FROM REGULATORY PHARMACIST TO ACADEMICIAN: A Journey Back to UiTM

By Nur Atiqah Kamal Rodin (RX8)

When I was a pharmacy student at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Puncak Alam, I always had this thought that one day, I would come back to UiTM as a lecturer. I graduated in 2013, and although I was not sure when or how it would happen, I always knew that teaching was something I wanted to do. For me, teaching has always been one of the most noble professions to ever exist.

At that time, there was no clear pathway into academia for pharmacy graduates, so I started my career as a Provisionally Registered Pharmacist (PRP) at Hospital Ampang in 2013. A year later, I became a Fully Registered Pharmacist at the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA) in the Centre of Investigational New Products. My colleagues welcomed me warmly, and I gained invaluable experience working alongside them.

As a regulatory pharmacist, I learnt to evaluate investigational products for clinical trials and qualified as a Good Clinical Practice inspector. This gave me valuable experience, particularly in witnessing Malaysia's development in First-in-Human trials. NPRA also gave me the opportunity to pursue my Master of Research in Experimental Cancer Medicine at The University of Manchester from 2017 to 2018, for which I remain grateful to the agency, the Ministry of Health Malaysia and Clinical Research Malaysia.

اوسها تقوى مولیا

UiTM di hatiku



Istiadat Konvokesyen
UiTM Ke-79
(2013)

Beyond technical knowledge, my years at NPRA taught me to stay curious, collaborate effectively, appreciate different perspectives and commit to continuous learning. At the same time, I have always admired academicians, who play an important role in bringing research from the laboratory to human studies and eventually to the public.

So, why transition to academia after more than a decade as a regulatory pharmacist? It was not an overnight decision. Throughout my career, I realised that I genuinely enjoyed sharing knowledge, delivering presentations and interacting with people. I also held a deep passion for research, although I rarely had the time to pursue it. Most importantly, I found fulfilment in helping someone understand a concept that I had taken the time to explain.

Leave a career and an organisation that shaped so much of who I am was not easy. However, changing my career does not mean changing who I am. Instead, the invaluable experiences I gained along the way will become part of what I give back to society and to UiTM, which has truly always remained di hatiku.

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Returning to UiTM has felt both new and familiar. The dewan kuliah, tutorial rooms and laboratories may look different, but the purpose remains the same — learning, questioning and growing. Reconnecting with my former lecturers as colleagues is something I truly value. I could not admire them more, seeing all they have accomplished over the years and now having the opportunity to work alongside them.

I am completely new to academia, and I know I still have much to learn. I return not only as an academic, but also as a learner — seeking guidance from my colleagues and growing along the way.

"Perhaps the most meaningful part of this journey is simply coming back to where it all began. I once entered UiTM as a pharmacy student, unsure of where my career would take me. Now, I am back as a lecturer, bringing with me a decade of experience from a career I could never have imagined for myself. For me, becoming a lecturer is not the end of my journey as a regulatory pharmacist; it is simply a new way of continuing that mission — by sharing what I have learned and, hopefully, inspiring the next generation of pharmacists."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Nur Atiqah Kamal Rodin is a Pharmacology & Life Sciences Lecturer at the Faculty of Pharmacy, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). An alumna of the faculty, she spent more than a decade as a regulatory pharmacist at the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA), Ministry of Health Malaysia, specialising in the evaluation of investigational products for clinical trials. She has now returned to her alma mater to pursue her calling in teaching, mentorship, and academic research.

