



Tan Wei Keat
Healthcare Scholar

Studying: Master in Pharmacy,
University of Nottingham, UK

JURONG HEALTH SERVICES (JURONGHEALTH)

A PRESCRIPTION FOR A **FULFILLING CAREER**

The intricate network of medical professionals that make up the dynamic team at JurongHealth is united in its vision and heart to keep the community healthy. One such individual is Healthcare Scholar Tan Wei Keat, who tells us about his passion to make a difference in the lives of others.

By Desiree Yang

Singapore's healthcare sector is constantly evolving to meet society's ever-changing needs. As our ageing population intensifies the call for an even higher standard of care, Singapore is taking steps to respond and adapt to the healthcare needs of its population. This flexibility has enabled Singapore's healthcare system to gain worldwide recognition, with Bloomberg ranking it as the most efficient healthcare system in the world in 2014.

Healthcare Scholar Tan Wei Keat hopes to be able to continue the good work of his predecessors as a member of Singapore's healthcare system. The Pharmacy student at the University of Nottingham in the UK tells us, "As a pharmacist, I hope to be able to make contributions to improve and make a difference in the healthcare sector."

WHAT SPARKED YOUR INTEREST IN PHARMACY AND PROPELLED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE HEALTHCARE SCHOLARSHIP?

Tan Wei Keat: I realised that I wanted a career in the health sciences when I was in Junior College. Pharmacy was a perfect fit for me as it combines my twin passions in Chemistry and Biology and presents me with the opportunity to improve the lives of others through my work. The discipline also offers a wide array of career opportunities that go beyond work at the dispensary – a common stereotype – to positions in the area of industrial research as well. The Healthcare Scholarship was thus an excellent opportunity for me to pursue my passion for Pharmacy and help others!

WHAT ARE SOME LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES THAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN AS A HEALTHCARE SCHOLAR?

Wei Keat: I've enjoyed ample learning opportunities that go beyond the confines of the classroom, such as summer programmes and clinical attachments. I've also had the chance to attend networking sessions organised by MOH Holdings (MOHH) in both Singapore and the UK, where I got to interact with other healthcare professionals. In addition, I also did a clinical attachment at Alexandra Hospital (AH) during one of my term breaks and attended a summer programme in China as well.

Furthermore, I was initially worried that studying overseas would leave me less familiar with Singapore's healthcare system and regulations, which is crucial knowledge

for every pharmacist. Thankfully, my clinical attachment at AH successfully addressed these concerns and also exposed me to things such as the various financial schemes available in Singapore which are aimed at helping financially-strapped patients. The Healthcare Scholarship has also given me the opportunity to interact with different mentors and colleagues who are always more than willing to share their knowledge and experiences with me.

SHARE WITH US A COUPLE OF HIGHLIGHTS FROM YOUR SCHOLARSHIP JOURNEY.

Wei Keat: I had the opportunity to intern at MOHH where I was involved in various projects that allowed me to pick up many valuable corporate and interpersonal skills. During my time as an intern, I was also given the opportunity to sit in on management meetings that allowed me to gain a holistic view of Singapore's healthcare system.

Furthermore, the Healthcare Scholarship and internship at MOHH have also allowed me to build up a rapport with fellow healthcare students and professionals, which proved to be instrumental in the setting up of the Singapore Healthcare Society (SHS), a student-run society for Singapore healthcare professionals and students. The SHS now has three branches in Singapore, Australia and the UK.

HOW HAS YOUR COURSE EQUIPPED YOU WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NECESSARY TO DO WELL IN YOUR FUTURE CAREER?

Wei Keat: The Master in Pharmacy course in the University of Nottingham is a comprehensive course that is equipping me with much needed clinical knowledge and professional skills to be a pharmacist. Learning goes beyond the pages of a textbook and includes placement opportunities in various industries, community pharmacies and hospitals and inter-professional learning sessions with healthcare students from other disciplines. These sessions allow us to work on cases as a multi-disciplinary team and they have helped me to develop my interpersonal skills and better my understanding of

the roles that other healthcare professionals play in the provision of care to patients.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FORWARD TO IN YOUR FUTURE CAREER?

Wei Keat: As Singapore's newest public healthcare cluster, there are indeed some exciting times ahead for JurongHealth, especially with the new integrated healthcare hub comprising of the 700-bed Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and 400-bed Jurong Community Hospital! I'm glad to be a part of the team to roll out initiatives to transform the patient care experience and ensure that it is done in a seamless and integrated way. In addition, I hope to be able to bring refreshing ideas and perspectives to the table with my experience in the UK's healthcare system.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR ASPIRING HEALTHCARE SCHOLARS? WHAT QUALITIES SHOULD ONE POSSESS IN ORDER TO DO WELL IN THE HEALTHCARE INDUSTRY?

Wei Keat: It is important for you to know what you're signing up for. It will also definitely help if you are able to gain some clinical experience through hospital attachments or by speaking to different healthcare professionals to get a better understanding of the industry. And while grades are important, candidates should also possess leadership experience, the right attitude and most important of all – a passion for the healthcare sector. ■



“ Learning goes beyond the pages of a textbook and includes placement opportunities in various industries, community pharmacies and hospitals and inter-professional learning sessions with healthcare students from other disciplines.”