

Course to teach health workers infocomm skills

■ BY THAM YUEN-C

HEALTH-CARE professionals will get the chance to pick up information technology skills by taking a new course at the National University of Singapore.

The programme will also help people already working in IT to delve into the health sector.

It will be helmed by the School of Computing, as part of an initiative by the Infocomm Development Authority that aims to groom talent in Singapore.

Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts, said yesterday: "The Government is committed to collaborating with our partners to develop infocomm talents who can respond to global industry shifts."

About 600 infocomm professionals and 1,000 health-care staff will take the course in the next three years. The university is working with major organisations such as Ministry of Health Holdings and the Integrated Health Information Systems.

Dr Yaacob said the infocomm sector has developed rapidly over the past few years, with more than 80 foreign start-ups setting up operations here since 2008. Multinational technology firms have also continued to invest in Singapore, with Google setting up a data centre here, for example.



The minister announced the new course at a gala dinner at the Shangri-La Hotel for the annual Singapore Computer Systems IT Leader Awards.

Six infocomm professionals were honoured. Ms Wu Choy Peng (above), group chief information officer for Neptune Orient Lines, became only the second woman to win the IT Leader of the Year award since it was introduced in 1997. "When I was a rookie, many of my managers were females," said the 48-year-old. "I'm very happy that I'm one of the few who are still around."

Mr Lim Swee Cheang, director and chief executive of the Institute of Systems Science, was inducted into the IT Leader Awards Hall of Fame.

Mr Kelly Choo, vice-president of business development and strategy at Brandtology, and Mr Joel Lou, chief executive officer of JustCommodity Software Solutions, were both named Young Professional of the Year. Students Nicholas Ooi Hsien Loong from Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Zhang Lizi from Nanyang Technological University received the IT Youth award.

"Singapore is very conducive for technopreneurs and I think there will be more and more start-ups," said Mr Choo, 31. "Will we ever be like Silicon Valley? That may not be a fair comparison but we have our own niche."