

Memorable time for IMU Pharmacy students in Japan

THE elective module is compulsory and offered in Semester 6 in the Bachelor of Pharmacy (BPharm) programme at International Medical University (IMU).

This module gives students the opportunity to acquire knowledge and enhance competencies in a pharmacy-related area or non-pharmacy-related area in a minimum four-week duration.

Two students from the BP114 cohort of IMU BPharm programme, Branda Tan Wan Yi and Brandon Teo Yu Shen, chose to complete their elective programme at Hiroshima University, Japan.

They spent their first two weeks on the activities planned by head of pharmaceutical service department at Hiroshima University Hospital Prof Hiroaki Matsuo.

They started by visiting pharmaceutical company Wakunaga Pharmaceutical Co, Ltd and a pharmaceutical distribution centre Everlth Co, Ltd in Hiroshima. They also visited a private hospital, public hospital and chain pharmacy within Hiroshima city.

The dispensary in Japan was an eye-opener for them as pharmacists filled the prescription with the help of a barcode system – something rarely seen in Malaysia.

They were also introduced to different departments in the Hiroshima University Hospital, such as the intensive care unit (ICU), surgical intensive care unit (SICU), emergency department (ER), clinical trials,

inpatient and outpatient dispensary departments.

For the following two weeks, both were assigned to a department of their choice in the Pharmaceutical Sciences Department of Hiroshima University. Tan was put in the Microbiology Laboratory, while Teo was in Pharmacognosy Laboratory.

“Under the supervision of Prof Teruo Kuroda and Prof Takonori Kumagai, I did some interesting experiments which increased my knowledge on antibiotics and resistant bacteria,” said Tan.

“First, I inoculated the spore of *Streptomyces lavendulae* in a culture medium, then I test the activity of this bacteria on *Bacillus subtilis*.

“In another experiment, I tested the minimum inhibitory concentration on antibiotics for a few strains of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Staphylococcus aureus*.

“From this experiment, I need to determine which bacteria strain is resistant to the antibiotics.

“I enjoyed these experiments and I learned extra knowledge throughout the experiment,” said Tan.

Teo was under the wing of Prof Matsunami Katsuyoshi: “I have performed various biological assays such as anti-A549 (anticancer) assay, anti-Leishmania assay, DPPH assay, antimicrobial (antibacterial and antifungal) assay, glucosidase assay, and



Tan (ninth from left) and Teo (11th from left) visiting a Japanese sword forging factory.

acetylcholinesterase inhibitory assay which helped me to develop skills on handling of cell lines for my Semester 7 research project.

“Together with Prof Matsunami as well as three international students from Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam respectively, we went to the Hiroshima Prefecture Tree Planting Center to collect 30 different species of plant samples and screen for the bioactivities of the plant samples using the assays mentioned.

“The moments I had in pharmacognosy laboratory was truly unforgettable and enjoyable as I gained not only experiences and knowledge but also friendship with my laboratory mates.”

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

These international partnerships are a testament to IMU’s educational alignment to global standards.

Students also could complete the entire four-year pharmacy degree in IMU.

The next commencement for the Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) programme is in July and September.

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

If you have just completed your SPM and do not have pre-university qualification, consider enrolling in the one-year IMU Foundation in Science, the preferred foundation and direct route for entry into any of the university’s degree programmes.

■ For details, visit www.imu.edu.my, e-mail start@imu.edu.my or call IMU at 03-2731 7272.