

Annex 4: HSWG's recommendations to the ERC Human Capital Subcommittee

Recommendations for Developing the Healthcare Services Industry

Foreign nurses

1. Singapore relies heavily on foreign sources for nursing talent. About 30% of our nurses are foreigners. 80% to 90% of them are in Singapore under a Q2 pass. This is because their salaries are usually below \$2,500, the minimum income criteria of \$2,500 for a Q1 pass.
2. Healthcare providers have observed a strong tendency for nurses to migrate to the US or Europe after working and receiving training in Singapore for a few years. This is mainly because they are unable to obtain a Q1 pass to allow their families to live in Singapore too, whereas they are able to bring their families with them to the US and Europe. Thus the current policy results in Singapore becoming a transit point for foreign nurses.
3. The Healthcare Services Working Group proposes to waive the minimum income criteria for foreign nurses who have been trained in Singapore for a period of time are certified by approved healthcare institutions (e.g. hospitals). This is because the nursing profession is in high demand worldwide, making them highly mobile but are paid relatively low wages because of the industry structure. As a safeguard, the Q1 pass could be conditioned upon the nurses' spouse being employed. This would help to retain trained nursing talent.

Allied health workers

1. Foreign paramedical professionals (e.g. radiographers, physiotherapists) may be employed in Singapore only on a Q1 pass, i.e. they must meet the minimum income criteria of \$2,500. In addition, for work pass applications by foreign paramedical professionals who fall within a list of professions specified by MOH, MOM would refer the applications to MOH for vetting.
2. We understand that MOH is currently exploring with MOM on the establishment of a Q2 pass category for Allied Health workers who have the necessary qualifications.
3. The Healthcare Services Working Group further proposes that MOM allows MOH to delegate the vetting authority for the work pass applications to approved healthcare institutions, who are the prospective employers of these foreign paramedical professionals. This is to facilitate the process of recruiting foreigners to mitigate the shortage of local Singapore talents in these fields.

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