



Ms Juliet Choo and Mr Joshua Liew are classmates in the nursing professional conversion programme. TNP PHOTO: **KELVIN CHNG**

Caring for her father inspired PhD graduate to take on nursing

After 25 years in teaching and academia, Ms Juliet Choo, 47, is the first PhD graduate to take on one of the nursing professional conversion programmes (PCP), giving up her previous role as a lecturer teaching sociology and psychology programmes.

She is also at the National University of Singapore's Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies.

Ms Choo told The New Paper that while she had a few reasons for making the switch, the biggest was when her father had a serious accident and suffered from brain trauma in 2010.

VALUE

It was then that she realised the value and usefulness of nursing skills and knowledge, after caring for her father for three years.

She said after watching nurses care for her father and when she had the opportunity to interview nurses in the dementia ward for a research project, she felt moved by the dedication they displayed.

Ms Choo said: "Nurses are at the frontline of patient care and safety."

She added that should any-

thing happen, the reaction of the nurses on duty could be a matter of life or death for the patient.

She said: "You want to also make sure there is dignity there, especially for older patients, and to be able to bring them some comfort."

In honour of these professionals who devote their lives to looking after older people, caring for mothers and children, giving health advice, generally meeting everyday health needs and also in honour of the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, the World Health Assembly has designated 2020 the International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife.

Ms Choo said having specialised in the arts and social sciences her whole life, wrapping her head around biology and scientific terms is a challenge – so are the many hours nurses are required to be on their feet.

But she said that being able to communicate with and bring comfort to patients, particularly the older ones, whom she has a soft spot for, makes the difficulties worthwhile.

– **CHEOW SUE-ANN**