

NTU launches new PhD programme in medicine



File photo of NTU medical students

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Nanyang Technological University (NTU) is giving Singapore's talent pool in medical research a shot in the arm with the launch of a new PhD programme in medicine.

The four-year PhD programme by research will be offered by NTU's Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKCMedicine), and will kick off in January 2016. It will have an initial intake of 10 students which will be increased gradually.

The innovative programme will admit the brightest students from backgrounds as diverse as the natural and clinical sciences, engineering, and mathematics. Students will be equipped with the research skills necessary to address the healthcare challenges facing Singapore, such as metabolic disorders, infectious diseases, neurological and psychiatric disorders, and skin disease.

The programme will be shaped by Singapore's healthcare needs and delivered with several innovative features. It will include clinical attachments for students without a clinical background to provide a deeper understanding of local healthcare needs.

Students on the PhD programme will be able to choose from three different pathways for their research training.

The first will see the students based mainly at LKCMedicine, with a three to six-month overseas attachment. The second option will also see students based mainly at LKCMedicine, coupled with a six to 12-month attachment with an industry partner.

The third pathway will see them undertake their research project at both LKCMedicine and Imperial College London. The students will spend at least 12 months at Imperial, NTU's partner in its joint medical school.

For the final year, all students will be based at LKCMedicine to prepare their thesis for submission and examination.

To ensure their research remains focussed on clinical needs, students will be supervised by two members of LKCMedicine's faculty, at least one of whom is medically qualified. For those choosing to complete a project at LKCMedicine and Imperial, they will also be co-supervised by a member of Imperial's faculty.

By 2030, close to 2 million people in Singapore will live with chronic conditions and one in five residents will be over the age of 65. Older people and those suffering from chronic diseases often require longer and more frequent hospital stays, putting additional strain on healthcare resources.

Through the new PhD programme in medicine, NTU aims to nurture the next generation of biomedical scientists who can lead their fields by delivering innovations to healthcare and treatment that improve the quality of lives of patients in Singapore and around the world.

LKCMedicine Dean Professor James Best said: "Our innovative PhD programme leverages our research expertise and international partnerships, especially with Imperial College London, to equip students with the scientific, interpersonal and management skills required of the next generation of leaders in health policy, medical research and industry."

Applicants from non-clinical backgrounds should have a good degree in a relevant field. A Master's degree is not a pre-requisite but an advantage.

Applicants with clinical backgrounds should have a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) and identifiable research experience preferably in the form of a Master's degree.

All students will receive a solid foundation in basic and clinical research concepts, methods relevant to modern biomedical research, and a broad exposure across the range of expertise within the wider NTU community before specialising in their chosen research area.

Applications are now open and will close on 31 August 2015. Interested applicants can log on to: www.lkcmedicine.ntu.edu.sg

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