

Newly-appointed CEO all set to face fresh challenges

➤ I want to build a strong organisation 'by going to the ground to feel pulse of the establishment,' says NKF Malaysia chief

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PETALING JAYA: As someone who has worked her way up to the top, empowering patients to access healthcare while leveraging on digitalisation has been her mission.

But, a new challenge now awaits the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia (NKF Malaysia) CEO Khor Xin Yun.

Khor, 35, who was appointed to lead NKF Malaysia on Jan 1, described her appointment as "a pleasant surprise".

She said although it was great to be given the honour, there was also the need to fulfil responsibilities that came with it.

Having started her career as a pharmacist in Kulim Hospital in Kedah, she witnessed first hand the suffering of patients with chronic diseases.

"We saw an average of 20 to 30 patients in the ward. We would send them back home, control their blood pressure and give them

medication (up to) three months. Sadly, they would return just like a "loyal customer". That wasn't good.

"I had a former patient in her 50s, who had breast cancer with underlying diabetes. She also suffered from a second stroke. She was overweight and I found out that her teenage daughter was also overweight.

"The case made me realise that if we don't start making changes right now, it would also affect our younger generation. Something needs to be done before it's too late," she told *theSun*.

Khor obtained her diploma in Clinical Nutrition while serving as a senior assistant director of Pharmacy under the Health Ministry. During her stint in the government sector, she became the co-founder of Walnut Wellness, a homegrown digital health technology that leverages on digital technology and community network to deliver preventive care for corporates and healthcare providers.

She later became the head of digital health for the Better Health Programme Malaysia that was funded by the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's Prosperity Fund in 2020. The programme was a three-year initiative aimed at addressing global concerns on non-communicable diseases that included heart disease.

In her current role, she wants to build a strong organisation through a staff engagement culture "by going to the ground to listen to frontliners, staff and management to feel the pulse of the organisation".

"Since I joined NKF Malaysia, I have organised many open dialogues and discussion sessions with the staff to get first-hand information and input from them on how to move forward. It is crucial that the management helps staff improve their work.

"During my first week, I started instant messaging groups within the organisation to smoothen internal communications and allowed my staff to directly reach out to me via email and instant messaging. They can walk into my room anytime.

"It's time for us to break down the walls and work collaboratively towards our goals," she said.