

Quality diabetes educator leads

FOR 1 in every 5 Malaysian who lives with diabetes, access to quality healthcare is important.

Quality healthcare is doing the right things, for the right patient, at the right time, in the right way to achieve the best possible results.

Healthcare professionals, who are trained in this respect, play a pivotal role in driving quality healthcare within their workplace.

Wong Soh San, who is an Assistant Nurse Clinician (ANC) and a Diabetes Educator, shows us how this is done.

"Very often, a Diabetes Educator is recognised for their daily interaction with patients to empower them with self-management behaviours for improved health. However, many are not aware that Diabetes Educators can also improve the quality of healthcare provided at the organisational level," said Wong who also leads a group of diabetes educators for a private hospital in Malaysia.

From her beginnings as a State Registered Nurse (SRN) in Melaka, Wong's first interest in diabetes care bloomed from the desire to keep herself and her loved ones healthy.

"Diabetes runs in my family and I wanted to do something about this" recounted Wong.

Over the years, she worked closely with her patients to improve the care she gave to people living with diabetes.

Her interactions with patients gave her insights into how patient-centred care can be empowering.

"I will always remember the elderly gentlemen I saw in my early practice days. Being an independent soul, he valued having autonomy in all aspects of his life, including how he manages diabetes. The non-judgemental patient-centred conversations we had during his clinic visits provided a safe environment to develop a self-management plan that suited his lifestyle" said Wong.

In growing as a person, Wong



WONG SOH SAN

progressed from being a positive influence on people living with diabetes, to being a role-model for her peers.

Wong recalled with fondness that; "In my first job, I worked alongside a Credentialed Diabetes Educator who encouraged me to constantly improve as a practitioner and to do things that positively impact others around me."

It was in this context that Wong took the IMU Postgraduate Diploma in Diabetes Management and Education from the International Medical University (IMU).

"Having a postgraduate diploma in this area can, and has, boosted my career, but I wanted something more", said Wong.

She integrated her postgraduate assignments into projects that mattered at her workplace. This included immediately putting to use her newly acquired knowledge and skills in diabetes care in her clinic sessions.

Wong also conducted a clinical audit as part of an assignment. In completing this assignment, she used a scientific and systematic 4-step process – the PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) cycle, to improve the use of self-monitoring of blood glucose (SMBG) in reducing the

HbA1c of her patients.

Her audit work was recognised by the top management of her workplace and has since become a template for audit projects implemented in the team of Diabetes Educators from the 16 hospital branches that she now leads.

When asked if she is happy with her achievements, Wong smiled and said "I will do my best to provide clinical nursing leadership and improve the overall nursing practice and standards of care for patients. I have a passion to help others, and in doing so found that I too grow as a person".

Working adults in the health-care sectors or fresh graduates with a keen interest in diabetes education have the opportunity to earn their postgraduate diploma at the IMU by either enrolling full-time in just 1-year or on a part-time basis within a 3-year period.

Designed to suit working adults, this programme uses a blended learning model that incorporates online learning and clinical experience conducted at the student's own place of work.

This delivery allows the student to maximise learning anywhere and anytime.

IMU offers postgraduate programmes including Master in Science programmes in Public Health, Analytical and Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Molecular Medicine, Acupuncture and Pharmacy Practice; Master of Counselling; Postgraduate Diplomas in Diabetes Management and Education, Implant Dentistry, Endodontics and Prosthodontics; postgraduate programmes in Health Professions Education, Health Informatics and Analytics and Business Administration in Healthcare Management as well as MSc and PhD in Medical and Health Sciences.

For more information about this or our other postgraduate programmes, please visit www.imu.edu.my or email: postgraduate@imu.edu.my, or call 03 – 2731 7272.