

S\$120k nursing scholarship to cover diploma, degree

SINGAPORE – In a push to enhance the attractiveness of nursing as a profession, the Ministry of Health (MOH) has launched a S\$120,000-scholarship that will see a student begin with diploma studies and completing the programme with a degree at the end of five years.

Open to Singaporean secondary school leavers with outstanding O-Level results, the Integrated Nursing Scholarship (INS) will provide full coverage for tuition fees and other compulsory fees, allowances, commencement and distinction awards and sponsorship for scholar development programmes.

Scholars will go through a three-year nursing diploma programme at Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) or Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP). They can then pursue a 19-month nursing degree course with the Singapore Institute of Technology, while top INS scholars can opt for a one-year nursing degree programme in reputable overseas universities.

The INS programme also pro-

vides internships at the Health Ministry; MOH Holdings, the holding company of Singapore's public healthcare assets; and public healthcare institutions.

Upon completion of their degree programme, the scholars will be required to serve a three-year bond in the public healthcare sector.

Sixteen-year-old Shermaine Tay, who completed her O-Levels last year and has an interest in nursing, welcomes the new scholarship.

Apart from the financial support it offers, Ms Tay said: "I'll also get a job afterwards ... and (it will) ensure a place for me in university."

Ms Elaine Yip, 23, who works for a nursing agency, said the scholarship is a "really good deal", but expressed concern about the eligibility criteria.

Among other things, applicants must have O-level results of L1R2B2 (language, two relevant and two best subjects) of 10 points and below.

Ms Yip said: "(The criteria) make it very hard to get (the scholarship) ... 10 points, that person must really love

and want to be a nurse."

The aggregates of the lowest-ranked students admitted into NP and NYP's nursing courses last year were both 26 points.

The INS is the latest MOH move to raise the nursing profile in Singapore. Other efforts include introducing pay increases for nurses in 2014, and launching a book on the local nursing profession last year.

Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, and Ministry of Health, said yesterday: "The Integrated Nursing Scholarship aims to attract more talented young Singaporeans into nursing early and nurture them into future nursing leaders. The launch of the integrated diploma to degree scholarship is timely and will further enhance the attractiveness of nursing as a profession."

Applications for the INS will be open from Monday to Jan 31 through the BrightSparks Scholarship website (<http://student.brightsparks.com.sg/profile/mohh/index.php>). **FRANCISLAW**

APPLICATIONS OPEN ON MONDAY

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