‘Virtual tutor soon for NTU medical students

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Students at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine may soon be assigned virtual tutors that can adapt to learning styles and can guide them towards the right subjects. This comes as NTU announced its collaboration with technology firm Nanang Technology University to develop an artificial intelligence (AI)-based e-learning platform.

This virtual tutor could be in the form of a chatbot, a voice-activated butler program with voice command, or be integrated with the school’s traditional teaching sessions. The aim is to equip medical students with an additional learning resource to help them absorb knowledge more easily.

For example, when a student wants to recall content on a specific topic, the ‘tutor’ should be able to retrieve the relevant content, help identify key information and direct the student towards the application of the knowledge they have learned. This knowledge will be available to students in class, online, and at home. The project is also flexible, allowing students to use the virtual tutor on-the-go.

“Artificial intelligence and deep learning technology will enable NTU to provide personalized education to students with their own unique characteristics,” said Professor Kam Chan Hin, NTU’s deputy provost of education.

He added: “This is an important milestone in NTU’s move in the next five years towards technology-enhanced learning, which uses multimedia components such as 2D or 3D animations, simulations, and augmented and virtual reality.”

Graduate students are also turning to technology for a more personalised education experience.

Associate Professor Tan Swee Liang, director of the Singapore Management University’s Centre for Excellence in Teaching, said faculty members and instructors are encouraged to use technology to teach and to educate to students’ needs, preferences, specific interests and rates of progress.

A recent initiative, she said, used a platform that could detect weaknesses in students and offer them tailored learning activities, based on their responses to the previous quiz, as well as the knowledge confidence level they indicated. The quizzes were used to gauge their level of competence to determine the next class level.