

More mid-career professionals making switch to nursing



Since 2011, 17 mid-career workers have become registered nurses after completing their training. PHOTO: ST FILE

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SINGAPORE - More mid-career professionals are opting to become nurses under a programme that lets them join the healthcare sector.

Last year (2016), six professionals signed up for the Healthcare Professional Conversion Programme and started working for the National Healthcare Group (NHG), up from just one in 2011.

Before that, they worked in the customer service, education and engineering sectors.

NHG, in a statement on Thursday (Aug 03), said mid-career staff made the switch to nursing because of "structured career advancement pathways, better training opportunities and competitive salaries".

Since 2011, 17 mid-career workers have become registered nurses after completing their training.

One of them, Ms Rachel Wu, 33, a staff nurse from the NHG polyclinics, joined nursing in July this year (2017) after completing her nursing diploma at Nanyang Polytechnic.

Ms Wu, who used to be a home-based translator, said she was inspired by her children to fulfil her childhood dream of becoming a nurse. She is married to a 35-year-old business consultant, and they have two children - a five-year-old boy and a seven-year-old girl.

She said: "Nursing is a satisfying profession because I learn something new every day from patients and my peers."

The Healthcare Professional Conversion Programme is jointly run by the Ministry of Health and Workforce Singapore. It helps mid-career workers get retrained as registered and enrolled nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists, diagnostic radiographers, and dental surgery assistants.

Tan Tock Seng Hospital chief nurse Yong Keng Kwang said the rise in the number of professionals joining NHG through the programme is a sign that there is a growing interest in the nursing profession.

He said: "Nurses comprise the largest segment of healthcare professionals in Singapore, and are instrumental in helping to shape our healthcare transformation landscape."

NHG said career paths for its nurses are mapped out, and they can choose from four tracks - clinical, education, research and management.

"Structured training and mentoring programmes are available to facilitate their growth," it added.





More nurses at NHG are also pursuing postgraduate degrees, the statement said. From 2011 to 2016, nurses with a master's degree or doctorate in nursing grew from two to 72.

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