics Committee, SASW
Member	Ms Elaine Loo	Probation & Community Rehabilitation Service, Rehabilitation and Protection Group	MSF
Member	Ms Madeleine Yeo	Senior Principal Social Worker, Office of the Director-General of Social Welfare (ODGSW)	MSF
Member	Mr Mohd Ali Bin Mahmood	Community Development & Social Work Consultant	BROMOHD – The Practice
Member	A/P Teo Poh Leng	Head, Bachelor of Social Work Programme	Singapore University of Social Sciences
Member	Dr Sylvia Mun	Senior Lecturer, Social Work Programmes	Singapore University of Social Sciences

Social Work Supervision Seminar 2025 Workgroup

Position	Name	Designation	Organisation
Co-Chairperson	Ms Katherine Baptist	Member	SWAAB
Co-Chairperson	Ms Yogeswari Munisamy	Senior Principal Social Worker, Child Protective Service	MSF
Member	Mr Alvin Goh	Assistant Director and Lead Correctional Rehabilitation Specialist	Singapore Prison Service
Member	Mr Chan Whee Peng	Senior Lecturer	Singapore University of Social Services
Member	Ms Chua Ee Cheng	Head (Medical Social Service)	Yishun Health
Member	Ms Goh Yan Ling	Senior Medical Social Worker	Institute of Mental Health
Member	Ms Gracia Goh	Senior Director	Singapore Children's Society
Member	Ms Jocelyn Tan	Head (Plans & Professional Development), Allied Health Professions (AHP) Hub	MINDS
Member	Ms Lin Siping	Senior Social Worker, Office of the Director-General of Social Welfare (ODGSW)	MSF
Member	Mr Mohd Ali Bin Mahmood	Social Work Consultant	BROMOHD – The Practice
Member	Ms Patricia Wee	Principal Mentor	KidSTART Singapore
Member	Ms Tan Yi Ying	Lead Social Worker	Allkin Singapore Ltd
Member	Ms Theresa Wang	Director	SHINE Children and Youth Services
Member	Mr Udhia Kumar	Social Worker	N.A.
Member	Ms Zoe Tee	Senior Social Worker	Fei Yue Community Services
Advisor	A/P Peace Wong	Associate Professor, Department of Social Work	National University of Singapore

Accreditation Secretariat

Name	Designation	Organisation
Mr Simon-Peter Lum (From January 2024)	Head of Accreditation Executive Director	SASW
Ms Theresa Lee (Till February 2024)	Head of Accreditation Executive Director	SASW
Ms Pearlyn Lee	Senior Executive	SASW
Ms Sharon Song	Senior Executive	SASW
Ms Sahira Zulkifli	Senior Executive	SASW
Ms Kamaljeet Kaur (Till October 2024)	Administrative Executive	SASW

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Revised Accreditation Framework and System Enhancement

The Revised Accreditation Framework and the Online Accreditation System Enhancement were successfully completed, incorporating key new components such as the Online Ethics Quiz, the updated Supervised Practice Declaration Form that is in alignment with the Skills Framework for Social Service, and the revised requirements for Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits.

The Revised Accreditation Framework was formally launched on 15 January 2024.

ACCREDITATION STATISTICS

Accreditation Categories

There are three accreditation categories to recognise the different qualifications and practice experience of Social Workers and social service practitioners. The three categories are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| i. Registered Social Workers-Provisional (RSW-Ps) | Social Workers with less than a year of post qualification full-time practice in a Social Work position in Singapore and are employed in a Social Work position in Singapore at the point of application. |
| ii. Registered Social Workers (RSWs) | Social Workers with at least a year of post qualification full-time practice in a Social Work position in Singapore, 80 hours of in-employment training and 1,000 hours of supervised practice from a qualified supervisor. |
| iii. Registered Social Service Practitioners (RSSPs) | Practitioners with significant years of relevant social service practice experience but who do not have a recognised Social Work qualification and registered for accreditation on or before 30 June 2012. Accreditation as Registered Social Service Practitioner ceased from 01 July 2012. |

As of 31 December 2024, there were 3,031 accredited professionals. 86% of the accredited professionals were RSWs, 12% were RSW-Ps and 2% were RSSPs. The numbers of RSWs and RSW-Ps increased by 7.8% and 5.1% while the number of RSSPs decreased 10.7% from 2023 to 2024. The decrease in number of RSSPs was expected and consistent with previous years since 2012 when SWAAB stopped accepting new applications for accreditation as RSSPs.

In 2024, 125 RSW-Ps has successfully applied for conversion to become RSWs. 1 RSSP has successfully applied for conversion to become RSW-P.

Table 1: Number of Accredited Professionals by Accreditation Categories as of 31 December 2024

Category	Number	Percentage
RSW-Ps	368	12%
RSWs	2,596	86%
RSSPs	67	2%
Total:	3,031	100%

Table 2: Number of Accredited Professionals by Accreditation Categories over the Past Five Years (2020 to 2024)

Category	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
No. of RSW-Ps	349	347	377	350	368
YOY Change	0.6%	-0.6%	8.6%	-7.2%	5.1%
No. of RSWs	1,622	1,820	2,087	2,408	2,596
YOY Change	3.2%	12.2%	14.7%	15.4%	7.8%
No. of RSSPs	113	106	91	75	67
YOY Change	-12.4%	-6.2%	-14.2%	-17.6%	-10.7%
Total	2,084	2,273	2,555	2833	3031
YOY Change	1.8%	9.1%	12.4%	10.9%	7%

Sector Distribution

The top three types of employers of accredited professionals were social service agencies (SSAs), public healthcare agencies and government ministries and statutory boards.

Table 3: Number of Accredited Professional by Accreditation Categories and Sectors

Employment	RSW-P	RSW	RSSP	Total	Percentage
Social Service Agencies (i.e., charities or societies providing social services)	291	1791	37	2119	70%
Public Healthcare Agencies (e.g., restructured hospitals, polyclinics, specialist centres)	50	421	2	473	16%
Government Ministries and Statutory Boards (e.g., MSF, NCSS, MOE)	10	131	10	151	5%
Self Employed / Private Practice & Others (e.g., private companies, freelance practice, Educational Institutions)	8	111	11	130	4%
Not in Employment	9	142	7	158	5%
TOTAL	368	2,596	67	3,031	100.0%

Overall, the majority of Registered Social Workers were employed in SSAs (70%) followed by the Healthcare (16%).

Country of Social Work Qualifications

In 2024, 93.2% of the registered professionals had obtained their Social Work qualifications from local universities. 54.0% of the foreign qualifications were obtained from Australia, Hong Kong, and America. RSWs were more likely than RSW-Ps and RSSPs to hold a foreign Social Work qualification. 7.5% of RSWs had foreign qualifications as compared to 2.0% of RSW-Ps. No RSSP had a foreign Social Work qualification.

Table 4: Number and Percentage of RSW-Ps, RSWs and RSSPs by Country of Social Work Qualification

Country of Social Work Qualification	RSW-P		RSW		RSSP		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Singapore	360	97.8%	2410	92.8%	1	1.5%	2771	93.5%
Australia	0	0.0%	84	3.2%	0	0.0%	84	2.8%
Hong Kong	1	0.3%	39	1.5%	0	0.0%	40	1.3%
America	1	0.3%	14	0.5%	0	0.0%	15	0.5%
India	2	0.5%	13	0.5%	0	0.0%	15	0.5%
Malaysia	1	0.3%	12	0.5%	0	0.0%	13	0.4%
Taiwan	2	0.5%	8	0.3%	0	0.0%	10	0.3%
Philippines	0	0.0%	7	0.3%	0	0.0%	7	0.2%
United Kingdom	0	0.0%	5	0.2%	0	0.0%	5	0.2%
Canada	1	0.3%	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	3	0.1%
China	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%
Total:	368	100.0%	2,596	100.0%	1*	100.0%	2,965	100.0%

*Social Work Qualification not a requirement for RSSP.

Demographic Profile of Accredited Professionals

i. By Sex

Consistent with previous years, there were more females than males across all accreditation categories.

Table 5a: Number and Percentage of Accredited Professionals by Sex

Sex	RSW-P		RSW		RSSP		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	103	28%	611	24%	18	27%	732	24%
Female	265	72%	1,985	76%	49	73%	2,299	76%
Total:	368	100%	2,596	100%	67	100%	3,031	100%

ii. By Age Groups

In 2024, the age of accredited professionals ranged from 22 to 78 years old, with a mean age of 39 years old and median age of 37 years old.

Table 5b: Mean and Median Age of Accredited Professionals by Accreditation Categories

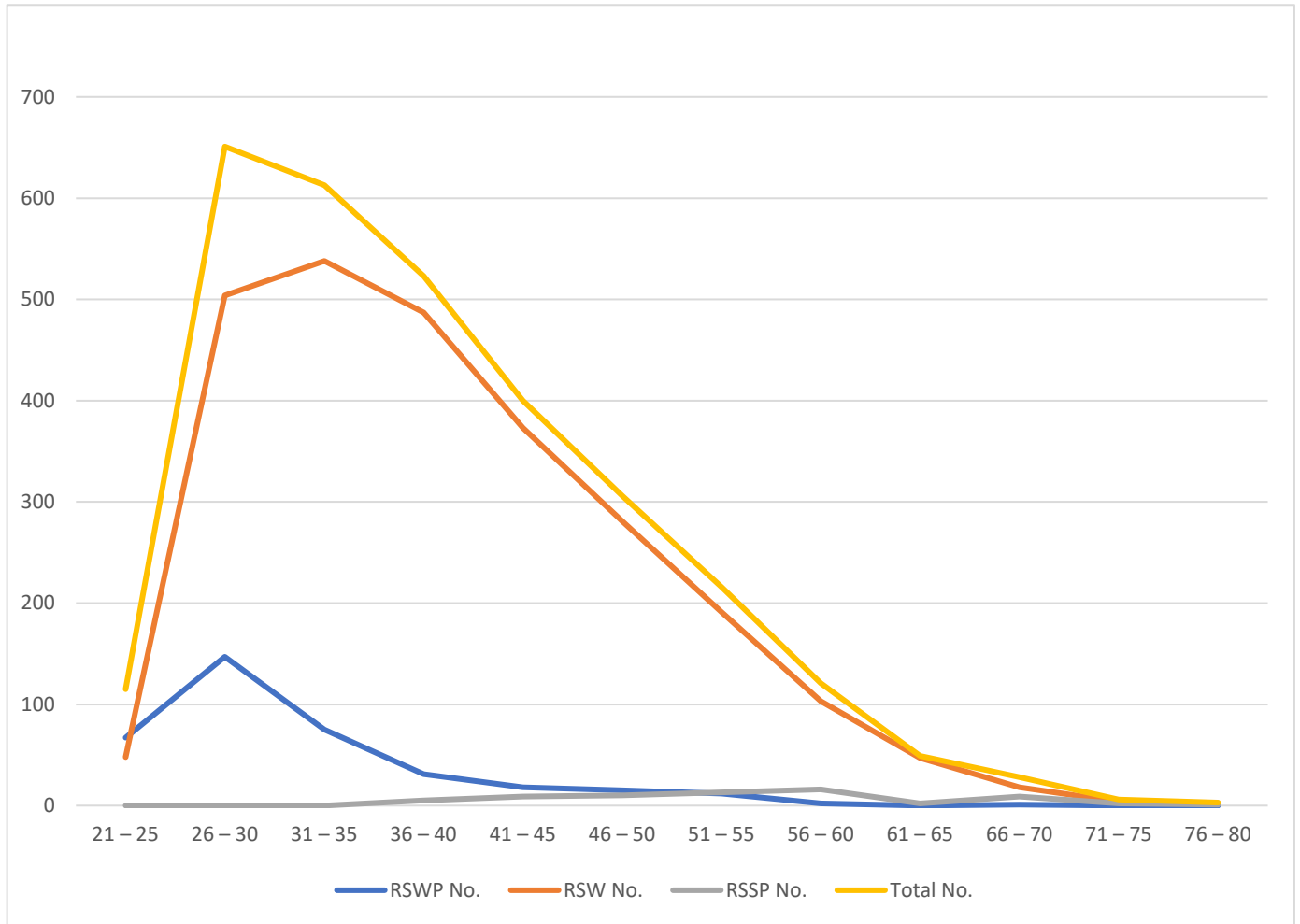
	RSW-P	RSW	RSSP	Overall
Mean Age	32	39	54	39
Median Age	29	38	53	37

Consistent with the criteria for each accreditation categories, RSW-Ps tend to be younger than RSWs and RSSPs tended to be older. Most RSW-Ps were in their twenties, while the largest group of RSWs was in their thirties and RSSPs in their fifties.

Table 5c: Number and Percentage of Accredited Professionals by Age Group and Accreditation Categories

Age Group	RSW-P		RSW		RSSP		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
21 – 25	67	18.2%	48	1.8%	0	0.0%	115	3.8%
26 – 30	147	39.9%	504	19.4%	0	0.0%	651	21.5%
31 – 35	75	20.4%	538	20.7%	0	0.0%	613	20.2%
36 – 40	31	8.4%	487	18.8%	5	7.5%	523	17.3%
41 – 45	18	4.9%	373	14.4%	9	13.4%	400	13.2%
46 – 50	15	4.1%	281	10.8%	10	14.9%	306	10.1%
51 – 55	12	3.3%	191	7.4%	13	19.4%	216	7.1%
56 – 60	2	0.5%	103	4.0%	16	23.9%	121	4.0%
61 – 65	0	0.0%	47	1.8%	2	3.0%	49	1.6%
66 – 70	1	0.3%	18	0.7%	9	13.4%	28	0.9%
71 – 75	0	0.0%	4	0.2%	2	3.0%	6	0.2%
76 – 80	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	1	1.5%	3	0.1%

All three accreditation categories had a positively skewed age distribution. 62.8% of accredited professionals were aged 40 and below and only 13.9% of accredited professionals were aged above 50.

Chart 2: No. of Accredited Professionals by Age Group and Accreditation Categories

iii. By Citizenship

In 2024, 96% of accredited professionals were Singapore Citizens, 3% were Singapore Permanent Residents and 1% were foreigners.

Table 5d: Number and Percentage of Accredited Professionals by Citizenship

Citizenship	RSW-P		RSW		RSSP		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Singapore Citizen	361	98%	2493	96%	62	93%	2916	96%
Singapore Permanent Resident	3	1%	82	3%	5	7%	90	3%
Foreign Citizen	4	1%	21	1%	0	0%	25	1%
Total:	368	100.0%	2,596	100.0%	67	100.0%	3,031	100.0%*

Almost half (43.5%) of the 115 accredited professionals who were not Singapore Citizens were Malaysians. 20.9% were from China and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. There were also significant number of accredited professionals who were citizens of India, Philippines and Taiwan.

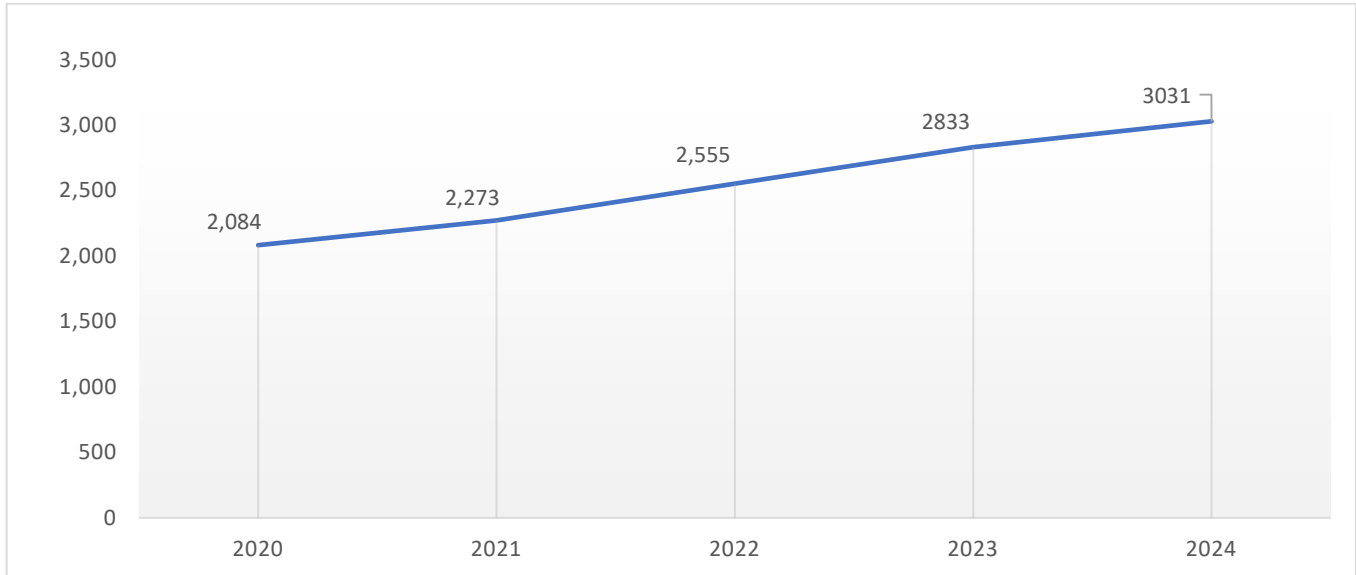
Table 5e: Citizenship of Accredited Professionals who were Singapore Permanent Residents and Foreigners

Citizenship	Singapore Permanent Residents				Foreigners				Total	%
	RSW-P	RSW	RSSP	Subtotal	RSW-P	RSW	RSSP	Subtotal		
America	0	2	0	2	1	1	0	2	4	3.5%
Australia	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%
Canada	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0.9%
China	0	7	0	7	0	3	0	3	10	8.7%
Germany	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%
Hong Kong	0	8	0	8	0	6	0	6	14	12.2%
India	0	8	1	9	0	5	0	5	14	12.2%
Indonesia	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	3	2.6%
Macau	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0.9%
Malaysia	2	43	4	49	0	1	0	1	50	43.5%
Philippines	0	3	0	3	0	4	0	4	7	6.1%
Portugal	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0.9%
Taiwan	1	5	0	6	1	0	0	1	7	6.1%
Vietnam	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0.9%
Total	3	81	5	90	4	21	0	25	115	100.0%

Accreditation Status in the Past Five Years

The total number of accredited professionals has been increasing over the years. The number of accredited professionals in 2024 was the highest since the inception of the accreditation system in 2009. From 2023 to 2024, the year-over-year (YOY) increase is 7%. The total number of accredited professionals increased by 45.4% from 2,084 accredited professionals as of 31 December 2020 to 3,031 in 2024.

Chart 3: Number of Accredited Professionals from 2020 to 2024



The number of accredited professionals who did not renew their accreditation but were within the renewal grace period of three years decreased by 2.8% from 574 in 2023 to 558 in 2024. Key reasons indicated for not renewing accreditation status included retirement and no longer in the sector. The number of accredited professionals who did not renew their accreditation status after the renewal grace period of three years and were archived is 1,197 as of 31 December 2024.

In 2024, 30 previously accredited professionals whose records were archived re-applied for accreditation as RSW.

Table 6: Accreditation Status as from 2020 to 2024

Status	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Accredited	2,084	2,273	2,555	2,833	3,031
Not Renewed*	696	596	540	574	558
Archived**	560	761	899	1,027	1,197
Not Approved	36	37	37	39	40

Note: Figures are as of 31 December of each year.

**These are members who have yet to renew their accreditation within the grace period of 3 years.*

*** These are members who have lapsed their 3 years grace period for renewal.*

Retention Rates in the Past Five Years

The overall retention was 82% in 2023. The retention rates for RSW-P increased while that for RSSP decreased from 2022 to 2023.

Table 7: Retention Rates of Accredited Professionals from 2019 to 2023

Accreditation Category	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
RSW-P	73%	73%	76%	79%	75%	75%
RSW	80%	82%	86%	86%	87%	84%
RSSP	68%	79%	72%	69%	68%	71%
Overall	77%	81%	84%	85%	85%	82%

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

In 2024, Accreditation Secretariat received and handled four cases of feedback on concerns related to practice matters. The cases were presented to the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) for investigation and assessment.

Out of the four cases, one was an individual who was neither accredited nor a member of the Singapore Association of Social Workers, hence the complainant was advised to refer their complaint directly to the management of the agency. Two cases were found to have no merit and were accordingly dismissed. In the final case, the complaint was withdrawn by the complainant.

CONTACT OF ACCREDITATION SECRETARIAT

For any further information or enquiry, please contact the Accreditation Secretariat at the following:

Email: accreditation@sasw.org.sg

Telephone: 6778 7922