

A TRIBUTE TO NURSES

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Giving patients
the utmost
care

Mr Keshvaran S/O Karnaneedi, who is taking up an Edinburgh Napier University, UK nursing degree at MDIS, goes beyond giving medical care to his patients

BY GEL CABOTAJE

Some patients – worrying about their health – may feel anxious and uneasy in the hospital. A caring nurse will help soothe these feelings and even alleviate any physical pain the patients may have.

For 24-year-old registered nurse Keshvaran S/O Karnaneedi, his goal is to make patients in his care as comfortable as possible, even if it goes beyond his core responsibilities.

“Whenever I am done with my duties, I will always take some time to interact with my patients, to understand them better,” he says. “They usually enjoy my company and when my patients are happy, I am happy too.”

Formerly a trainee nurse in an oncology ward, Mr Keshvaran says there is a misconception that all cancer patients are weak and have ailing health.

“However, from my experience, they are among some of the most fun, positive and open-minded patients I’ve ever met,” he says.

“I do not merely interact with the patients to understand them better. Some of them tend to be lonely and do not have visitors. Connecting with them is a way for me to alleviate their loneliness and give them my attention, care and moral support,” he adds.

Mr Keshvaran is currently serving National Service (NS) at Singapore Civil Defence Force as an emergency medical technician while studying part-time at Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS). He is taking the top-up bachelor’s degree programme in nursing awarded by Edinburgh Napier University, UK.

“The nursing programme at MDIS has helped me to build up my leadership qualities, shape my critical thinking skills and provide solutions to my patients and even my colleagues,” he says.

Mr Keshvaran wants to become a full-time nurse after completing NS and plans to further his studies to focus on a speciality which he will decide down the road.

For now, he is bent on giving his utmost care to the people who most need it. “Whenever I end my shift, my patients or their loved ones ask me whether I am working the next day. When I tell them that I will return and they respond with a smile, I know that my efforts have been worthwhile,” Mr Keshvaran says.



PHOTO: TED CHEN



PHOTO: SIM GLOBAL EDUCATION

Breaking
gender
stereotypes

Mr Kenneth Chia, who pursued The University of Sydney’s bachelor’s degree in nursing at SIM GE, has had his heart set on a career in healthcare since childhood

BY MICHELLE CHIN

More men are entering the nursing profession. The number of male nurses registered with the Singapore Nursing Board has increased from about 3,500 in 2014 to 4,700 last year. There were more than 42,000 nurses in Singapore as of last year.

The nursing profession may still be largely dominated by women, but for Mr Kenneth Chia, 27, gender is no barrier to the profession.

Mr Chia now works as a staff nurse at Changi General Hospital’s Accident & Emergency Department. When he was a child, he was admitted into a hospital due to asthma complications; Mr Chia was so touched by the care he received that he made nursing his childhood dream.

Mr Chia was part of his secondary school’s St John Brigade, pursued nursing courses at ITE College East and Nanyang Polytechnic.

He also completed a Bachelor of Nursing (Post-Registration) degree at SIM Global Education (SIM GE) in July 2017.

The Bachelor of Nursing (Post-Registration) programme, which can be completed on a one-year or two-year part-time basis, is developed and awarded by The University of Sydney and offered at SIM GE in Singapore. It is fully-taught by academics from The University of Sydney.

This year marks 25 years of partnership between SIM GE and The University of Sydney, and over 3,500 health professionals have graduated with nursing and health science-related degrees through the partnership.

Mr Chia shares more about the programme he graduated from and his experiences in nursing:

What is it like working in a female-majority field?

As nurses, we respect one another’s area of work regardless of gender. It is perfectly all right for a male nurse to display his softer side when providing care for patients.

My advice to people considering a nursing career is not to let gender norms get in the way... Sometimes, it is also easier for male nurses to communicate with male patients who are uncomfortable sharing their problems with female nurses.

How was the bachelor’s degree helpful?

My academic journey with The University of Sydney at SIM GE provided me with a new education experience of interacting with esteemed educators who are leaders in their respective fields.

The course has helped me to broaden my clinical knowledge and skills to deliver quality care to patients.



What are some unforgettable moments you’ve had working in the A&E department?


I remember vividly this elderly lady who was admitted after falling at home in the toilet. She had been immobilised for days. My colleague and I brought her up to one of the wards.

After she was cleaned, fed and her wounds properly dressed, she thanked us profusely. I was overwhelmed with emotions that day.

As nurses, we respect one another’s area of work regardless of gender. It is perfectly all right for a male nurse to display his softer side when providing care for patients.

MR KENNETH CHIA
staff nurse
Changi General
Hospital’s Accident &
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Longer route to fulfilling nursing dream

Staff nurse Jocelyn Chua, who is pursuing King's College London's Bachelor of Science in Nursing with Honours (Top-up) conducted at Ngee Ann Academy, took up marine engineering and early childhood education before heeding her inner calling

BY MICHELLE CHIN

When she was 17, Ms Jocelyn Chua conformed with her parents' wishes and picked marine engineering as her first choice for a diploma course.

Back then, her parents, like many others of their generation, felt that there was a certain stigma associated with nursing: the nursing diploma course was the last resort for people who had failed to make the mark for other courses.

Thus, Ms Chua buried her passion for nursing and studied for a Diploma in Marine Engineering instead.

A marine engineering internship to the Philippines and Taiwan and subsequent medical and humanitarian trips to Cambodia during her free time rekindled her interest in the nursing field.

Seeing first-hand how the poor and destitute lacked access to medical services, she wished she possessed the knowledge and medical skills to do something for them.

Despite her hardened resolve, her journey to becoming a nurse took longer than expected.

She was unable to enrol in nursing degree courses because her polytechnic grades failed to meet the cut-off.

Hence, she opted for an Advanced Diploma in Kindergarten Education – Teaching, graduated in 2011 and worked for four years in the industry.

In 2012, Ms Chua began applying for the Diploma in Nursing (Professional Conversion Programme).

PCPs are career conversion programmes for professionals, managers, executives and technicians, including mid-career switchers, to undergo skills conversion and training for their new occupations.



PHOTO: TED CHEN

However, her endeavour was an unsuccessful attempt as she did not make it past the interview.

After that, she attended career preview fairs and tried applying for the PCP every year. However, each time, she was either too afraid to attend the interview or had work commitments. There were also people close to her who did not think that becoming a nurse was a good option for Ms Chua, and that affected her confidence.

Finally, in 2015, Ms Chua plucked up her courage, submitted her application, aced her interview and succeeded in clinching a place in the PCP.

In 2016, she finally enrolled in Nanyang Polytechnic's two-year, full-time Diploma in Nursing via the PCP scheme.

Two years later, she became a recipient of Ministry of Health's Gold Medal for the most outstanding graduate for the Diploma in Nursing (Professional Conversion Programme).

The 31-year-old now works full-time at Tan Tock Seng Hospital's Emergency Department.

In January, she enrolled in the part-time, two-year King's College London's Bachelor of

Science in Nursing with Honours (Top-up) that is conducted at Ngee Ann Academy.

Ngee Ann Academy is a private institution and wholly-owned subsidiary of The Ngee Ann Kongsi.

The nursing faculty at King's College London is ranked second in the world according to the 2019 QS World University Rankings.

Ms Chua also received the bond-free Ngee Ann Education Holdings Scholarship that covers half of her school fees.

Ms Chua says that as compared to a decade ago, nursing is now more recognised as a respected career that requires expertise.

"My family members now tend to seek my opinion or advice on medical matters, or before making medical-related decisions. Being a nurse changes my perspective on life, it is not just about living well, it is also about leaving well. I cherish time with my family and friends a lot more now. Life can be fleeting and transient, I would never know if people around me may pass on suddenly, and I would regret not spending enough time with them," she says.

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admissions@naa.edu.sg
+65 6738 2910

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