

Pharmacy students undertake experiential learning at hospital

FIVE third year IMU pharmacy students, Karmelia Chan, Wong Jin-Ying, Lee Ming Zhao, Kok Yu Qian and Sellam Elangovan had the opportunity to undergo a pharmacy internship at Pantai Hospital Kuala Lumpur (PHKL) as part of their elective module in Semester 6.

During this internship, they were rotated individually to several departments including Outpatient and Inpatient Pharmacy, Clinical, Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN), Cytotoxic Drug Reconstitution (CDR) and Main Store. Karmelia, Jin-Ying and Ming Zhao relate their experience here.

'At PHKL, there are several outpatient pharmacies catering to the variety of specialties there. We were exposed to the process of receiving prescriptions from the specialist clinics. From there, we assisted in prescription screening followed by packing of medications. In a way, we are able to familiarise ourselves with brand names of medications. At that time, we had a glimpse of the implementation of e-prescriptions as part of an initiative to integrate IT into our healthcare system.

The highlight of our clinical rotation is being part of the ward rounds with other healthcare professionals.

They observed nurses, dieticians and even a physiotherapist having patient-centred discussions in a multidisciplinary approach in the hopes of giving the best possible treatment to patients.

Their attachment in CDR exposed us to the various responsibilities of a CDR pharmacist such as in handling cytotoxic drugs, counselling patients on their oral chemotherapy regimen, and maintaining the clean room.

They observed that counselling of oral chemotherapy emphasises on the side effects of the drug in contrast to other oral medications especially to patients taking it for the first time.

This experience has increased awareness on practicing good aseptic techniques, protective gowning procedures and principles of clean room design that have been focused of the pharmacy degree syllabus.

Not only that, the rotation to the main store of PHKL provided us with basic knowledge and overview of the organisation structure of the Pharmacy Department in terms of stock procurement, distribution, and control.

The interns observed the importance of understanding stock movement, drug usage patterns, maintaining maximum and minimum stock levels, and monitoring the expiry date to keep up with the hospital's demand.

They were also briefed on the application of Good Storage Practice (GSP) in maintaining cleanliness, sanitation, and security of the store.

'Internship in PHKL was an eye-opening experience for me. It was an amazing experience with lots of

knowledge gained. Indeed, it was a great opportunity to explore about future career as a hospital pharmacist. I would like to thank IMU for giving us this opportunity and the pharmacists from PHKL for guiding us,' said Sellam.

IMU's Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) students have the option to transfer credits in their first 2 years' curriculum to the pharmacy programme in the University of Otago, New Zealand or University of Tasmania, Australia.

These international partnerships are a clear testament of the alignment of IMU's innovative education to global standards. Students also could complete the entire 4 year pharmacy degree in IMU.

The next commencement for the Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons) programme is in September 2017. If you are inspired on a diverse career that is involved with the safe and effective use of medicines, make an online application today to study our 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.

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