

## **INTERVIEWS**

# **This is Femfluence: Dr Nur Farhan, Raffles Medical**

Meet three leaders who are redefining female power to defy mindsets, and influence positive change. Prepare to be inspired.

by Mary Lim / MARCH 8, 2022



With more than 60 per cent users under the age of 26, TikTok has become the go-to social media playground for Gen Z, particularly those who enjoy entertainment videos with over 443 billion hashtag views. So what is geriatrician Dr Nur Farhan Bte Mohammad Alami doing here?

After debuting as @geriatrician.sg on the platform in February 2021, Dr Farhan shared her experience of receiving her first dose of the Covid-19 vaccination. She has more than 15,600 followers, with the most popular video racking up over 143,300 views.


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## **Speaking out**

Describing TikTok as a “natural progression” for healthcare professionals already on Facebook and Instagram, she discusses other medical conditions such as vascular dementia and rhabdomyolysis.

“There is a lot of fake news floating around. It is important that experts speak out and share accurate information. For example, many people think dementia is a normal part of ageing but less know that it can be prevented,” she says.

“Adopting a healthy lifestyle can reduce your risk of dementia by 40 per cent. It means avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol, exercising regularly, and fending off feelings of loneliness and depression.”

People aged 60 and older are especially vulnerable to serious health complications induced by Covid-19, so Dr Farhan is empathetic toward them. The elderly are hardest hit by limited socialisation during a pandemic, as family members often forbid them from going out. 

“I had a patient who volunteered regularly at her granddaughter’s school library. When Covid-19 struck and she was unable to return to the library, she became depressed and turned to alcohol. While intoxicated, she fell and broke her hip. She took a long time to recover and bounce back.”



DR NUR FARHAN BTE MOHAMMAD ALAMI – Consultant, Raffles Medical Group

## Curious spirit

Dr Farhan describes it as a privilege to work with older patients. Their medical histories may be long and often complicated, but their life stories and experiences are rich and colourful. Specialisation requires a curious spirit, she confides.

“An older patient may have swollen feet for several reasons. They can be treated by any doctor, but a geriatrician will assess if they are a symptom of dementia. For instance, could he or she be regularly missing out on medication? Depression and malnutrition are also possibilities.

“Or perhaps the patient eats mostly take-out meals loaded with salt because she stays on her own? Otherwise, is she having financial difficulties and cannot afford medication? A good geriatrician must ask the right questions.”

In her absence from social media, Dr Farhan demonstrates her knowledge through webinars and health education events. She says, “Every individual has a role in contributing to the community. I hope my children will also learn the importance of this.”

Her brood includes daughter Hana, who is 12, and Mika, Jibrail and Eesa, who are 9, 6 and 18 months old. She will welcome another son in July.

Despite the challenges she has had to overcome—her three older kids have dyslexia and struggled to read and write when they were you ^ - Dr Farhan enjoys being a mother.

Women exert the greatest influence in their family, where they are caregivers to their children and parents. This is often undervalued by society, points out Dr Farhan, whose mother raised four kids while juggling a career. "I look forward to better support for women, whether they are full-time or working mothers."

(Related: [Why hair care entrepreneur Amy Ngo believes in the retail experience](#))

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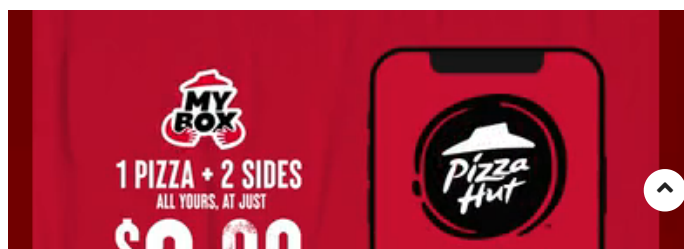
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