

80 people, 20 teams lauded at Healthcare Humanity Awards



Retired hawker Joo Yeow Sing, 70, with his individual award for compassion at the Healthcare Humanity Awards ceremony at The Clifford Pier on Nov 6. The part-time community care associate helped a woman regain independence after 17 years of isolation. ST PHOTO: KEVIN LIM

They include retiree who helped a woman get back on her feet after years of isolation

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Mr Joo Yeow Sing, a part-time community care associate who helped a woman regain independence after 17 years of isolation, was among 100 individuals and teams that received the Healthcare Humanity Award in 2025.

The 70-year-old worker at Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu-Chi Foundation (Singapore), who won the award in the compassion category, met the woman in 2023 and made repeated home visits to build rapport with her. He listened patiently and empathised with the mental stresses she faced as she lived with and depended on her mother.

It was a journey of more than nine months for Mr Joo, a retired hawker who says he likes to prepare treats like muah chee (glutinous rice flour snack) and rojak to take with him when he comforts grieving seniors or befriends lonely individuals.

The woman, now 42, is close to achieving full independence and works part-time at a Tzu-Chi centre.

The Healthcare Humanity Awards (HHA), which began in

2004, celebrate extraordinary individuals and teams whose actions reflect the deepest values of care. There were 77 recipients in 2024.

President Tharman Shanmugaratnam, patron-in-chief of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS), presented the awards to the 2025 recipients at a ceremony held at The Clifford Pier on Nov 6.

“Our healthcare professionals meet people when they are down and help them find strength again. It is deeply human work. Our award recipients reflect a true calling, of caring and serving selflessly,” he said in a press release.

The 80 individual and 20 team recipients span the full spectrum of Singapore’s health landscape – from hospitals and homes to the heart of the community – in award categories of resilience, compassion, dedication and selflessness for individuals, and collaboration for the teams.

They include compassion award winner Nur Aliza Kamsan, 38, a nurse manager at National University Hospital, who quietly returned to the hospital after work hours to create hand and foot moulds of a baby in palliative care for the grieving parents to keep as a final memory.

Other recipients exemplify the

resilience of healthcare professionals who continue to serve amid significant challenges.

Ms Kamilah Mohamed Tohar, 41, a medical technologist at Parkway Laboratory Services, had soldiered on with her work despite a diagnosis of metastatic breast cancer. She died less than a week ago, on Nov 1. Her brother collected the award on her behalf to loud applause.

Ms Chia Yiwen Yvonne, 36, a senior medical informatics analyst at National University Health System, has a severe autoimmune condition that involves frequent episodes of high fever and often requires hospitalisation.

Yet she has achieved much at work, including spearheading a referral project that significantly reduced patient waiting times for specialist care.

The awards organiser, MOH Holdings, said that these accounts, among many others, remind people that healing extends far beyond technical expertise to encompass

everyday moments of understanding, dignity, and human connection.

Dr Wong Chin Jung, 45, a senior consultant in rehabilitation medicine at Tan Tock Seng Hospital who won an award under the dedication category, led the development of Singapore’s first community-based cancer rehab clinic.

When the Singapore Cancer Society Rehabilitation Centre was launched in 2016 to plug the gap in outpatient rehabilitation services, it did not have any doctor-led service, only services such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

In 2018, Dr Wong helped develop a doctor-led programme there. He continues to see patients weekly under the programme.

“As a doctor, I can customise the patients’ rehab programmes on the go when they develop new symptoms,” he said.

This means that patients who experience a new onset of back pain, for instance, do not need to go back

to the healthcare system to get the help they need before resuming their rehab.

“We’re trying to streamline it for cancer patients, because care is expensive, time is a premium and patients are very fatigued.”

In the selflessness award category was Dr Bhavani Sriram, 66, the clinical lead of MindSG, a non-profit organisation that supports persons with intellectual disabilities and their families, who makes regular home visits to these individuals who cannot easily access care in traditional settings.

She was recognised for her willingness to go beyond her formal role, including drafting personalised care plans and following up with caregivers on weekends.

Another recipient in the same category was Dr Sung Min, 56, a senior consultant in developmental psychiatry at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH), who has worked tirelessly to improve autism care.

In 2000, she switched to working

part-time after her son, now 30, was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). That did not stop the senior consultant from establishing autism services at IMH in 2006 and pioneering clinical programmes that now support many families, when she noticed the gap in mental health support for children with ASD.

The teams that won included the Singapore Emergency Medical Team that treated over 1,800 casualties in a disaster zone in Myanmar, and KK Women’s and Children’s Hospital’s Project Restore that has supported around 2,000 women who experienced sexual assault and pregnancy-related losses, since its launch in October 2022.

The Project Restore team, which comprises six clinical psychologists, has ensured that these women have faster access to psychological care and improved mental health outcomes.

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