

CULTIVATING A CARING CULTURE IN AN ACADEMIC MEDICAL CLUSTER IN SINGAPORE: WE CARE AS OneNUHS

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INTRODUCTION

The National University Health System (NUHS) is an academic medical cluster in Singapore formed through the integration of four healthcare institutions in 2017. These include the National University Hospital, the Jurong Health Campus, Alexandra Hospital and the National University Polyclinics; each with different historical backgrounds and cultures. This clustering was part of the national exercise to integrate Singapore's public healthcare institutions. NUHS now employs over 14,000 staff serving the health needs of the Western sector of Singapore. Following its formation, NUHS developed a clear vision, mission and set of core values. It then went on to establish a OneNUHS identity as well as to define and cultivate its culture.

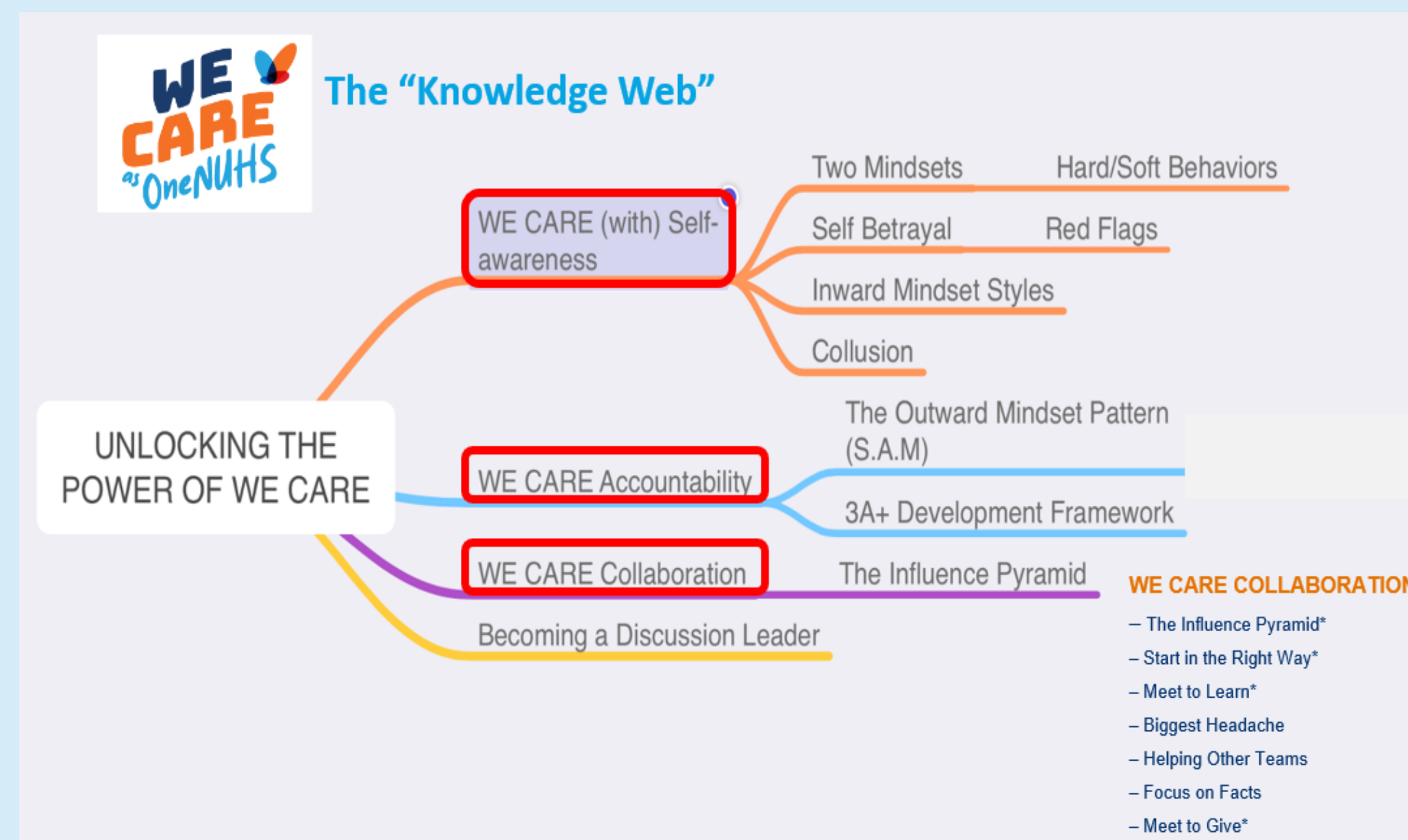
METHODS

A series of cluster-wide engagement sessions identified the culture archetype and the culture narrative 'WE CARE as OneNUHS' was born, emphasizing care for our people as well as our patients, and highlighting the importance of working together to tap on the synergies across the institutions.

In cultivating this culture, we developed a programme to help our staff understand what it means, how to apply and live it. WE CARE workshops were designed in partnership with the Arbinger Institute to effect a fundamental mindset shift, through better self-awareness, accountability and collaboration, to drive sustained behavioral shifts. To influence all 14,000 staff, identified People-Leaders were trained to conduct the WE CARE sustained programme across the institutions over a three-year effort to create a cascading impact. The programme focuses on discussions and sharing in groups of staff within their circle of influence; opening conversations and reinforcing these concepts to ensure enduring change. Full roll-out of the programme is expected to be completed by mid-2025.

Alongside the workshops are communication and mindshare efforts, augmented by parallel efforts to enhance staff well-being as well as patient support initiatives. All these initiatives are leader-led, with consistent sharing of efforts and developments through regular staff communications, further supported by service-training tools for frontline staff. The organizational systems are also progressively aligned with the Caring concept and founded on the axiom 'WE CARE as OneNUHS'.

PROGRAMME ELEMENTS

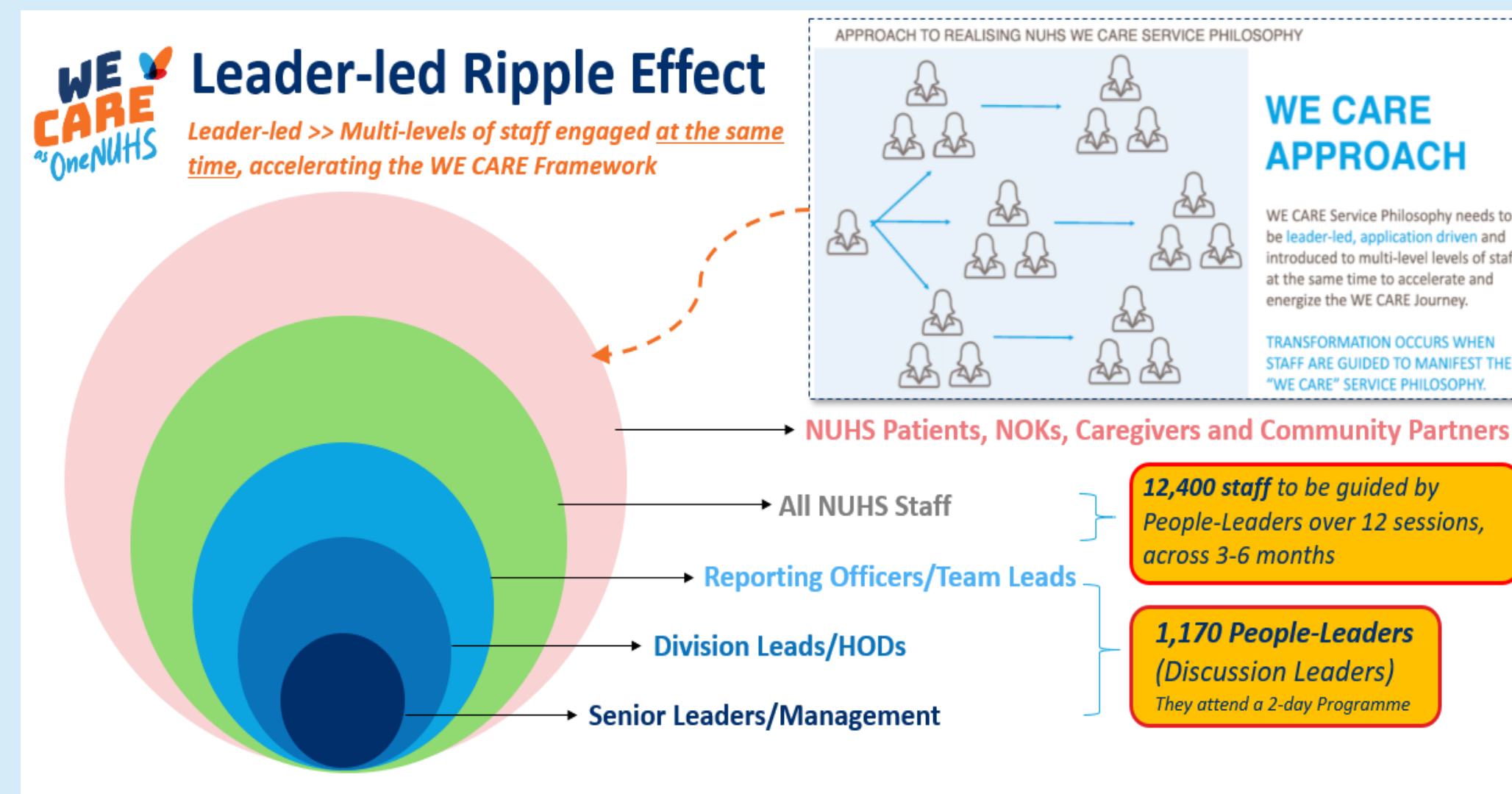


Our Culture Narrative

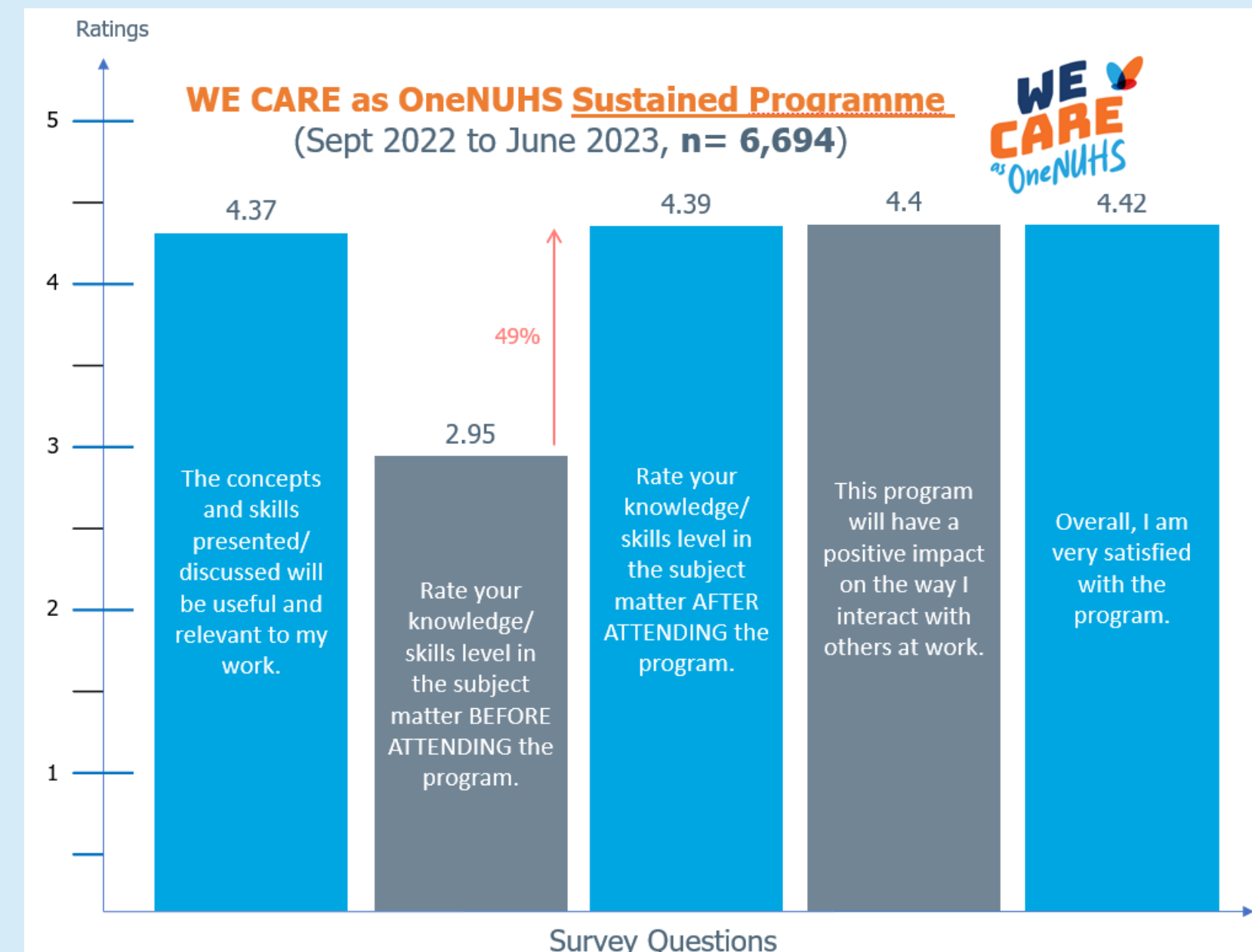
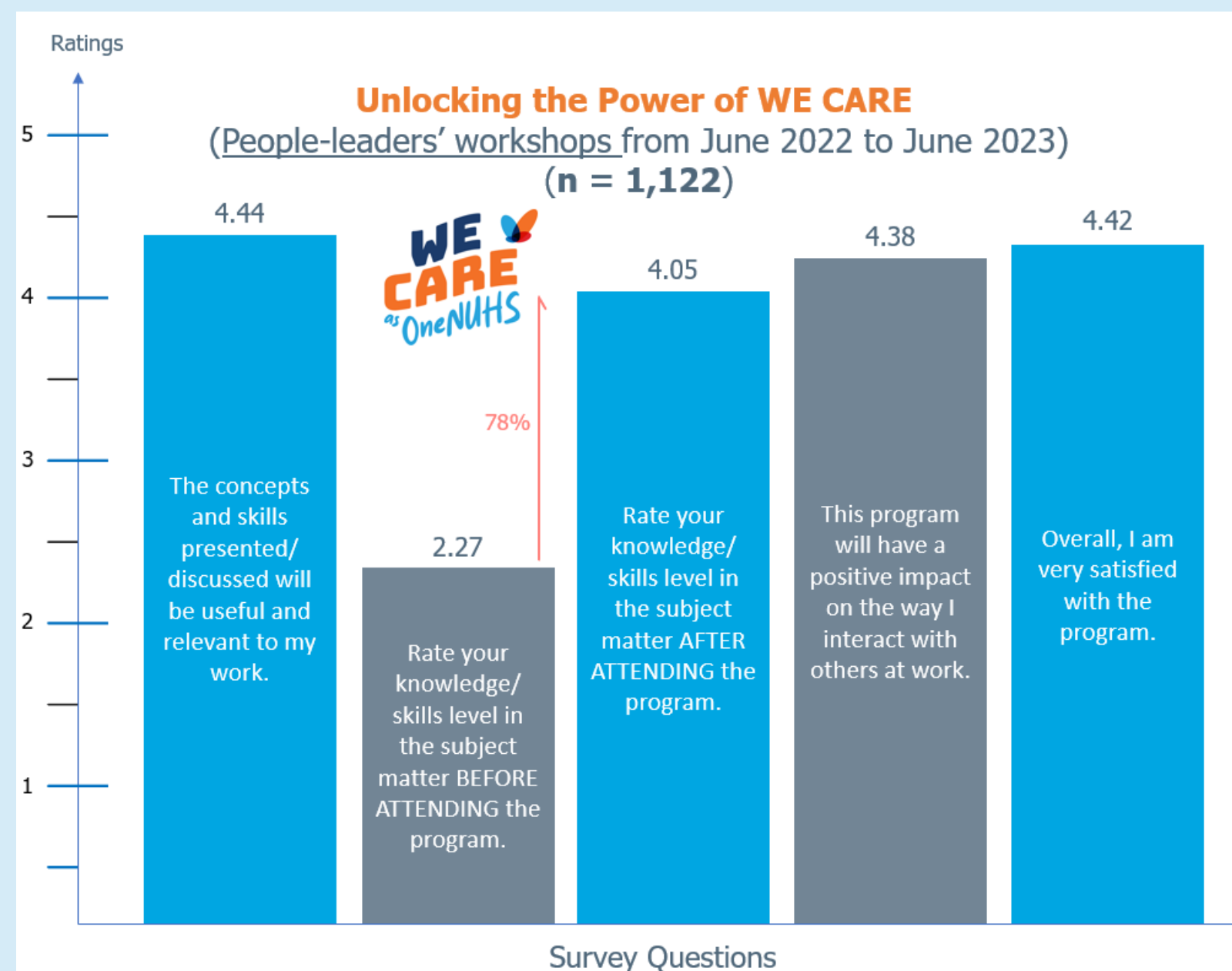
WE CARE as OneNUHS: For each other and everyone we serve.

- WE CARE for each other.** You are part of the NUHS family and your wellbeing is important. We want to make sure that everyone feels respected, valued, recognised, and safe. We support each other as family would.
- WE CARE for our patients and community** in pursuit of delivering *Incredible Care and Health*.

WE CARE is the framework that guides our daily interactions.
It stands for Warmth, Empathy, Communicate, Advocate, (be) Responsive, and Empower.



IMPACT



FOLLOW-UP

Effectiveness of systemic initiatives in building our desired culture is measured via periodic WE CARE assessment surveys to evaluate the understanding and application at the individual level, and witnessed real improvements on the ground. Improvements in other key surveys and HR matrices such as the Patient Experience Surveys (PES) and Employee Engagement Surveys (EES) and attrition rates would also signal success in our cultural change efforts. Details and progress on this journey will be shared in the presentation.

CONCLUSION

NUHS has embarked on cultivating a caring culture, emphasizing the importance of caring for our people as well as our patients. It is a deliberate effort to build a positive culture and tradition, with significant long-term positive impact on the work environment, interactions between staff and also with patients and caregivers. We believe that when our staff feel cared for, they will be better able to care for our patients, delivering Incredible Care and Health, together.

ABOUT NUHS

The **National University Health System (NUHS)** is one of three public healthcare clusters in Singapore, and an integrated Academic Health System and Regional Health System that delivers value-driven, innovative and sustainable healthcare in Singapore.

We leverage our unique position as an Academic Health System to tap on the wealth of resources residing within the National University of Singapore (NUS). Through collaborations with NUS faculties, we are able to draw upon their academic, research and creative capabilities to develop solutions for existing and emerging health and healthcare needs.

As a Regional Health System, we work in close collaboration with community hospitals, general practitioners, family medicine clinics, nursing homes and other community partners to provide integrated care to the community.

With member institutions under one Academic Health System, NUHS creates synergies as a fully integrated cluster to provide seamless care, develop solutions for Singapore's healthcare challenges and nurture the next generation of healthcare professionals.

MEMBERS OF NUHS

Presently, members of NUHS comprise tertiary, acute and community hospitals, national specialty centres, polyclinics, a medical centre as well as academic health sciences institutions.