



# Professionalising & upskilling of Specialist Clinic Assistants through



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## INTRODUCTION

The WSQ project is a joint partnership between HR and the *Division of Speciality and Ambulatory Services (SAS)*.

### What is Healthcare Support WSQ?

- ❑ The Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) is a national skills training system developed by the healthcare industry with the **Workforce Development Agency (WDA)**.
- ❑ It trains, develops, assesses and recognises individuals for the key competencies needed in the healthcare industry.
- ❑ It provides useful pathways for staff interested in career progression and mobility in the healthcare industry as it allows them to upgrade their qualifications.



## OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project is to provide continuing education and skills upgrading opportunity for all **Specialist Clinic Assistants (SCAs)** in SAS, increase staff retention and to provide them with better career advancement.



## METHODOLOGY

### 1. Formation of WSQ Workgroup between subject matter experts in SAS and HR in 2008.

The workgroup identified suitable modules in the WSQ Healthcare Competency Map to develop and also established systems to govern all WSQ training and assessment matters.

### 2. Getting KKH to be an Approved Training Organisation (ATO) qualified to conduct WSQ training and assessment.

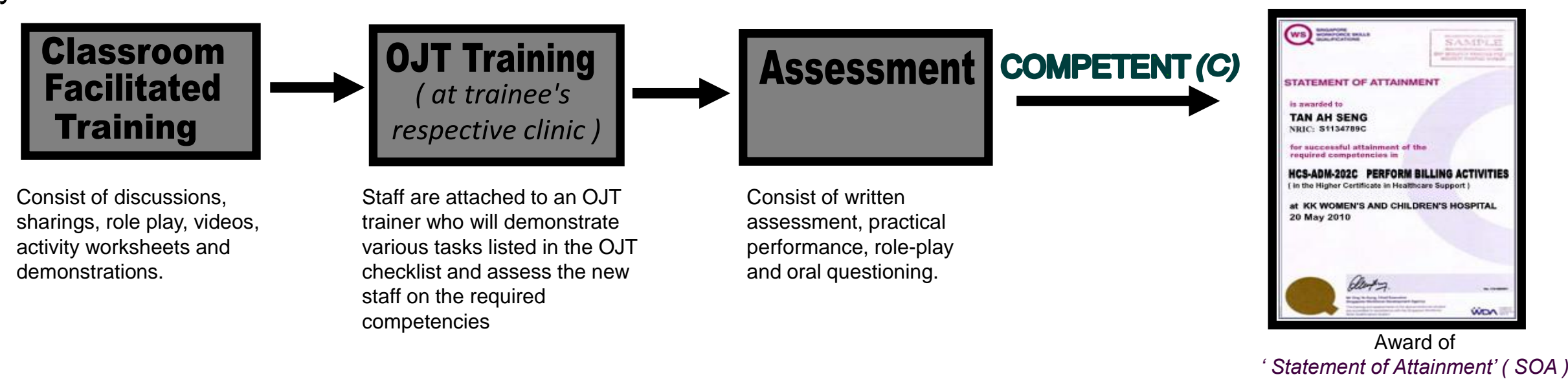
The WSQ workgroup prepared and submitted the relevant documentation to WDA to apply for Organisation Approval and worked at developing the training and assessment curriculum for the first WSQ module for submission to WDA for approval. Existing tasks in the OJT Blueprint were transformed into WSQ modules. The workgroup had to ensure that the curriculum developed was pedagogically sound, aligned and contextualized according to the training and assessment guidelines set by the Workforce Development Agency (WDA) in the competency standards for each module.

ATO status was conferred upon obtaining Organisation Approval and Course Approval.

In addition, WDA required the organisation to have at least 1 staff who is certified in **'Advanced Certificate in Training and Assessment (ACTA)'** competencies to be the Master Developer, Trainer and Assessor for WSQ. Belverie went through 6 ACTA modules to be ACTA certified as a WSQ developer, trainer and assessor.

### 3. Training and Assessment Framework

6 WSQ modules were developed. Each module developed followed a structured training methodology which consisted of the following components. Staff who are between 6 months and 1 year in service go through this Train and Assess pathway in WSQ:



### 4. Tackling resistance in Nurse Managers and SCAs in rolling out a new programme

As the WSQ programme required staff to pass a modular assessment, it inevitably created stress among the SCAs. It was also a time-consuming process as the assessments were conducted on a one-to-one basis in a real-time clinic setting. There was no assessment required in the previous OJT Blueprint. The Nurse Managers (NMs) were concerned on the greater time involvement. Roadshows were conducted during the divisions' management meetings to inform and educate the NMs and SCAs on the programme and address their concerns.

### 5. Systems were developed to manage training and assessment activities to ensure effectiveness.

- ❑ System to ensure PDCA for training and assessment is implemented regularly;
- ❑ System to profile learners;
- ❑ Adult Educator Management System to ensure most qualified adult educators are recruited, trained, developed, monitored and appraised in their performance;
- ❑ System for appeal and non-competence in performance for learners;
- ❑ System to ensure accurate and timely submission of assessment results.

As an ATO, we are expected to pursue continuous improvement to uplift the quality of the training and assessment. WDA periodically validates the internal quality assurance system and capability of each ATO's system through the **'Continuous Improvement Review (CIR)'** audit.

### Moments of Learning



Classroom Facilitated Training



OJT Training for the module 'Prepare Clinic for Services'



Briefing of OJT Trainers



Briefing of WSQ Adult Educators and Nurse Managers

### 6. Senior staff with potential were selected and groomed to be WSQ Adult Educators (Trainers, Assessors and Developers)

WDA requires all WSQ Adult Educators to attain the relevant ACTA qualifications in order to competently function as WSQ trainers, assessors and developers. Pre-ACTA course briefings, Pre-ACTA Assessor briefings, Pre-ACTA Trainer briefings were conducted for the WSQ AEs identified for the different roles to guide them to attain the relevant ACTA qualifications. Some of the staff were identified for multiple roles. Subsequently, they underwent structured coaching and mentoring sessions designed to develop their capabilities to be competent in their roles.

### 7. Annual Appreciation sessions are organised for the Adult Educators

Purpose:

- ❑ To celebrate achievements for the past year
- ❑ To share new developments and best practices
- ❑ To clarify any misconceptions and challenges faced in their roles
- ❑ To share on the upcoming year's workplan
- ❑ Provide the opportunity to network, interact and learn from one another



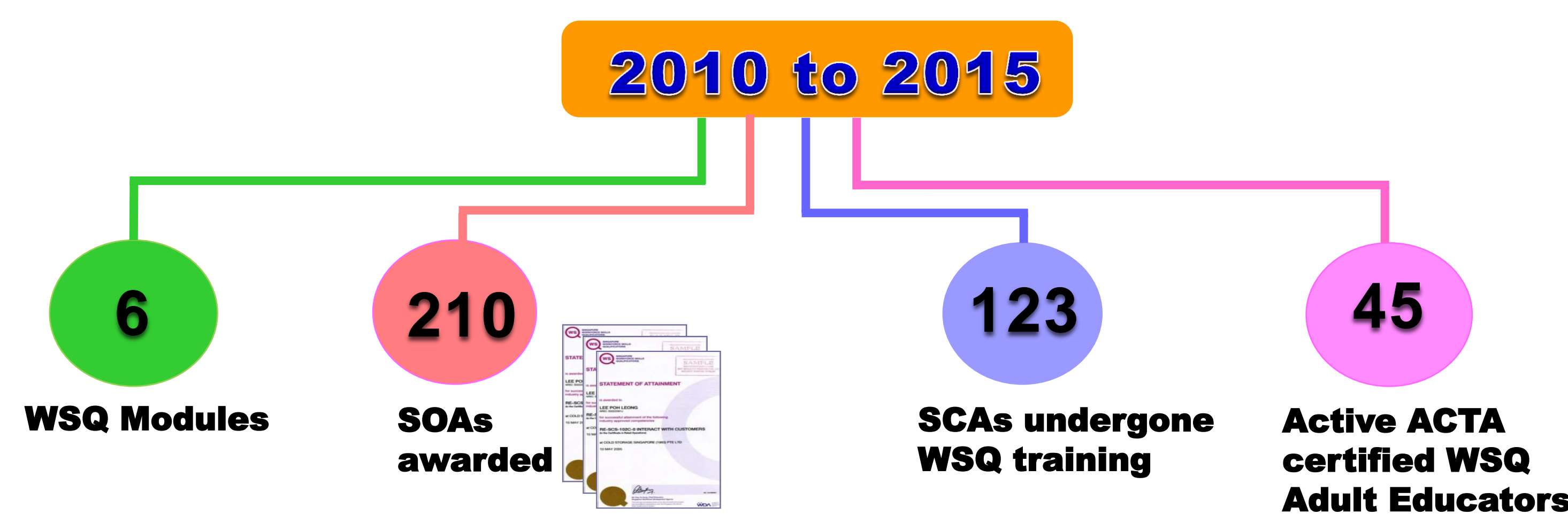
WSQ Adult Educators' Appreciation Session

## RESULTS



### Only WSQ in-house ATO\* in the Healthcare sector (Since 2009)

\*ATO = Approved Training Organisation



## CONCLUSION

Outcome: Win-win benefit for both staff and organisation



#### For Staff

- ❑ WSQ qualifications are nationally recognised, quality assured credentials benchmarked against industry-established work standards. Assessment and certification are competency based and it recognises prior work experience and skills acquired. There is no pre-requisites in academic qualifications to be eligible. It provides skills upgrading and career progression pathways for SCAs to upgrade their qualifications to progress in their careers to be Section Leaders and Operations Executives.
- ❑ SCAs who are 35 years and older and earning not more than \$1,900 a month also benefits from the monetary rewards WDA awards them under the **'Workfare Training Support Scheme (WTS)'**. All eligible staff will receive cash rewards of \$200 for every 2 WSQ modules completed up to a cap of \$400 a year.
- ❑ Attaining the ACTA qualification gives the Adult Educators a sense of achievement as it adds to their skill sets, increases their job satisfaction and enhances their chances of promotion.

#### For Organisation

- ❑ The vigorous, structured training and assessment optimised the acquirement of relevant workplace competencies leading to an increase confidence to perform tasks. SCAs whose probation had been extended due to weak performance, saw a marked improvement on tasks like performing registration, making appointment for patients, billing and preparing the clinic for services.
- ❑ Service delivery to patients was enhanced due to more competent staff and it was one of the contributing factors that helped the Division steadily improve its customer satisfaction ratings. There was an increase in compliments and a drop in complains from patients.

#### Looking Ahead...

- ❑ The WSQ team is currently in discussions with WDA to recognise the competencies of existing staff with more than two years of experience through the **'Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)'** system. Through the RPL mode, staff will be awarded the WSQ Statements of Attainment (SOA) without having to go through the training and assessment.
- ❑ In addition, the WSQ team is working with institutes of higher learning to see how they can recognise WSQ qualifications as part of the entry requirements into their Diploma or Degree programmes.