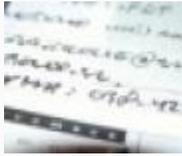


**on 24 February 2014**

## **'More nurses too if Unimas has own teaching hospital'**



KUCHING: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) is still hoping for its own teaching hospital to be materialise, to complement its 20-year-old Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

While the university understands the financial constraints of the government, deputy vice-chancellor Mohd Fadzil Abdul Rahman said a teaching hospital was important for Sarawak to produce more specialists, to enhance quality, especially in research and development for its medical students and professors.

"It would also attract more doctors and specialists to come to the state because we have the facility for research on diseases. We will be able to produce more specialists and medical personnel," he told the press after officiating at the opening ceremony of 5th Unimas Nursing Students' Conference at the university in Kota Samarahan on Saturday.

Dean of Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Professor Dr Ahmad Hata Rasit and head of Nursing Department of Unimas Associate Professor Dr Zabidah Putit, head of Nursing Department of University Malaysia Associate Professor Dr Khatijah Lim, and organising chairperson Natally Henry were among those present.

Fadzil elaborated that with its own teaching hospital, Unimas would not have to send its medical students, nursing students and lecturers to faraway hospitals which incurred extra cost for the university as well as displacement for a certain period of time.

"At the moment, we have to send our medical students and lecturers to Sarawak General Hospital, Miri Hospital, Serian Hospital and Sibu Hospital," he added.

He also mentioned that if their teaching hospital materialises, they would also be able to train more nurses, while pointing out that currently they could not accept more than 50 students per intake.

Earlier in his speech, he said the nursing conference has attracted 750 participants from all over Malaysia. Themed 'Nurses: A force for change — A vital resource for health', the conference is an important message for nurses and others at large.

As the largest group of health professionals, and who are closest to the population, nurses have a great responsibility to improve the health of the population and to achieve better health for everyone, he said.

"Today, nurses struggle to keep up with new challenges such as patients' demands, environment complexities, new on-the-job skills, complex working systems, new emerging diseases and so forth.

"It is imperative that nurses continue to seek ways to learn, relearn and unlearn relevant knowledge and skills, so they are constantly upscaling themselves. As nurses are at the forefront of medical services, there is a great sense of responsibility and dedication required to sustain the interest in the job, with the increasing complexities emerging from various needs," he said.

"Skilled nurses are an asset and they are able to transform lives of many. With collegiality and collaboration, such as what we are witnessing in today's conference, nurses are able to share knowledge, skills and stories about best practices in a positive manner," he added.

It is expected of nurses to be able to demonstrate care throughout their service in the health field.

He said skills like timely decision-making and communication were vital for nurses to master because these skills are used every day when dealing with patients, doctors and stakeholders.

The goals of the conference are to advance nursing knowledge in the aspects of education, practice and research; and to discuss current nursing roles as resources for health; to nurture leadership skills in nursing; and finally, to promote positive change and improvement in the quality of care and well-being of patients.

Unimas final year nursing students benefited from the event as they were able to showcase their student projects, posters, and so forth, to participants at the conference.

Source: The Borneo Post