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SINGAPORE

NTU admits more medical students this year

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By Sharon See

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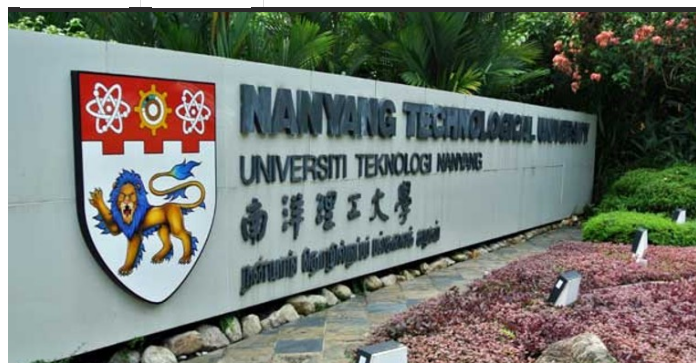
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The university expanded its intake by more than a third this
year and also welcomed its first polytechnic graduate.

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Nanyang Technological University

CAPTION

SINGAPORE: Nanyang Technological University's (NTU) Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine has expanded its intake by more than a third. It is taking in 78 students this year, up from 54 who formed the inaugural intake last year. The university hopes to take in 150 students in four years' time.

The White Coat Ceremony - the white coat being a symbol of the medical profession - marked these 78 students' initiation into medicine. NTU said most of the students who were admitted scored three As or more at the GCE 'A' Levels, or had near perfect International Baccalaureate scores.

The students were handpicked from the 330 who were shortlisted for a series of mini interviews. In all, the university received more than 800 applications.

Professor James Best, dean of the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine at NTU, said: "Last year's group was also extremely capable academically, but this year's group has higher scores. But what is just as important is that both last year and this year, we have students who have done very well in what we call the Multiple Mini Interviews. That is a test to assess communication skills and also whether students have the right attitudes to make good doctors."

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This year, the school also took in its first and only polytechnic graduate. Mr Russell Chuah studied biomedical science at Singapore Polytechnic and graduated with a grade point average of 3.96 out of 4.

Mr Chuah said: "Initially, I went to poly because I wanted to be a biomedical researcher, but things happened in poly and then you realise that it may not be suitable for you. I chose medicine. I think it is a very noble profession because you dedicate your time and energy to helping people get better. Even though it will be very challenging, it will be very exciting and meaningful as well."

Students at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine graduate with a joint NTU-Imperial medicine degree. Currently, all the students are Singaporeans, but it is considering admitting international students in the future.

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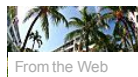
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