

A TRIBUTE TO NURSES This special feature is also available @ www.stjobs.sg/explore-careers

...Helping Others Regain Health And Dignity

Ms Loh Jiar Lin, 25, is a senior staff nurse at the Medical & Neurology High Dependency Unit in Tan Tock Seng Hospital. Apart from direct patient care, she also teaches and mentors junior nursing staff who join her unit.

Ms Loh discovered her calling when her grandfather fell sick and was admitted to the hospital multiple times. "I was heartbroken when I saw him struggling with his illness and I felt helpless. I lacked the knowledge and skills to make him more comfortable," she recalls. "This struck a chord with me and made me pursue a healthcare-related course after I finished secondary school."

She moved to Singapore from Malaysia in 2012 to pursue her nursing diploma, and, in 2019, furthered her studies at Singapore Institute of Management (SIM), where she earned a Bachelor of Nursing (Post-Registration), awarded by The University of Sydney, Australia.

Something she found particularly useful in her SIM course was learning physical examination skills. She says: "I am now confident in my patient assessment and am able to pick up subtle changes in my patient's condition and highlight it to the medical team for early intervention. This is an invaluable skill



PHOTO: TED CHEN

Loh Jiar Lin
25, senior staff nurse at Tan Tock Seng Hospital
"Nursing is never an easy job. One should have a positive attitude and be resilient. And always have compassion for the people you care for."

that has equipped me to be a better nurse today."

She sees herself providing "compassionate and competent bedside care" to her patients in the long run. She remembers caring for a bedbound patient who needed help to get to a commode (mobile toilet). The patient thanked her profusely. "The simple act of helping the patient may be insignificant

in the eyes of others, but to my patient who was ill, being able to relieve herself naturally meant retaining her dignity and reducing her reliance on others," Ms Loh says.

Her advice to aspiring nurses? "Nursing is never an easy job. One should have a positive attitude and be resilient. And always have compassion for the people you care for."

...Drawing Strength From The Courage Of Patients

Ms Kok Hui Scen once thought of quitting the nursing profession because of work pressure, but her patients gave her strength.

A nurse in the palliative care setting at Tan Tock Seng Hospital, she said: "My cancer patients demonstrated much resilience and persistence, which strengthened my will to care for them. As I reflected on what I could have done better to help them, my commitment to nursing grew stronger."

The 34-year-old, a senior staff nurse at Tan Tock Seng Hospital, also worked on the front-line of the nation's fight in the Covid-19 pandemic. She was part of the hospital's healthcare team in charge of suspected Covid-19 cases.

In 2018, Ms Kok embarked on a two-year part-time Bachelor's of Science in Nursing with Honours (Top-up) programme with Ngee Ann Academy, awarded by King's College London. She is graduating this year.

She says the course has equipped her with well-rounded nursing skills and in-depth knowledge, which is particularly helpful as she comes across patients from different backgrounds who require different kinds of care.

She adds: "The physical assessment module, for example,



PHOTO: TED CHEN

has strengthened my foundation in clinical practice and given me greater confidence to manage more complex care.

"My experience with King's College London has taught me the importance of independent learning and how it should be a continuous effort that goes beyond the classroom."

She hopes to apply her new knowledge and skills to provide greater patient-centred care. Ms Kok says she is also looking forward to pursuing a master's degree to advance her nursing career.

She finds joy in caring for her patients and gaining their trust to improve their quality of life.

"The journey of nursing can be challenging but one must never give up. Find your internal drive that can help you to overcome the barriers. Lifelong learning is also essential for nurses to keep our skills sharp and think outside the box to handle any situation. No matter what type of nursing work you do, it all contributes to making a difference to patients' lives," she says.

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