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RAPID advances in technology and innovation has spurred various educational fields to keep up with the latest changes in order to produce work-ready graduates. And medical education is no exception.

International Medical University's (IMU) Assoc Prof Dr Kang Yew Beng said things like patients' expectations, how doctors treat their patients, and medicine, are all changing.

"We cannot teach our students using textbooks made in the previous century because the students who are going to graduate are going to be treating current patients."

"Technology is going to change everything," said the Teaching and Learning Technology Enhanced Learning (eLearning) associate dean.

However, Prof Dr Vishna Devi Nadarajah, dean for Teaching and Learning Human Biology, believes technology is merely a tool to enhance learning.

"It cannot be the driving force for change," she said, adding that as increasing focus is placed on higher learning institutes' curriculum as technology advances, assessments among medical students is crucial.

"It should be based on international standards and this is important because we want our graduates to be work ready," she said.

Prof Vishna believes the recurrent issues in the lack of quality among doctors can be tackled through cooperation from medical professionals in the industry and universities.

"While in university, students must have work experiences and should not merely work in a simulated environment such as their universities as it does not give them the real experience."

"Curriculum must be designed with real work experiences and in a way where students are offered the opportunity to work beyond borders," she said, acknowledging the Higher Education Ministry's effort in introducing the 2u2i programme among public universities.

Introduced last year, 2u2i requires undergraduates to study on campus for two years

# Technology, a tool to enhance learning



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before interning in industries for another two.

Prof Vishna said while a hospital serves as the traditional workplace for a doctor, working in hospitals alone is not enough.

"Many might branch out to become general practitioners, while some might even work in community clinics, so an attachment is important," she added.

In order to innovate and learn from the shortcomings of the industry, she said it is important to have conferences with world experts where latest innovations, standards and best practices are discussed.

And IMU has been doing just that for the past 12 years by hosting the International Medical Education Conference (IMEC).

Prof Vishna said before the inception of



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IMEC, there was no conference where medical educators could come together to discuss standards, best practices, and share research findings.

"Since external expertise from around the world came to IMU for our internal meetings, we thought it would be a good idea to ask them to stay on and share their expertise with everyone in the region."

"For us academicians, attending a conference is like going for a spa! We get rejuvenated with ideas and things we can do to improve the quality of education in our institutions," she said of the conference held last week with the theme "Health Professions Education Without Borders".

Prof Vishna said in the past, a large number of IMEC participants came from out-



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side the country.

However, the last three years has seen an increase in participation by local universities.

"From the rise in the number of medical schools to the long waiting list for graduates to get their housemanship, Malaysia is not alone," she said.

Teaching and Learning Pharmaceutical Chemistry associate dean Assoc Prof Dr Hui Meng said due to technological advancement, health education is important, no matter the location.

"The theme is not only relevant to medical education, but also to the training of other health-related professions such as dentistry, pharmacy and nursing," she added.