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Title: Passion for nursing patients back to health pays off for ten  
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Their passion for nursing the sick back to the pink of health has paid off for ten outstanding enrolled nurses.

In recognition of their efforts, the ten were conferred the Tan Chin Tuan Nursing Awards on Friday.

Held for the third consecutive year, organisers received 20 nominations from 15 public and private healthcare institutions and nursing homes.

Join our reporter Claire Huang as she speaks to some of the recipients to find out the formula to their success.

To many of her patients, Ms Hajjah Nor Aini is their source of joy and comfort.

The cheery 47-year-old is one of two recipients of the Special Commendations that falls under the Tan Chin Tuan Nursing Awards.

Ms Hajjah on the award.

"I feel honoured. I don't expect to get this award before, only after I was told by my nurse manager and by my director of nursing that I was chosen. So I didn't expect this to happen to me actually."

Ms Hajjah who has been in this line for almost 30 years, says nursing has always been her calling.

"Actually it started from my younger days, when my grandfather falls sick, falls ill, there's nobody in my family who is medically trained. He died of a sudden heart failure. Actually it's very sad, none of us know how to do CPR, he died at home, so I just think it's a calling for me to be a nurse. "

Spurred by her grandfather's death, Ms Hajjah applied to be a nurse after getting her "O" Levels.

"Actually I applied for nursing but I was unsuccessful for the first year. Then I went home crying after getting the letter that I was unsuccessful.

Then I started work at a bank."

But Ms Hajjah didn't give up.

She reapplied one year later and clinched the job.

"There was another application in the following year, I tried again. Then there I was chosen, so I start my days in School of Nursing, training for two years. "

Over the years, Ms Hajjah gained vast experience from her stints at different healthcare institutions, including the former Woodbridge Hospital and Tan Tock Seng Hospital.

While it hasn't always been a smooth-sailing journey for her, Ms Hajjah more than made up with her passion and commitment.

"Nursing is actually not an easy job, not everybody can take it. It's stressful; you get scolded by patients, all the 4-letter words, all the emotional people. We try to understand them. That's why as a nurse you don't treat this as a profession, but as a vocation. "

This probably explains why despite her busy schedule, the veteran who's currently stationed at Alexandra Hospital, still makes time for former patients.

In fact, Ms Hajjah often helps out ex-patients for free upon their request.

She also travels to the patients' houses to teach their caregivers basic nursing.

The rapport she built with her ex-patients is so deep that she's willing to go the extra mile for them.

"That's why even though some of them pass away, I still visit their grave, after visiting I'll call their family (and they'll be) very touched. They say "you're very good ah, I've never seen nurses like you before, so touched like that". So this is what motivates me and make me want to stay actually. It's my calling for life."

Echoing Ms Hajjah's sentiments is Madam Soonthrammal Nalappan, a Principal Assistant Nurse at the Institute of Mental Health.

The 46-year-old has been conferred the top honour - the Challenge Trophy at the Tan Chin Tuan Nursing Awards.

It's the first time an enrolled nurse from the National Healthcare Group clinched the award.

And she says nursing is all about the mentality.

"Nursing is a career where not everyone is a good nurse, you need a lot of commitment, dedication, patience, concern, care, love. All these come into nursing. If you don't have all these qualities, it's very difficult to be a good nurse. And I always feel that as a nurse, I always see that my patient recovers and go back. That is my satisfaction. "

The mother of two boys admits that life as a nurse can be tough.

But she feels happy to be in a position to help others.

And she's been doing so for more than 20 years.

So what keeps her going?

Like Ms Hajjah, it's the ability to help someone.

"It's always I feel there's a satisfaction. Whenever coming to work is always, I feel like I'm coming to help somebody, and (I) never regret. I have no regrets at all."

Ms Hajjah and Madam Soonthrammal are two of the more than 5,600 enrolled nurses in Singapore.

Enrolled nurses make up a quarter of the 22,000 nurses in Singapore.

While an enrolled nurse may not be able to prescribe medication to patients, an enrolled nurse can help relieve some of the burden of staff nurses, by providing treatment to patients and education to caregivers.

In doing so, they help ease the country's shortage of nurses.