

## Citation for Yusrita Zolkefli

Yusrita is a lecturer in nursing and midwifery in the Institute of Health Sciences at the University of Brunei, Darussalam, where she coordinates the law and ethics for health professionals module at undergraduate and graduate levels. She was nominated for the Human Rights and Nursing Award by friends and colleagues on the basis of her outstanding initiatives, both in education and practice, which have inspired nurses to embrace ethics and law as part of their daily working life.

Yusrita obtained her BSc in Nursing at Cardiff University in 2007 and then completing her MSc in Health Care Ethics at the University of Liverpool in 2008, followed by a PhD in Nursing in 2017 at the University of Edinburgh, all of them in the UK. She has published widely on subjects such as patient autonomy, courage, choice in health care, truth telling and most recently, in *Nursing Ethics*, on nurses' perceptions of ethical responsibility. Yusrita also has a similarly impressive record of international conference presentations, not least at the 18<sup>th</sup> Nursing Ethics and 3<sup>rd</sup> International Ethics in Care Conference in Leuven, Belgium, 2017.

However, while Yusrita's academic profile is highly praiseworthy, it is her achievements in the application of knowledge for the advancement of nursing practice that mark her out as exceptional.

Yusrita has been instrumental in the development of the ethics curriculum in Brunei. The sponsors of Yusrita's nomination of this award describe how she has organised students to attend classes early on Saturday mornings, where she presents a controversial topic to the class, which has been chosen to stimulate debate on aspects of nursing ethics and its relationship to care and development. The topics range from confidentiality, informed consent, relationships, professional issues and anything that nurses may encounter in a working day. The class is then divided in two, with one group taking the position of supporting the topic and the other group opposing it. A discussion follows about the stands taken. Then she reverses the order of the groups and a new discussion begins. In this way every participant has to defend a point of view and learn also how to defend the opposite stance. Nurses learn how to know their beliefs and convictions and those of people with whom they disagree. This is vital for the work of advocacy for nurses. This teaches them also the value of human rights, the dignity and value of the profession, and gives them a better chance to gain valuable positions in their professional work, be this at the bedside or in professional leadership. Part of the success of this project, her colleagues suggest, is attributed to Yusrita's own moral integrity as well as the care and compassion she herself demonstrates when debating complex ethical issues.



Further commendation for Yusrita is given for monthly ethics seminars with nurses in practice in the numerous hospitals in Brunei, Darussalam. Service managers have fed back that these seminars have been instrumental in the promotion of ethical practice by enabling nursing staff to recognise the ethical and legal issues inherent in their practice, then use that understanding to inform their subsequent clinical decision making. Through this work, Yusrita has gained the respect of the nursing staff in the hospital and she is widely viewed as a key reference point for guidance on ethical issues. As if she did not have enough work, Yusrita conducts these seminars in practice on a voluntary basis and with an infectious humour and enthusiasm.

Friends and colleagues of Yusrita describe her exceptional ability to promote human rights of patients regardless of their ethnicity, cultural differences or religious beliefs. Her creativity and innovation is energising and she has been widely recognised as empowering nurses to take risks as well as situate themselves at the heart of tackling current ethical challenges in care. Yusrita's work has ensured that all nurses throughout Brunei have the opportunity of ethical education, understand the language of ethics and use it. With her commitment that all nurses in her country learn and understand what ethics is about and how to practise ethics, she is a role model of outstanding quality. Her contribution to both human rights and nursing is clearly of international significance.

