



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dementia Colabs

Towards a dementia-inclusive
Singapore

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2021

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Context

Dementia in Singapore

- There are 92,000 people estimated to be living with dementia in Singapore. Although dementia is not an inevitable part of ageing, it is progressive in nature and is due to a variety of diseases and injuries that affects the brain. This impacts one's ability to remember, think, perceive and behave.
- With the increased life expectancy and the rapidly ageing population in Singapore, this number is expected to increase to 152,000 by 2030.
- There is no one-size-fits-all approach for dementia as each person living with dementia (PLWD) and caregiver's experience is distinct with unique challenges.
- Dementia progresses differently for PLWDs at different stages, which brings about challenges to adapt to a rapidly deteriorating condition. Caring for PLWDs is labour-intensive and costly, and caregivers are often overwhelmed by the variety of services and are at risk of burnout .
- Despite this, navigating the dementia space need not be a lonely and helpless journey. There are many stories of PLWDs living their lives fully by discovering meaning and dignity, retaining a sense of connection, and living fully as part of society.
- With the right support from the community at large, and a seamless integration between healthcare and social systems, we can come together to create a dementia-inclusive Singapore.



Difficulties Living with Dementia



CAREGIVERS

INCREASED ANXIETY

Caregivers of PLWDs reported significantly higher levels of distress and psychological problems as compared with caregivers of people without dementia (e.g. cancer clients).

FEELINGS OF EMBARRASSMENT

30% of caregivers said they feel embarrassed while tending to their loved ones in public, while more than 10% feel that others around them “seem awkward”.

HIGH COST OF CARE

Caring for PLWDs is labour-intensive and costly. Dementia care costs 40% more than basic social and day care maintenance (Ho, 2018). Ironically, caregivers often have to leave their jobs and struggle with the loss of income. Caregiving costs and processes also become more demanding as the condition worsens.

TOO MANY SERVICES

Caregivers often assume their role overnight once their loved ones are diagnosed. They often feel overwhelmed when navigating the complex landscape of schemes and programs (Ho, 2018). Additionally, the split between healthcare and social care makes it challenging to receive holistic services for PLWDs.

COPING WITH CHANGES IN CRISIS

The many COVID restrictions disrupt the fixed routines that many PLWDs live by. This puts them at an even higher risk due to their inability to comprehend or follow changing public health information.

FREQUENT CARE

56% of PLWDs reported that they need frequent care compared to 2% of seniors who do not have dementia.



PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA [PLWD]

FEELINGS OF REJECTION

72% of PLWDs feel loneliness and rejection. Half of them feel that they are unable to openly share their condition with others. Over 56% feel that people treat them as less competent.

LACK OF AWARENESS AND WAYS TO HELP

Non-PLWDs reported discomfort when interacting with PLWDs, with almost 44% feeling frustrated with not knowing how to help.



PUBLIC

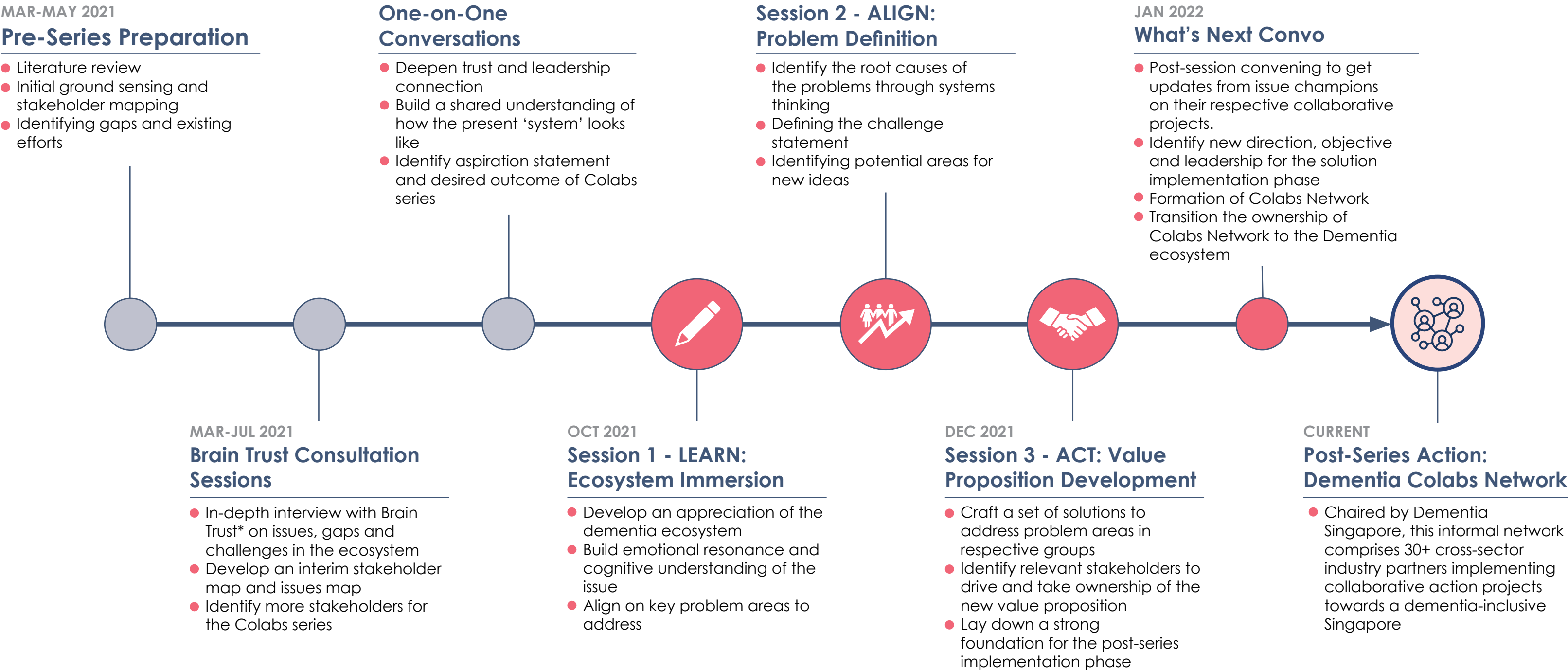
Source: Institute of Mental Health (2015), Singapore Management University (2019)

Dementia Colabs Series: Aspiration Statement

*How might we **create**
a whole-of-society
response for a
dementia-inclusive
Singapore?*



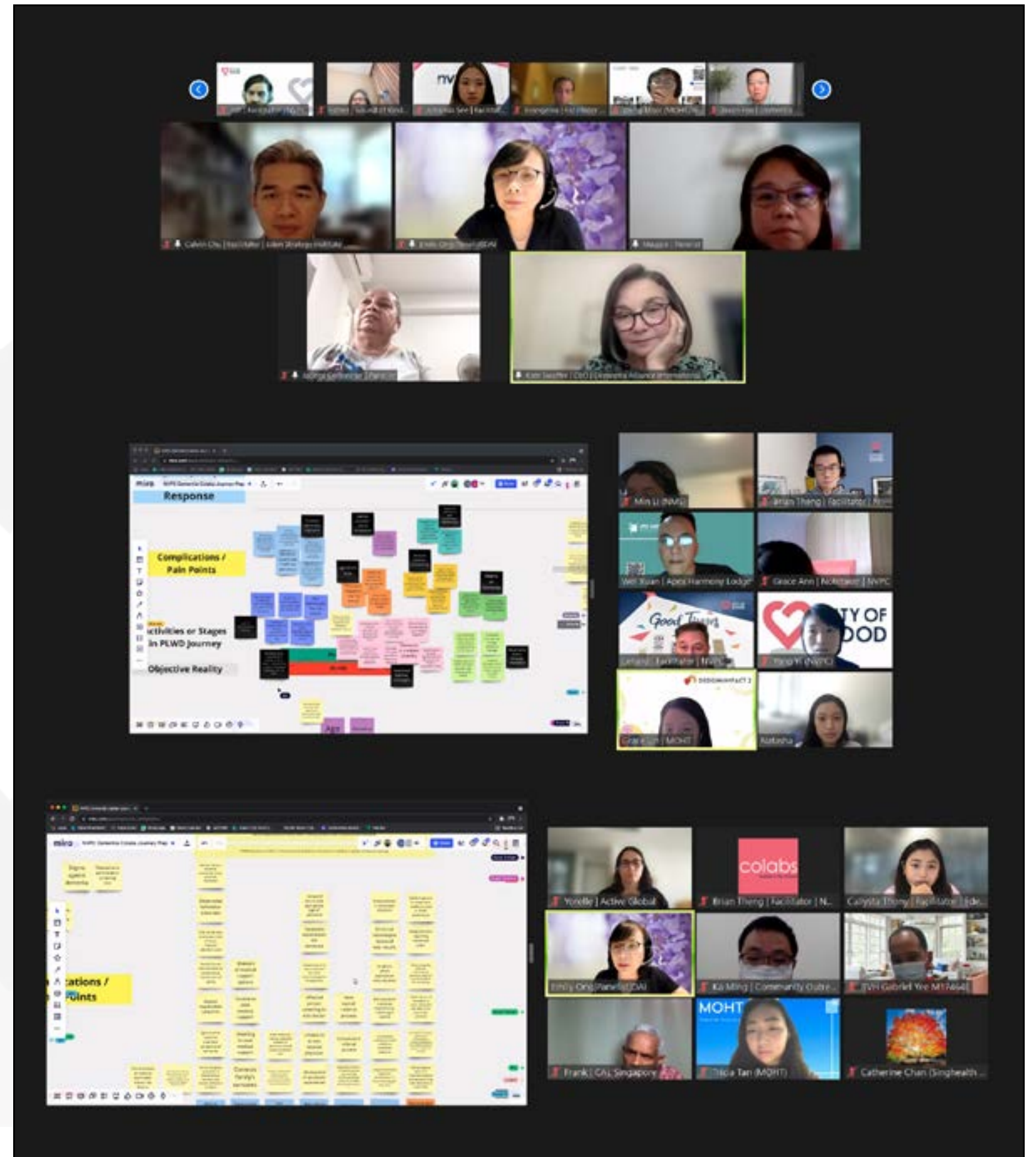
Milestones



*Brain Trust: A core group of key stakeholders with a deep interest in the dementia ecosystem.

Design & Approach

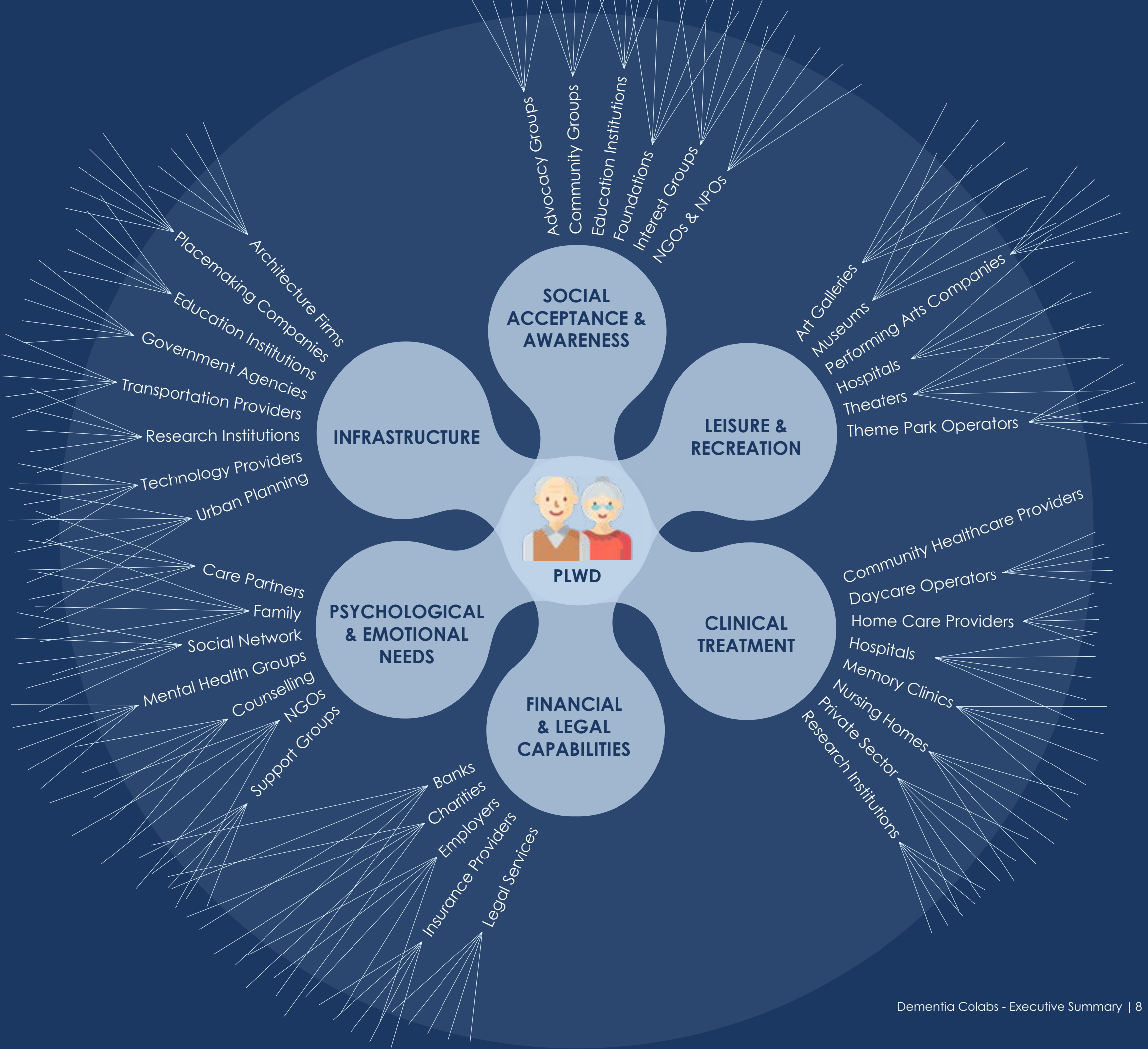
- **A Fragmented Landscape.** The Dementia space in Singapore is saturated with many players, leading to duplication of efforts and ineffective resource allocation.
- **A Neutral Middle Ground.** Dementia Colabs is envisioned as a common ground for various stakeholders who impact and are impacted by dementia to learn from each other, align their efforts, and identify collaborative action opportunities.
- **Learn, Align, Act.** The Colabs model focuses on the journey of common learning and discovery which comes about from seeding empathy, engaging cognitively and building community.
- **Bringing The Whole System Into The Room.** Moving beyond health and social perspectives, hearing from more non-traditional voices such as from the arts and urban environment spaces provides new perspectives and allows for a more holistic picture to emerge.
- **Nothing About Us, Without Us.** We also strive to engage PLWDs and caregivers throughout the journey, from providing lived perspectives, decision making, to driving action implementation.
- **Diverse Brain Trust and Participants.** The initiative is co-led by a core group of key stakeholders with a deep interest in the dementia ecosystem, and joined by a wide range of participants.



Stakeholder Map

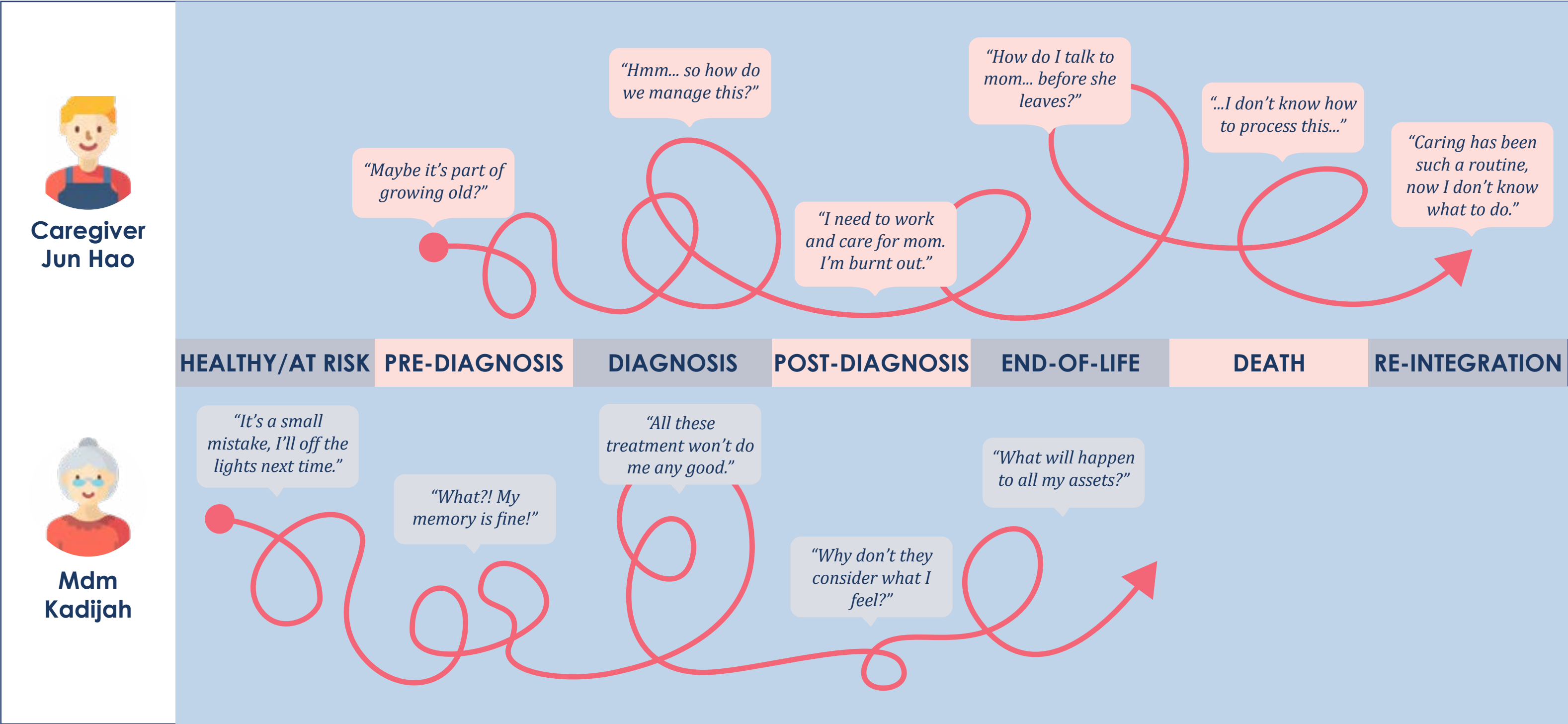
We centered the dementia ecosystem around the PLWDs and explored their six key areas of need. This needs-based framework allows us to explore non-traditional players who may be able to meet PLWD needs and inspire new areas of intervention.

Each player encompasses a range of organisations and institutions.



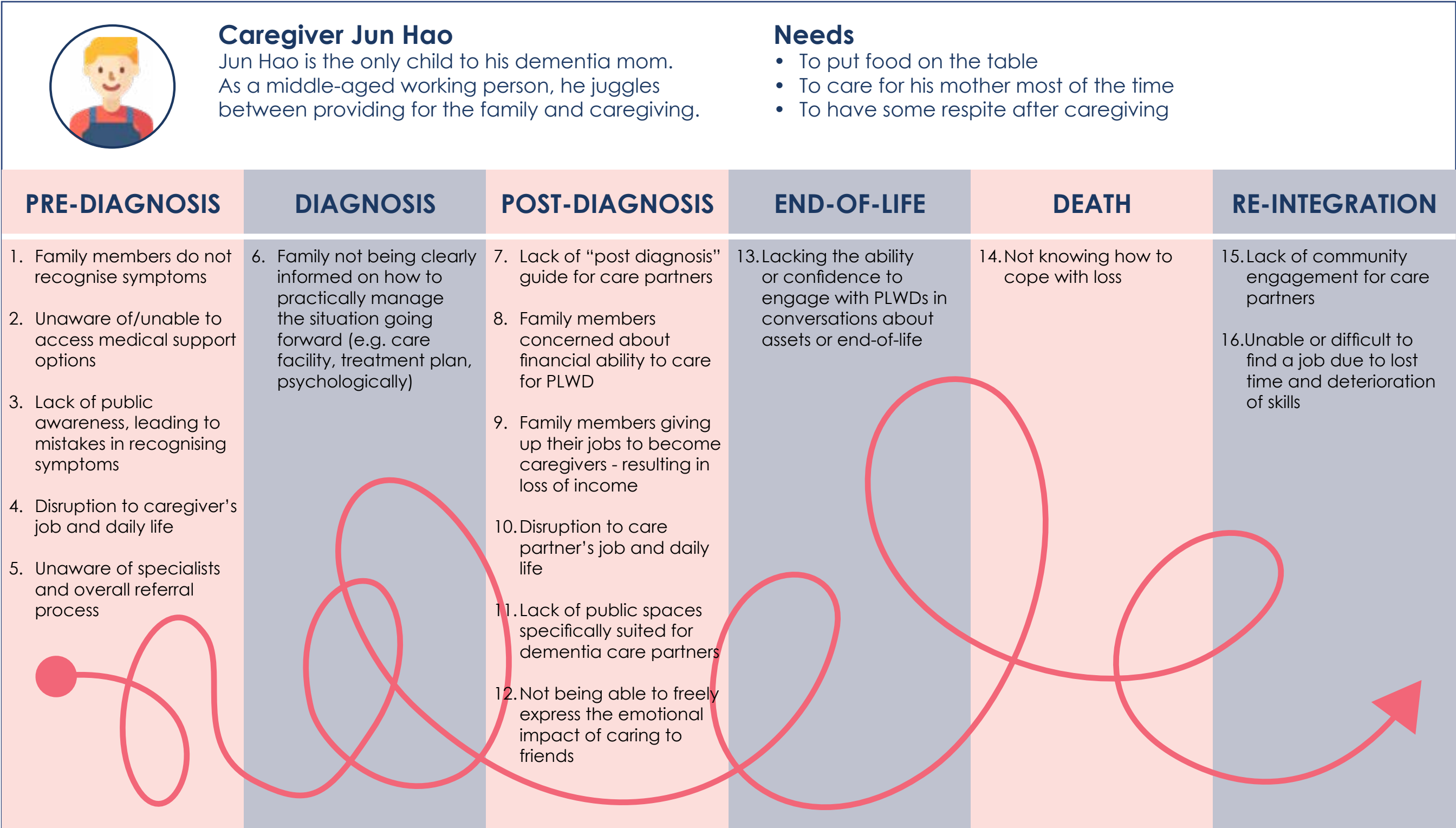
Journey Maps

The following journey maps explore a caregiver's and PLWD's experience in the different dementia stages. Since every caregiver and PLWD's journey is distinct, the following maps are impressions of what one might go through and may not represent their journey entirely. These composite personas are inspired by the stories shared during the Colabs dialogue.



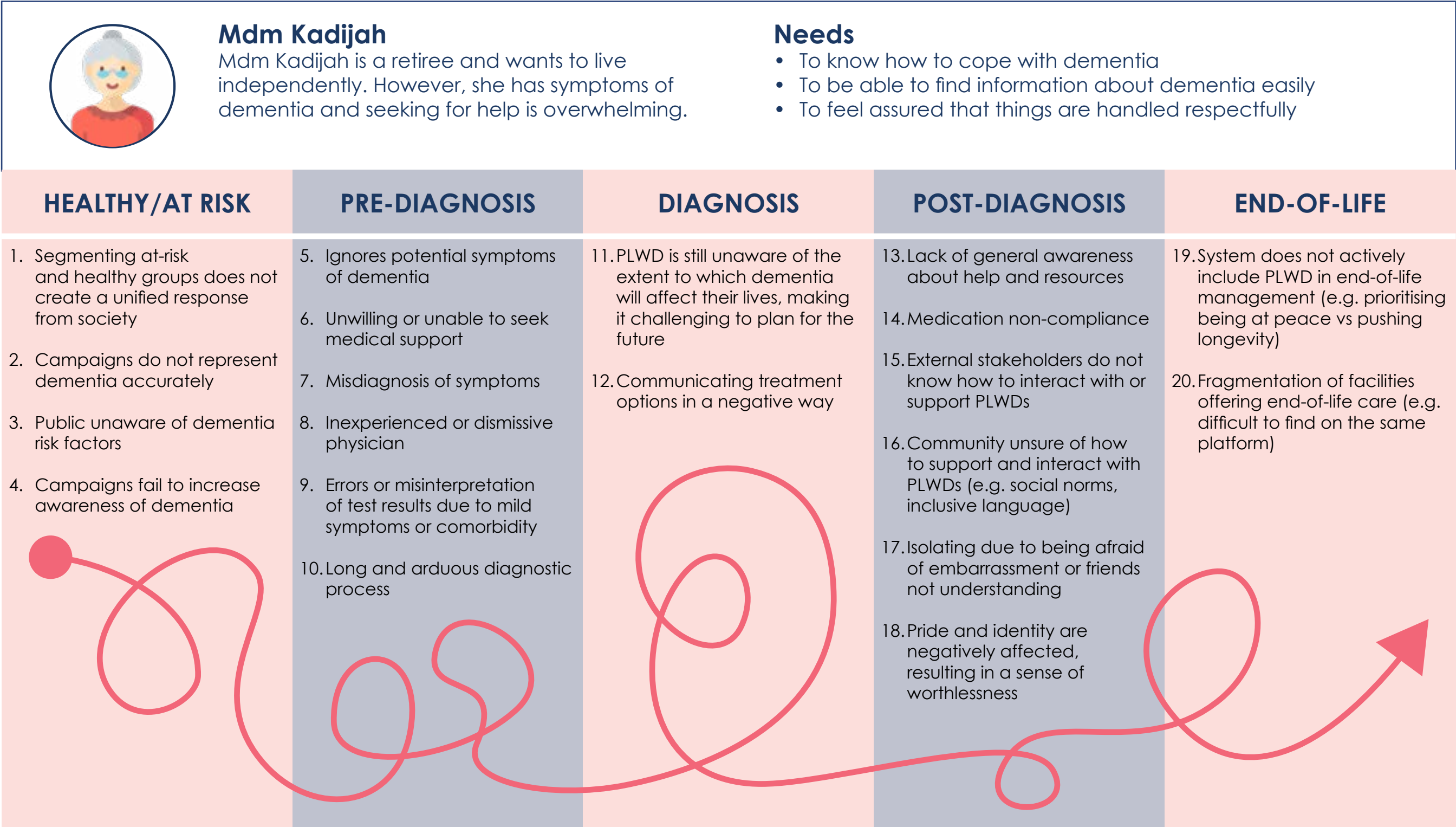
Caregiver's Journey Map

Caregivers for PLWDs will similarly experience challenges throughout the dementia journey, often having to adapt to a major change in their loved one's life and lacking guidance in navigating this process.



PLWD's Journey Map

PLWDs experience a range of key challenges throughout the dementia journey, ranging from misdiagnosis, arduous testing processes, and difficulties navigating post-diagnosis lifestyle changes.



Opportunities and Insights

Through the Colabs sessions, we gathered 7 opportunities and insights which may inspire new approaches and interventions for Singapore's dementia space.



1. Raising Public Understanding

INSIGHT: Ongoing public awareness efforts are sub-optimal due to stigma surrounding dementia



2. Normalising Conversations Around Brain Health

INSIGHT: Broadening dementia conversations to include brain health can help to increase upstream awareness



3. Ramping Up Upstream Work To Target The Undiagnosed-At-Large

INSIGHT: A complex combination of human psyche and social factors hampers accurate diagnosis and early detection of dementia



4. Transforming The Diagnosis Experience

INSIGHT: Diagnosis is a critical moment in the dementia journey that has room to be radically transformed to be more informative, compassionate and empowering.



5. Digitalising Post-Diagnosis Journeys

INSIGHT: Digitalisation pushes the boundaries of care to transform the entire post-diagnosis journey for PLWD and caregivers



6. Exploring Alternative Care Models

INSIGHT: It is key to move from an efficient productivity-centric approach to a more compassionate client-centric care for PLWD



7. Leveraging The Full Range of Community Assets

INSIGHT: A whole-of-society response to dementia means a full integration of PLWD and caregivers into their respective communities



For more detailed opportunities and insights, check out the **Full Report**.

Visions

We synthesised the various insights gleaned from an in-depth understanding of the dementia journey into upstream and downstream challenge statements. In this section we also included recommendations for the ecosystem to take action.

UPSTREAM:

How might we mobilise a more comprehensive, informed, and empathetic community response to dementia?



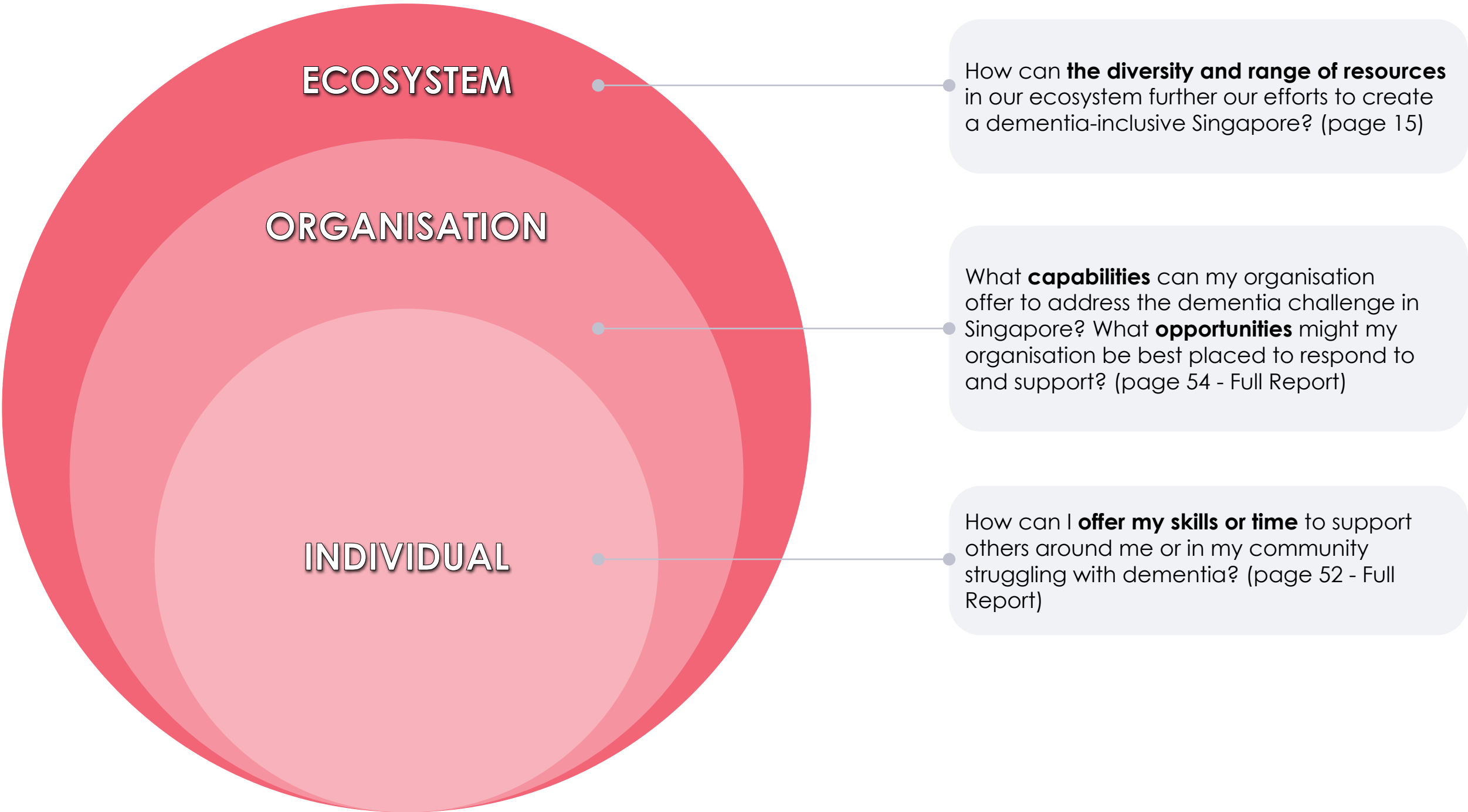
DOWNSTREAM:

Can we re-imagine better planned and seamlessly-integrated, family-centric services and resources for different persons with dementia?

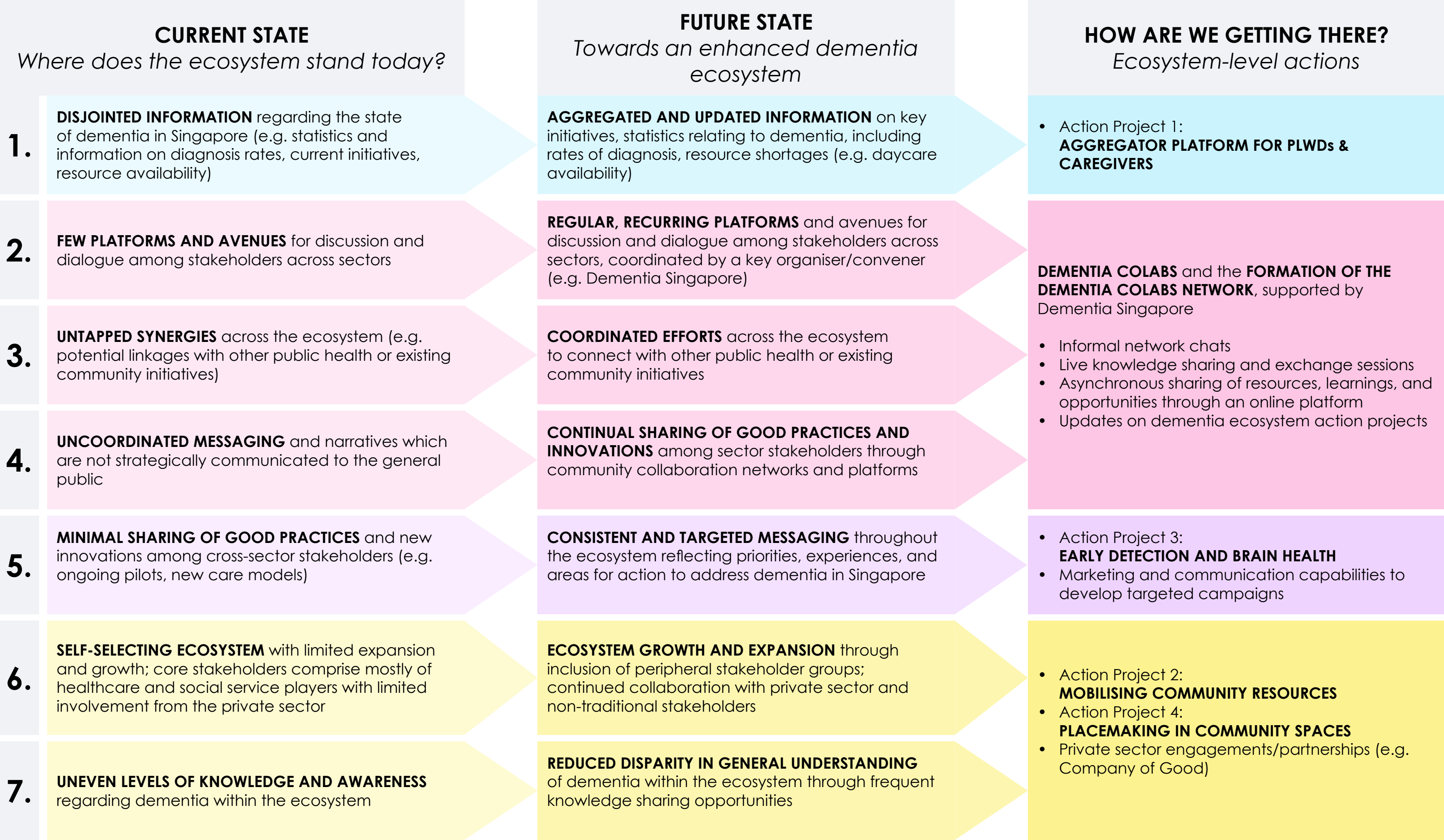


Recommendations

The Dementia Colabs has inspired and unveiled opportunities to take action at the individual, organisational, and ecosystem level.



RECOMMENDATIONS | FOR THE ECOSYSTEM



Action Projects

Inspired by the challenge statements in the multi-stakeholder dialogues, Action Projects were co-created by the Colabs participants in the series. Each project has an issue champion(s) spurring forward action and momentum.

Aggregator Platform for PLWDs & Caregivers

A one-stop platform that helps to address the difficulty that PLWDs and caregivers face in navigating the wide range of resources available to them.

Issue Champion: Dementia Singapore

About the Solution

- To help them gain autonomy and accessibility to the resources, Dementia Singapore is driving 2 initiatives:
 - Dementia Hub: Singapore's one-stop hub for all information and resources related to dementia
 - CARA Membership: a digital platform providing Community, Assurance, Rewards, and Acceptance (CARA) allowing PLWDs and caregivers to access personalised support and benefits



Mobilising Community Resources

Getting whole-of-society support via community programmes using creative expressions to engage PLWDs and community members.

Issue Champions: Enable Asia, Dementia & Co.

About the Solution

- Long term aspiration: For the public to see PLWDs as community assets
- Aims to increase public awareness and understanding of dementia
- Establishing connection between PLWDs and members of the public through creative activities
- Early ideas: Storytelling, arts as a medium to share PLWDs stories
- Engage PLWDs in powerful self-advocacy whilst integrating them with broader communities





Early Detection & Brain Health

Dementia prevention and early detection challenges may be addressed by reframing dementia as part of the broader issue of brain health.

Issue Champion: Savonix

About the Solution

- To reduce stigma and fear of diagnosis, conversations about dementia could be reframed as being around brain health. This is something the public may relate to more easily.
- This could include steps such as:
 - Promoting early awareness of brain health
 - Highlighting lifestyle interventions
 - Linking brain health to general wellness
 - Driving targeted brain health campaigns (e.g. based on age group or health condition)



Placemaking in Community Spaces

Integrating PLWDs and their caregivers into the community via placemaking efforts and purposefully designed community programmes.

Issue Champion: Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD)

About the Solution

- Dementia is a community issue, and interventions need to focus on PLWDs and caregivers as part of their broader community.
- Community and built environment designs are leverage points for efforts in placemaking, programming, and intergenerational approaches towards dementia care, which includes:
 - Establishing a central contact point
 - Community design (e.g. ageing in place, participatory placemaking)
 - People-driven services and programmes within communities (e.g. volunteering opportunities)

Other Ongoing Initiatives

Below are some ongoing initiatives and explorations that are happening beyond the Colabs dialogues. If you are keen in supporting or collaborating in the initiatives as a funder, donor, volunteer or sector industry feel free to reach out to these organisations.



ComfortDelGro x Agency for Integrated Care x Dementia Singapore

The joint collaboration between **ComfortDelGro**, **AIC** and **DSG** aims to increase transportation accessibility for PLWDs and their caregivers. This initiative hopes to:

1. Train ComfortDelGro's driver community (of taxis and private buses) in interacting with PLWDs
2. Incorporate Dementia Friends Mobile application and CARA as part of drivers' assistance protocols for MedCare
3. Raise awareness on CDG's specialised transportation services to PLWDs and Caregivers



Agency for Integrated Care x National Library Board

This collaboration aims to make Woodlands library into a more dementia-inclusive space by equipping staff with dementia awareness workshops, curation of NLB resources, providing micro-employment for people with young onset or mild dementia. There are also plans to create a Learning Community in the library with a focus on caregivers and care partners to increase the awareness of dementia. By having NLB as a touchpoint in the community, this enables PLWDs and their caregivers to enjoy the space together.



Care Beyond Walls

This is an ongoing multi-pronged project between **AWWA** and **Lien Foundation** that aims to challenge the boundaries of dementia care centres into a centre-based care for PLWDs through personalised interest-based activities. The project will also offer caregivers a variety of respite care options and will also include a new dementia resource centre for end-to-end support. This space also aims to function as a communal space for social gatherings, health screenings and public education workshops.

Website: <https://www.awwa.org.sg/our-services/seniors/dementia-day-care-centre/>



WHAT YOU CAN DO For Caregivers

Getting Diagnosed Early:

If you suspect your loved one has dementia, getting diagnosed and seeking treatment and intervention early is important. Visiting a family doctor is often the first step. You may also obtain professional diagnosis through a Memory Clinic. You can learn more about the detailed steps through this site.

Website: <https://www.aic.sg/body-mind/get-dementia-diagnosis>

Caregivers Support Network:

Dementia Singapore

Dementia Singapore offers programmes that aim to promote self-care by providing a platform for caregivers to nurture interests, learn skills, and connect with other caregivers. Some of the programmes also touch on topics such as medications in dementia care and managing emotions. They also have programmes that are conducted in English, Mandarin and Malay.

Website: <https://dementia.org.sg/csg/>

Caregivers Alliance

This non-profit organisation offers caregiver-to-caregiver training programmes specifically for caregivers of PLWDs. A fully funded course spanning 8 weeks is available for you to learn how to better care for your loved ones with dementia.

Website: <https://www.cal.org.sg/c2c>

Caregiving Welfare Association (CWA)

In this caregiver support group, caregivers can gain mutual support from other caregivers by sharing their personal experiences in overcoming their struggles and learning from one another through art therapy or a mindfulness-based support group.

Website: <https://www.cwa.org.sg/get-help/caregiver-support-group>

Dementia Care Centres:

Active Global Home & Community Care

Active Global Home & Community is a home and community-based eldercare that delivers personalised client care. Active Global offers specialised care at the senior day care centres in Ghim Moh and Telok Blangah specifically for elderly with dementia and also trains caregivers of PLWDs.

Website: www.activeglobalcaregiver.sg

AWWA

AWWA's Dementia Day Care Centre provides maintenance day care services to clients who have mild to severe dementia. It aims to slow down the deterioration of clients' physical and mental functions, thus delaying the need for institutionalisation.

Website: <https://www.awwa.org.sg/our-services/seniors/dementia-day-care-centre/>

Family of Wisdom by Dementia Singapore

This weekly three-hour enrichment programme is conducted in a small group setting, where PLWDs are grouped according to their stage of dementia, spoken language, age and educational profile. The session provides a continuum of community care for PLWDs who have completed sessional therapy outpatient programmes and are discharged for community care.

Website: <https://dementia.org.sg/fow/>

Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing (HMCSA) by Tsao Foundation

Hua Mei Elder-Centred Programme of Integrated Comprehensive Care was started to help older persons who want to continue living in the community despite their multiple medical conditions, physical frailty and weak family and social support network.

Website: <https://tsaofoundation.org/towards-successful-ageing/hmcsa/centre-based-comprehensive-care>

New Horizon Centres by Dementia Singapore

Dementia Singapore manages and supports the New Horizon Centres, which provides daycare services for people with dementia. The New Horizon Centres at Bukit Batok, Jurong Point, Tampines and Toa Payoh also offer an Early Dementia Programme for those at an early stage of dementia.

Website: <https://dementia.org.sg/nhc/>

St Luke's Hospital

St Luke's Hospital has a specially-designed dementia ward. Members in the multi-disciplinary care team have a passion in dementia care and are trained in the care of persons with dementia and their caregivers.

Website: <https://www.slh.org.sg/service/dementia-care/>

For Organisations & Companies



Environment Audit

- ❑ **Lighting:** Consistent and bright lighting can help PLWDs make sense of the surroundings and reduce the risk of falls.
- ❑ **Noise levels & other external stimulations:** Create a soothing, spacious and familiar environment by using recognisable store signs and relaxing music.
- ❑ **Seating & resting areas:** Create sufficient space to allow PLWDs to choose to be alone or with others.
- ❑ **Signage:** Good enabling signages can guide PLWDs to their destination or provide them with sufficient cues to complete a task.
- ❑ **Walkways & flooring:** Provide well-defined pathways with landmarks and mark out uneven surfaces (i.e. steps, kerbs, etc.)

Support Employees With Dementia

- ❑ Implementing non-discriminatory and inclusive employment practices
- ❑ Educate and advocate for dementia awareness at the workplace
- ❑ Providing flexible working hours and locations to ensure safety
- ❑ Building dementia-friendly spaces in the workplace
- ❑ Provide training and development as a refresher for employees with dementia to perform their tasks.
- ❑ Having peer mentoring for extra guidance and support
- ❑ Practising dementia-informed and non-punitive appraisal process
- ❑ Ensuring compensation and benefits are fair and commensurate with job requirements
- ❑ Respecting employees' time and privacy

Support Employees Who Are Caregivers

- ❑ Having a fair and open employment selection
- ❑ Redesign and adjust jobs that have more flexibility
- ❑ Providing training and development of shared networks where caregivers can support one another
- ❑ Giving equitable compensation and discretionary benefits to caregivers
- ❑ Adopting a deliverable-focused performance management system instead of prioritising face-time within the organisation
- ❑ Providing support to the well-being of employees
- ❑ Creating a safe space for employees to provide feedback on discriminatory practices

To learn more on how you can make your **business dementia-inclusive**, check out the comprehensive toolkit by **Dementia Singapore**:

<https://dementia.org.sg/business-toolkit/>

WHAT YOU CAN DO For The General Public



Building A Pool Of Dementia Friends & Champions

Dementia Friends can be anyone who has been trained to understand the symptoms of dementia. They should be willing to serve as community lookouts and try to assist people with dementia in public situations. This could be creating a communication channel within your neighbourhood or even creating dementia friendly stickers for food stalls that can help to keep a lookout.

Website: <https://www.aic.sg/body-mind/become-dementia-friend>



Creating Intergenerational Programmes

Intergenerational programs offer younger and older generations the opportunity to interact and engage in ways that are beneficial on multiple levels. These programs connect people of varying ages through ongoing activities designed to teach, stimulate, and foster purposeful living. These can be activities that both young and old can participate in. For example, community cooking, playing board games or repairing things together.

Website: <https://www.family-central.sg/intergenerational-learning-programme/>



Crowdfunding for Resources

Resources are always tight in the dementia space. Service providers are often looking to extend more resources to PLWDs and their caregivers. The community can contribute to their efforts by donating funds, medical supplies, food or any donations in-kind to any of the service providers. Volunteering of skills and labour are also of great help!

Check out [Giving.sg](https://giving.sg) to find out how you can give your time or donations to the organisation of your choice.

gi♥ing.sg



Learn about Dementia

Becoming more aware of dementia can be powerful and enabling as we learn more about the conditions, symptoms and how we can assist and communicate with PLWDs. AIC has developed an e-learning module on Dementia to equip the community with essential knowledge and skills. Upon completing the course, you can graduate with a certification of achievement!

Website: <https://www.aic.sg/body-mind/mental-health-elearning>



Volunteer To Provide Caregiver Support

There are several programmes supporting caregivers but most of them are either caregiver support groups or training. However, none of the current programmes focus on the caregivers' own mental well-being. Thus, members of the public can also help to fill this gap by setting up a group or a club with a focus on self-care and promote the well-being of caregivers.

Website: <https://www.giving.sg/>

The KIND Gesture

Everyone can play a part in building a supportive community. Remember the KIND gesture when helping each other:



KEEP A LOOKOUT

Look out for people who show signs and symptoms of dementia



INTERACT WITH PATIENCE

Be friendly and acknowledge their concerns. Reassure them that you are there to help.



NOTICE THEIR NEEDS AND OFFER HELP

Ask for their identification and Next-of-Kin's contact details, with the help of visual clues.



DIAL FOR HELP

Call the Next-of-Kin if possible or bring the person to the nearest dementia Go-To Point for assistance.

Website: <https://dementiafriendly.sg/Home/GuidePre>

This is an Executive Summary of the [full Dementia Colabs report](#) which is available on the Colabs website. The report was released on 5 April 2022.

We would like to thank our Brain Trust members, our partner Eden Strategy Institute, all of our Colabs participants, including organisations and individuals for their contributions towards the Dementia Colabs series, as well as you for reading and learning more about the dementia space in Singapore!

Connect with us:

If you need more information on Colabs, you may visit cityofgood.sg/colabs. Do write in to connect@colabs.sg if you have any questions or would simply like to get in touch.

Together, let us become the City of Good

Towards a



Brought to you by



Together, Because

