

Diversity in medical schools 'crucial'

By PEARL LEE

THE new Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine provides a model of education that differs from that of the other two medical schools in Singapore.

Speaking at the official opening of the annexe building of Nanyang Technological University's (NTU) medical school, Education Minister Heng Swee Keat said yesterday it is crucial that medical schools offer different models of education to meet the country's evolving health-care needs.

This diversity allows Singapore to tap the strengths of the various approaches to medical education, he said.

"Our health-care system must remain responsive, and our health-care professionals must be prepared to continually develop new capabilities to meet rising public expectations and increas-

ing demand for more specialised services," he said.

The three-storey annexe building, located in NTU's Novena campus on Mandalay Road, has been named the Toh Kian Chui Annex. This is to recognise the \$20 million gift from the Toh Kian Chui Foundation, named after the entrepreneur and philanthropist who started one of the first road construction companies in Singapore.

The annexe will house facilities such as a 188-seat lecture theatre, a 66-seat seminar room, an interim library and a rooftop terrace.

With matching funds from the Government, the gift will amount to \$50 million. It will be used to fund a distinguished professorship, up to 25 scholarships annually and a gold medal for top-performing medical students.

The building's opening marks the completion of the first phase of the school's infrastructural de-

velopment. The next phase will feature a Clinical Sciences Building which will house classrooms, research labs and collaborative spaces for its staff and students.

The medical school – the third in Singapore – is a partnership between NTU and Imperial College London. It opened its doors in August this year to 54 students.

The other two medical schools are the National University of Singapore's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and the Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School.

The Novena campus is near medical centres such as the Communicable Disease Centre and National Neuroscience Institute.

Health Minister Gan Kim Yong announced last month that the Novena precinct will be transformed into Health City Novena, a 17ha integrated health-care complex, by 2030.

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