

## Singapore launches new MOH–NUS Fellowship to strengthen everyday ethics in Singapore’s healthcare sector

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**The inaugural Fellowship—awarded to NUH nurse Kwek Shi Qi—equips experienced healthcare professionals to translate ethical principles into everyday clinical decisions through rigorous study and real-world attachments**



Singapore's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore (NUS Medicine) launched the MOH–NUS Postgraduate Fellowship in Biomedical Ethics, a postgraduate programme to advance the understanding and translation of the practice of ethics in healthcare settings, and to equip healthcare professionals and leaders

with the frameworks and tools to address real-world ethical challenges in everyday healthcare practice. The first awardee of the Fellowship is Ms Kwek Shi Qi, a registered nurse at the National University Hospital (NUH), and alumna of the Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies, NUS Medicine.

Singapore's healthcare system is growing increasingly complex, fuelled by advances in medical technology, an ageing population, and more informed patients. This complexity routinely brings critical questions of consent, communication, fairness and end-of-life decisions to the patient's bedside. Beyond delivering excellent care, healthcare professionals must navigate these ethical challenges while balancing patient autonomy, professional responsibilities, and system-level constraints in a transparent and principled manner. It is essential to equip them with knowledge and understanding of biomedical ethics, ethical analysis and reasoning, so that they can recognise and resolve conflicts early, and reduce moral distress.

Associate Professor Michael Dunn, Centre for Biomedical Ethics (CBmE), NUS Medicine, said, "The Fellowship builds system-wide ethical capacity by training practising healthcare professionals and grounding their capstone projects in frontline clinical attachments. Focused on translating ethics education into practice, the programme will enable Fellows to develop transformative improvements in healthcare practice locally."

As the inaugural Fellow of the programme, Ms Kwek will undertake a Master of Science in Biomedical Ethics at CBmE, NUS Medicine, in a unique model of healthcare ethics training that combines academic scholarship with formal placements in public healthcare and policy settings. In her role as a staff nurse since August 2024, she has provided specialised care to patients with cardiovascular diseases at the National University Heart Centre, Singapore (NUHCS), while collaborating with a multidisciplinary team to ensure holistic patient wellbeing. She empowers individuals through patient education to better understand and manage their conditions, and uses clear, empathetic communication to support patients and their families

through critical phases of care—upholding dignity and offering clarity during moments of uncertainty. As part of the Fellowship, she will conduct a research project, titled “Everyday ethics on the ward: Exploring nurse-led ethics support”, which will map barriers and drivers for nurses mediating ethical conflicts in frontline work; clarify roles, steps and escalation criteria that complement existing ethics committees; and inform nursing education through practical tools.

The Fellowship provides full funding for tuition and relevant university fees, and a monthly stipend of S\$3,800 for the duration of the programme. It is supported by a fund of up to S\$1.2m from MOH, reflecting a national commitment to embedding ethical reasoning alongside clinical excellence in everyday practice.

“Ethical dilemmas are part of everyday life at the bedside. This Fellowship equips healthcare professionals with practical tools to make principled, patient-centred decisions, and to resolve conflicts early, even when there are no easy answers,” added Dr Sumytra Menon, Director at CBmE, NUS Medicine.

Adjunct Professor (Dr) Raymond Chua, Deputy Director-General of Health (Health Regulation), Ministry of Health, said, “Excellent healthcare is defined as much by ethical considerations as it is by clinical outcomes. This fellowship reflects our commitment to boosting the capabilities of our healthcare workforce in healthcare ethics. By embedding deep ethical expertise within our teams and cultivating a new generation of ethics practitioners, we ensure that our healthcare system continues to evolve in a way that prioritises the well-being of every patient while navigating increasingly complex medical and technological challenges.”