

## Training GPs Efficiently at DTU

DTU has completed its first year of General Practitioner training. In the second year DTU has received almost double the number of applications, with many outstanding applicants. This attractive new course, based on well-developed programs from American universities, gives students the confidence to come to DTU to study.



*Associate Professor Nguyen Ngoc Minh*

Associate Professor Nguyen Ngoc Minh, DTU Vice-Provost of Medicine, Pharmacy and Nursing was recently named “Outstanding Manager of the Integration Period” by the Institute of Science Studies for Talents & Human Resources. He was interviewed on General Practitioner education at DTU.

*The General Practitioner programs at most Vietnamese universities last for six years. Recently there has been a move to shorten that by one year. DTU’s program is 7 years long however. Why is there a difference, Professor?*

- Yes, it is true that, so far, Vietnamese universities have offered six-year General Practitioner programs. However, the University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Ho Chi Minh City plans to offer a new four-year Bachelor of Medicine degree, after which students can choose from the two disciplines, Practicing Physician or Research Physician, with several further years of study. This model may be good but I wonder how new graduates would perform and how they would be affected if that level of degree was not

accepted by the government, unless they continued studying. A key point is that, however the major is structured, the training of general practitioners needs much preparation because doctors are vital to maintain people's health and need to accumulate as much experience as possible. In the US, students take four years to obtain a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry or Biology and must then study for a further four years to become a Physician, after which they can become a Specialist in another two to four years. So, which model should Vietnam adopt?

After having researching which model was the best, DTU decided to enroll students for seven years, to dedicate the first year to teaching general and special English. DTU is currently experimenting with teaching several basic science courses, such as Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and others in English, to test the students' acquisition capabilities. With their improved English level, they can study more easily for the next six years to become a General Practitioner, because most of the practical and research materials are published in English.



*DTU Medical students*

*The first General Practitioner class has just completed its first year of English. Can you tell us whether their level now meets the requirement to study and research using English documentation from now on?*

- The enrollment criteria for the General Practitioner program are relatively high and the first year of methodical English study has generated positive results. In addition to creating a good foundation in English, students have now started to access basic and advanced documentation in English, with the help of their teachers. Of the 83 students, 3 students obtained excellent grades and 22, or 30%, finished with honors. Vietnamese university students are generally weak in English and afraid to learn it. The measures

that DTU has taken planning its curriculum, however, has made them more self-confident and, at the same time, attracted more students to sign up for the General Practitioner program this year, with a total of 138 students. The number of new students has risen, from a minimum of 20 to 30 admissions.

*In addition to its focus on English, DTU's General Practitioner program has many other advantages, making students confident enough to enroll in ever high numbers, doesn't it Professor?*

- To improve the quality of education and enable graduates to satisfy labor requirements, DTU has consulted with appropriate universities in Vietnam, the US, France, Germany, Australia, Singapore and so on and signed agreements to train doctors and nurses, using the most advanced information and methods.

DTU has partnered with the University of Illinois in Chicago, which has the largest number of Medical and Pharmacy programs and students in the US, and ranks with the University of Pittsburgh amongst the top 15 universities offering such programs. DTU has also built a network of Physics, Chemistry and Biology labs and Pathophysiology, Immunology and Obstetric practice rooms, with modern advanced equipment guaranteed to meet the teaching, studying and research requirements of teachers and students.

DTU has also developed the Center of Visualization & Simulation (CVS), aimed at creating innovative 3D Medical virtual reality simulation applications, to improve the quality of medical education. DTU's 3D Anatomical simulation technology was nominated one of the three most outstanding innovations in the 2016 Tri Thuc Tre Vi Giao Duc program, which is currently used by lecturers and students. Students can study in 2D in the computer room, on their smartphones or directly interact in 3D in the projection studio, with a flexible software interface, where they can observe images of the skeleton, the respiratory system, the nervous system and the circulatory system, separate or integrated. This supplements the lack of previous demonstration materials and it gives students views of the human body from different perspectives. All this will ultimately create a difference, to the advantage of the students.



*The virtual 3D human anatomy software*

*Visiting medical universities around the world, we sometimes notice a difference, where schools are devoid of students, because most of them are at hospital for clinical training. Is this an issue at DTU?*

- Last-year students practice at the hospital. However, medical students in developed countries study using a credit-based system, allowing them to study any way they want. Vietnam is steadily trying to offer students more autonomy, but, under the current system, students must be controlled by academic advisors, managers and inspectors, to impose strict discipline from the start. However, DTU is very much focused on practice. With only around one hundred students, which is five to ten times less than traditional medical schools, placing students in hospitals for practice is easier. The university currently has partnerships with 18 large and small hospitals where students can train under well-known physicians and get clinical practice with patients, at the Danang Hospital, the Danang C Hospital, the Military Medical Hospital 17, the Ministry of Public Security Hospital 199, the Quang Nam Central General Hospital, the Family Hospital and others. The university is also pushing for the construction of its own diagnostic center and practice hospital.

*The Danang and Central Highlands regions do not currently have enough doctors. With a yearly enrollment of only 100, will it be difficult to provide the required number of physicians?*

- DTU is planning future educational standards and by 2030 it will double enrollment to meet community requirements. In doing so, the university will need to consider several issues, including the quality of its lecturers and facilities, or build its own hospital. When the successful training of additional skilled graduates can be guaranteed, DTU will increase its enrollment.

Thank you Professor.

*(Media Center)*