

NTU's medical school officially opens

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FOUR years after admitting its first batch of students, Singapore's third and newest medical school, the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine (LKCMedicine), was officially declared open on Monday.

The school was built in partnership between the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Imperial College London.

Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, who graced the opening ceremony at NTU's new Clinical Sciences Building in Mandalay Road, said in his speech that Singaporeans today enjoy good healthcare with "high standards and good outcomes", but that the country is grappling with the challenges of a rapidly ageing population, which is why there is a need to transform the healthcare system.

"Medical training is the foundation of future practice," said Mr Teo, who is also Coordinating Minister for National Security and chairman of the National Research Foundation.

"It is therefore important that our medical students and professionals are familiar with innovations in medical research and practice, and serve with heart to deliver holistic care for our patients," he added.

The other two medical schools in Singapore are at the National University of Singapore (NUS), which offers an undergraduate programme, and the Duke-NUS Medical School, which has a graduate-entry programme.



Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean with students of Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine at the opening. The pioneer batch, comprising 54 students, is set to graduate in 2018.

PHOTO: NTU

LKCMedicine is named after the founder of the Lee Foundation, the late Lee Kong Chian, a renowned business leader and philanthropist.

In 2011, the foundation donated a sum of S\$150 million towards the new school, with half that amount going directly to needy students.

LKCMedicine is unique in that it has a dual-campus structure: Its students benefit from resources and experts at NTU's main campus near Jurong West, and also at Health City Novena.

The 20-storey Clinical Sciences Building, the academic centre of the developing Health City Novena, is a stone's throw from Tan Tock Seng

Hospital (TTSH), Ren Ci Community Hospital and the National Skin Centre.

The National Healthcare Group (NHG), which manages TTSH, is the medical school's primary clinical partner. This is the first time the group has a medical school as part of its Novena healthcare campus.

Lim Chuan Poh, the chairman of LKCMedicine's governing board, praised the work of NTU, Imperial and NHG for having fulfilled a "long-held ambition".

"For Imperial, it was the right opportunity to prove its impact globally. For NTU, it was to start a medical school. For NHG, it was to have an academic presence on campus," he said.

The first intake of 54 students are

expected to graduate in July 2018. Just two weeks ago, the school took in its fifth batch, which means that there are students enrolled in all five years of the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree programme.

Mark Field, the UK's Minister of State (Asia and the Pacific) in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, was also at the opening ceremony.

Hailing the wide-ranging collaboration between Singapore and the UK, particularly in the fields of education, research and science, he said: "The UK government believes that by promoting science, innovation and life-long learning, we will also help promote economic growth and future prosperity."