

HealthServe ensures optimal support for migrant workers with Zoho Desk

HealthServe Singapore: The Organization

“The numbers don’t matter. What’s important for us is that we have helped every migrant brother who has reached out to us,” said Michael Cheah, the executive director of HealthServe. This is HealthServe’s motto, and it has been since their founding in 2006. HealthServe is an established non-profit organization in Singapore helping low-wage migrant workers with medical care, counselling, casework, social assistance, and other support services.

“In the early days, we were a medical clinic certified by Ministry of Health (MOH) but during our time working with migrant workers, we realized there is a social need that goes beyond just medical care,” said Michael.

INDUSTRY

HOSPITAL &
HEALTH CARE

SIZE

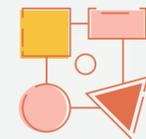
11-50
EMPLOYEES

TYPE

NON-PROFIT



He recalled that it was this need that caused HealthServe to grow from being just a medical clinic to include a casework center. With this addition, they were able to offer more social assistance by supporting migrant workers during injury cases, legal issues, salary disputes, and financial needs. HealthServe had started expanding their horizons.



Next Level of Work

In 2018, HealthServe conducted a survey to understand the broader needs on the ground and Michael realized there was a big chunk of unmet needs in mental and healthcare counselling services for migrant workers. He also added that another study done in Singapore found that an increasing number of migrant workers were committing suicide due to salary stress and related issues.

These findings led HealthServe to begin its first mental health program in 2019. With the support of volunteer psychiatrists, befrienders and counsellors as well as the Institute of Mental Health, hospitals and government agencies, they were able to extend their services to meet the need brought about by the crisis.



The Outbreak & The Swell in Support Cases

With the onset of COVID-19, HealthServe experienced a big spike in the number of incoming calls, with a peak of over 300 a day. “There was a lot of fear and anxiety in the initial days, not knowing what is happening which caused the initial spike and now we are at this stage where people are just trying to figure out when they can go back to work, this is a different kind of anxiety,” said Michael. Overwhelmed with the call volume spike, HealthServe needed a system that could ably manage every call coming in. Having already found viable solutions with Zoho previously, they were confident in starting with Zoho Desk as their help desk platform and were up and running within weeks.

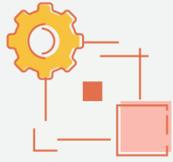




Using Zoho Desk to Accelerate & Personalize Support

“Zoho Desk is something we are using significantly for our counselling team,” Michael said, adding how important it is for the team to be able to log every grievance that comes in and ensure that necessary help is provided. With a small team of three active members, a handful of volunteering psychiatrists, psychologists, and over a hundred volunteers called “befrienders” working in a unified platform, the team is now able to address and resolve the issues of over 200,000 migrant workers.

Every call a migrant worker makes to HealthServe is logged as a ticket in Zoho Desk, and assigned to a team member to review and follow up. The counselling team does a diligent job reviewing each ticket that comes in. The ticket completes its cycle when the counselling team has reached out to the migrant worker who raised the ticket and has charted out a plan that suits the worker and addresses their specific need.

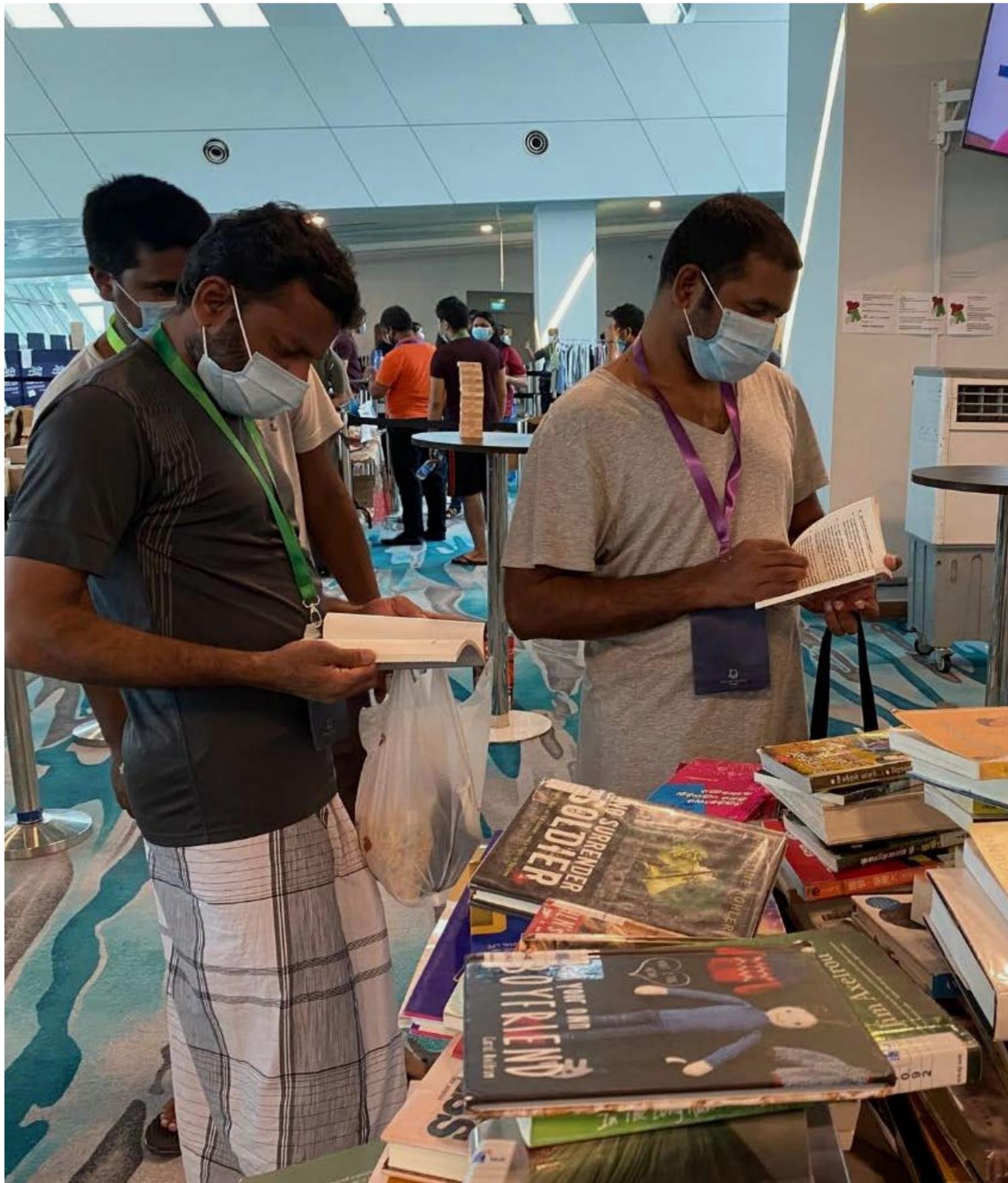


Unifying Communication Across Zoho's Functions

Another important function for the team is to help the migrant worker understand what counselling is all about, how long it will go on, and how often they will be expected to speak with the counsellor so they understand what's involved. Once the discussed plan is finalized with the migrant worker, the ticket is passed on to the case management team.

This team handles each of these cases by checking information in Zoho Desk before migrating the data into their case management system, which they developed using Zoho Creator about a year ago. "We were introduced to Zoho Creator by a friend and we found that it was able to meet our requirements quite well," said Michael. The system stores all appointments, schedules, and case notes for each case manager working with a migrant worker.





Closing a ticket at this stage often takes time and is not immediate. However, Michael said, “It’s not something that worries me because for HealthServe, closing a ticket at this stage is not as important as knowing that every migrant worker who appealed for help has been contacted and helped.”

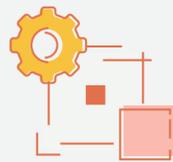


The Impact on Migrants & New Opportunities

Since HealthServe is one of the only non-profit organizations in Singapore providing affordable medical care, the increased number of migrant workers reaching out to them during the COVID-19 pandemic is understandable. Other polyclinics expect migrant workers to pay in foreign currency, which can get as high as a few hundred dollars. HealthServe, with its team of experienced volunteers who have been working with them for over 10 years, was able to treat migrant workers at a minimal charge of \$15 that includes doctor fees and treatment.

“We are growing in terms of the area of service and the number of people we can help. We are also zooming into another group of

people with chronic diseases,” said Michael about HealthServe’s future plans. After working directly for years with migrant workers, especially the most vulnerable of them, HealthServe is now looking to establish a higher reach model. They are knocking on the doors of organizations and collaborating with government agencies to go higher and find ways to reach deeper into society to help more migrant workers.



Continuing the Digital Journey

“The way to get higher reach is through digitization,” says Michael while talking about his plans to collaborate with the ministry and expand the horizons for HealthServe. With a more structured way to attend every grievance that comes from a migrant worker and being able to see through the process until help is provided, HealthServe is now confident to head out for a larger audience. As they get on with their yeoman service to help the migrant workers of Singapore, Zoho is proud to play an integral part in HealthServe’s mission.

