

A profession in pharmacy

FOR International Medical University (IMU) alumnus Lim Kean Ping, becoming a pharmacist was not his first career choice.

His first inclination to be a pharmacist rose after he suffered from a serious drug allergy, which resulted in a seven-day hospital stay.

Lim's initial intention was pretty simple – he wanted to be a pharmacist and manage his own medicine.

However, it has changed since then and he is now an advocate for the pharmacy profession.

“Choosing IMU was simply based on the strong recommendations from seniors. Undoubtedly, my four-year BPharm studies at IMU was one of the best experiences in my life.

“I think the unique education model offered by IMU is not just about the syllabus but the holistic approach to transforming students into competent and confident medical professionals. I am proud to say that most IMU BPharm graduates are always up to standard and are well prepared mentally,” he said.

After graduating in 2011, Lim chose to undergo his provisional training at Hospital Tawau, Sabah.

After completing his service in the government hospital, he started his community pharmacy practice in an independent pharmacy. By then, he realised that many people do not really understand the role of a pharmacist.

“I started spending more time with each walk-in patient, from medication reconciliation, at MTAC (Medication Therapy Adherence Clinic) to give education counselling to those who are interested in the pharmacy profession. This, as a start, was not easy. However, I truly enjoyed the gradual process of gaining trust and recognition by the community that I served as I believe that we play a very significant role in primary care settings,” said Lim.

An opportunity kicked in when local Chinese radio station Ai FM invited Lim to speak on a live programme regarding dispensing separation, together with a well-known paediatrician.

The programme went well and both were given equal chance to deliver their points and concerns.

This was followed by a two full-page report in the *Oriental Daily* newspaper on the same issue.

“It reaffirmed my belief that pharmacists need to be more proactive in promoting our profession. With the support from MPS Young Pharmacist Chapter, we gathered a group of young pharmacists and started a weekly column in *Oriental Daily* for nine months in 2014,” he said.

Lim is currently working as a business optimisation manager at AM PM Pharmacy, a rapidly growing community pharmacy chain with 24 branches to date in Johor.



In his efforts to build a sustainable primary healthcare network, Lim took up invitations to share his experiences in engaging the public with pharmacy students.

“I work in various aspects to build a sustainable primary healthcare network, focusing mainly in community pharmacy. I am still actively writing medical columns in magazines and newspapers. For the past two years, I enjoyed my role as a medical commentator for various health-related issues on local radio and television stations. I also took up invitations to share my experiences engaging the public with pharmacy students,” said Lim.

IMU's Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) students have the option to transfer credits in their first two years to the pharmacy programme at the University of Otago, New Zealand or University of Tasmania, Australia.

These international partnerships are a testament to the fact that IMU's innovative education is aligned to global standards.

Students can also opt to complete the entire four-year pharmacy degree in IMU.

The Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) programme will commence in August and September.

If you are inspired to take on a diverse career that involves the safe and effective use of medicines, make an online application today to study IMU's pharmacy programme.

For those who have just completed their SPM and do not have a pre-university qualification, consider enrolling in IMU's one-year Foundation in Science programme – the preferred foundation and direct route for entry into any of the university's local degree programmes.

■ For more information, visit www.imu.edu.my, e-mail start@imu.edu.my or call 03-2731 7272.