



School of Nursing

Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine
The University of Hong Kong



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White Guardian

Nurse represents the **LARGEST** group of professionals in our health care system in Hong Kong. **37,203** registered nurses in Hong Kong (as at Sept 2015). **HKU** educated 180-190 registered nurses every year to serve Hong Kong community. The employment rate of HKU nursing graduates is almost **100%**. **Over 1900** registered nurses graduated from our full-time Bachelor of Nursing programme over the last 20 years.

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White Guardian is a HKU School of Nursing undergraduate student publication. Through a series of interviews and reflections, we aim to inform interested readers of our student and alumni activities, as well as discover and showcase our graduates' career paths and achievements.

On the following pages are stories from two of our **distinguished alumni** who excel in their careers, lead the nursing profession, and serve our local community. They were interviewed by our **student reporters**.

Interested readers:

- ❖ Secondary school students or career masters
- ❖ HKU students and alumni
- ❖ Any person interested in the nursing profession



**“Life is full of challenges.
Only when you are prepared and not afraid of
the obstacles, then they become your
opportunities.”**



Profile

Ian Cheng

Patient Relations Officer
Queen Mary Hospital



Nurses not only take care of patients' bodies, but also attend to their psychological and emotional needs. This is especially true at the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department, where nurses are constantly under great pressure to satisfy many clients' needs in a short time with limited resources. Mr Ian Cheng, our 2003 alumnus who spent more than 10 years working at the A&E, managed well in this difficult job.

Looking back on why Ian wanted to be a nurse when he was in Form 7, the reason was surprisingly simple,

*“I enjoy facing people more than paperwork,
and I want to look after people.”*



After his first summer job as an accountant clerk, Ian discovered his interest in interacting with people rather than sitting in front of computers. So he decided to pursue a career in healthcare, and to study to become a nurse.

“Why chose HKU nursing?”

Unlike others who are attracted to HKU's fame, Ian first looked into the Medical Faculty of the University, and how the School of Nursing would have more and better medical resources. Ian particularly likes the Problem-Based Learning at HKU, which emphasizes theoretical and critical thinking. Thanks to abundant practices in PBL, Ian soon found that he could apply critical and evidence-based thinking when working in hospital.

Still, when choosing his career path, Ian faced judgements and misconceptions that boys are worse than girls when it comes to nursing. “I think this is because they don't know what exactly nursing is as a profession,” smiles Ian. In reality, nursing has a wide scope and is very diverse. Looking after male patients, taking care of mentally ill clients, handling acute relapse cases, etc. all require male nurses' strength and handling.

“Nursing is absolutely a Profession.”

Without hesitation, Ian rejects the idea that nurses are just doctors' assistants who simply follow orders and do bedside work. Ian goes on to describe A&E nurses' very unique roles. When patients are being admitted to A&E, the triage nurse is the one who sees them first, not the doctor.

Patients are then triaged into different categories according to their conditions, all by the nurse's independent clinical judgements. Other duties of A&E nurses include investigations like ECG (electrocardiography), urine tests, blood glucose monitoring, and even sutures, etc. “Certain nurse practitioners, like what I did at Princess Margaret Hospital, can take over doctor's role in handling some minor injury cases, such as sprains and fractures.” With more nursing clinics established, it is no doubt that our role is becoming more and more professional day by day.

HK's aging society inevitably brings challenges to the nursing profession. When dealing with patients' ever increasing demands and complaints e.g. over long waiting time, Ian do his best in his duty while understanding his limits. Whenever facing conflicts, he makes sure to pay extra effort and patience in explaining to and helping his clients to understand the situation.

“Life is full of challenges. Only when you are prepared and not afraid of the obstacles, then they become your opportunities.”

After years as a frontline nurse, Ian took courses in Legal Studies, and is currently starting a new position as Patient Relations Officer at QMH handling medical issues, patient complaints and feedbacks. “We should always reflect on our own nursing paths. When I realised there was no further improvements I could make in a place, I looked towards a new direction.” And there he is now, embarking on his new career.

WE ARE STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE IN VARIOUS SPECIALTIES.



Profile Frank Liu

Advanced Practice Nurse
Surgery
Queen Mary Hospital

A winner never
stops trying.

- Tom Landry-

Mr Frank Liu is a brilliant alumnus who graduated in 2003 from our School. He currently works as an APN in head and neck, plastic and burn surgery in Queen Mary hospital.

Frank chose nursing due to his interest in medical field and increasing popularity of nursing at the time. Though our School was quite new back then, he opted for HKU for it was the oldest local university with a world-class standing.



‘Male nursing students were quite a minority, and less than one fifth of my fellow classmates were boys,’ Frank confessed that it did make them stand out in the eyes of teachers and mentors. However, there are also limitations brought by gender difference. For instance, due to traditional Chinese culture, it is still not appropriate for male nurses to take care of or even witness certain procedures done on female patients. The number of specialties that male nurses can choose from and aim for is therefore limited.

Contrary to gender stereotypes that males are tough and insensitive, Frank is a gentle nurse who cares much for his patients. He shared with us a sad and unforgettable story of his once patient. During an accident, both the patient and his wife suffered serious burn injuries. They were then sent to different hospitals due to local triage policy. The patient kept asking for his wife’s condition as he was really worried about her. Unfortunately, the wife did not make it. Frank witnessed how the patient lost his will to fight and live on, and soon passed away too. It was so sad that the couple could never meet again and had to die alone without each other. Frank still feels very sorry for them, and vows to help and see as many patients getting better and discharged from hospitals as possible.

The general public’s perception of nurses mostly comes from television dramas. It is uncommon for people to consider that nurses are just assistants to doctors and without much professional knowledge. As an end note to our interview, Frank insists that this must change.

“Nurses nowadays are highly professional. We are striving for excellence in various specialties. In more and more positions such as nurse-led clinics, nurses are doing lots of clinical judgment and even primary diagnosis.”

Take home message that Frank gives us is “NURSE”

N : Novel

U : Unity

R : Resourceful

S : Supportive

E : Empathy



Kate Mui (BNURS Year 3)

It is a precious opportunity to interview our brilliant alumni, who are glad to share their experience with us. Their stories teach us that although there will be a lot of challenges along our road to success, we can overcome the difficulties if we prepare ourselves well. Each story they share is special and unique, and makes us all to have new reflections. The important message is that nursing is a caring, attentive, interacting, enabling, knowledge- and evidence-based profession, which is dynamic in meeting the ever-changing health needs of the society. We all need to keep on learning.



Katherine Tse (BNURS Year 3)

It has been a fruitful and enjoyable experience to interview our alumni. Both Frank and Ian open my eyes to see how diverse a nurse can be. Not only we ought to be patient and caring to our patients, we are also to work professionally and be resourceful and unique. While completing our work and tasks is a must, we have to be flexible and empathetic as well. In the past, I used to focus on doing and practicing and overlooked the importance of reflections on my learning journey. Our alumni inspire me to reflect more on my future development, and to always think deeper and further on the reasons behind actions. "Be prepared."— I shall keep equipping myself and explore for opportunities out there.



Tina Wong (BNURS Year 3)

I am grateful to have the chance to be a White Guardian. As a Year 3 student without much clinical experience, it is invaluable for me to learn from our alumni. With their candid sharing of stories and feelings as frontline nurses, I understand much more about what to expect when I become a Registered Nurse in near future. The real situations and struggles such as triage of patients at A&E, or the limitations of and challenges facing male nurses, are all very fascinating to me and help my preparation to the career.