

SINGAPORE

# Overcoming obstacles to become nurses

Inspiration to become a nurse can come from many places. TNP speaks to some people who have dedicated their career paths to helping others

**Smita Tiwary**  
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**It is a noble profession that makes a difference to countless lives daily. Yet nurses face discrimination often, even from their own families.**

Today is Nurses' Day.

Nursing student Yew Chin Ning, 17, is persevering with her studies even though she faces objections from her father.

She told The New Paper: "My father mocks me once in a while, asking why I want to do this dirty job, but it never deters me. I still want to help people, and I have chosen this path.

"There is stigma attached to nursing because the entry requirements are easy to meet, so my father thinks it is not prestigious."

Chin Ning, Ashley Chee Wan Ning, 16, Daryl Puan Jin Hao, 17, and Yan Pei Ling, 17, are first-year nursing students at Ngee Ann Polytechnic.



(From left) Nursing students Daryl Puan Jin Hao, Ashley Chee Wan Ning, Yan Pei Ling and Yew Chin Ning. PHOTO: Ngee ANN POLYTECHNIC



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They met while studying at the School of Science and Technology and signed up for the Ministry of Health Holdings' Healthcare Attachment Programme even before receiving their O-level results.

Daryl's mother, a clinical assistant, warned him of the long hours and the intense nature of the job.

He said: "My parents tried to dissuade me from it. My friends were supportive but teased me for wanting to pursue a vocation that had more females."

For Pei Ling, who scored three points for her O levels, it was a caring nurse at KK Women's and Children's Hospital who convinced her to be one.

She said: "She really tried to make me comfortable during my stay. I was around nine, but I still remember her name."

The four students are under a sponsorship with Tan Tock Seng Hospital that entitles them to a monthly allowance of \$900 for three years and guarantees them a job upon graduation.

For Yishun Community Hospital full-time nurse Sheena Ramazanu, 27, it was her father who inspired her to be a nurse.

In 1998, she was flying with her family to India when a fellow passenger could not breathe.

While everyone panicked, her father, Mr Ibrahim Shaik Mohamed, now 69, saved the day.

Then a mental health nurse, he tended to the passenger and calmed her down.

Miss Sheena said: "I do not know what would have happened if my father had not been there. From that day, I've related nursing to a life-saving occupation."

In 2010, she graduated as a top student from Nanyang Polytechnic's nursing course.

Now, Miss Sheena is heading to Hong Kong Polytechnic University on a scholarship to pursue a PhD in Family and Community Nursing.

She said: "It is important to go out, learn and bring back new ideas to Singapore so we can close the gaps here and improve.

**NURSING (OCCUPATION) Ngee ANN POLYTECHNIC TAN TOCK SENG HOSPITAL NANYANG POLYTECHNIC**

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