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Tajuk : Sarawakian nurses should be multilingual

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'Sarawakian nurses should be multilingual'

By **Lim How Pim**
reporters@thehomepost.com

KOTA SAMARAHAN: Nursing professionals and students must strive to be multilingual to better serve multicultural Sarawak.

Assistant Minister of Public Health Datuk Dr Jerip Susil said Sarawakians should speak at least four languages – their mother tongue, Bahasa Malaysia, English and Mandarin – to improve their communication skills.

"In Sarawak, perhaps Iban should be picked up as the fifth language. They need to be multilingual to be able to communicate with patients

and adapt to the multicultural environment.

"At the same time, I hope well-trained nurses are 'saleable' not just in Malaysia but also outside the country," he said when opening the seventh Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) Nursing Students' Conference 2016.

Dr Jerip opined that nurses trained in the state ought to be in demand in countries such as Singapore, Saudi Arabia, New Zealand and Australia.

He said the nursing industry would continue to grow given ageing populations worldwide.

"Ageing society happens in not only developed countries but



Dr Jerip (left) symbolically presents RM20,000 for the annual conference to Ahmad Hata. Also seen are Fadzil (second right) and organising chairman Mohd Azrul Syafiq.

developing countries as well," he said, adding that sufficient and

adequate staffing would be key to meet the desired healthcare

practitioner-client ratio.

Meanwhile, Unimas vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim Suaidi said optimal quality care began with effective staffing. "When this is achieved, nurses are more ready to engage in delivering high quality care," he said in a speech read by deputy vice-chancellor (student affairs and alumni) Prof Mohd Fadzil Abd Rahman.

Kadim said the conference would hopefully enlighten participants on the latest strategies, knowledge, research as well as best practices to promote improvements in nursing outcomes through quality, safety and staffing.

Unimas Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences dean Prof Dr Ahmad Hata Rasit said caring for the sick has become more complicated given today's demand for high quality and safe nursing care.

"High quality of nursing care is a holistic approach to physical, mental and emotional needs. Nurses have to be efficient in delivering nursing care with the sense of humanity and compassion," he said.

Dr Ahmad Hata said nurses must constantly acquire new knowledge to meet the needs of patients as well as adapt to changes in healthcare technology.