

Hospitals, Unimas praised for equipment

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Visiting students say these institutions superior than those at home

By Doreena Naeg

KUCHING: Pre-medical students from Cardiff Centre of Excellence, Cardiff, United Kingdom, are impressed with the state-of-the-art equipment in the local private hospitals as well as modern facilities and amenities in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas).

"The equipment and machines available in the private hospitals are far more advanced and superior than those in the United Kingdom," observed the students.

Malaysia, said the teacher in charge, Yasmin Sarwar, was a newly developed country with a striving economy hence the modern high tech equipment whereas the UK has been established a long time ago. "That probably explains the less modern equipment."

At the same time, the administrative system practised in local private hospitals was more organised and orderly than those in

the UK, they added.

Students of the centre, Jessica Howell, Carlie Cummings, Roopa Patel, Shabinara Rahman and Johana Lai told The Borneo Post this when they were visiting St Teresa's Secondary School here yesterday.

According to them, the UK is practising national health care that is free for all hence the long queue to see a doctor. "Unless it is a life threatening case, patients have to take their place in the long queue to get medical treatment."

There were no choices, they said, even for those able to afford private medical attention.

"The only alternative is for the patients to fly out of Britain to seek medical treatment elsewhere in Europe, particularly France as it is the nearest country."

Otherwise, if patients insisted on private medical treatment, they had to get a referral from government medical practitioners and that also meant waiting in queue, they added.

The medical options that

Malaysians enjoyed, said Yasmin, were excellent.

"Patients can choose to seek medical treatment from private or government hospitals depending on their preference. Most importantly they are given a choice."

The six students from the UK, ranging from 17 to 18 years of age, are in Kuching for a goodwill ambassador programme and they have so far visited Unimas, Normah Medical Specialist Centre, Kuching Specialist Centre and St Teresa's Secondary School. They will be visiting the Salvation Army's Children Home today to teach English to the children.

The programme is aimed at giving the students the exposure and experience before they head for medical schools.

"Many of them have never left the UK and this programme will give them the opportunity to see for themselves what other countries' are practising. It will definitely broaden their scope and knowledge."

This trip is the first arranged by the centre and Kuching is the first choice.

"I choose Kuching because it is safe and I am familiar with the place as I have stayed here before," Yasmin said.

Besides that, she also wants to expose the students to the multi culture of Malaysia and the racial harmony enjoyed by Malaysians.

"Britain is becoming multi culture too and for that reason I want them to see for themselves that they are not alone and if Malaysia can live in harmony so can Great Britain too."

On a lighter note, the students are drawn to the warmth and hospitality of the locals.

"We are all very well received," said Yasmin, adding that the trip's success was hugely contributed by the warm reception of the places they had visited.

The students will return to the UK this weekend, ending their two-week visit to the State.