



Thiruchelvam (left) explains Kenny's condition at the press conference while Rosnah (right) looks on.

UMS to free haemophilia patient from wheelchair

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By Chok Sim Yee

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) embarks on the first initiative in Sabah to free 11-year-old haemophilia patient Kenny Sim Yi Hau from his wheelchair under its 'A Life Without Wheelchair, Kenny! - A Haemophilia Patient' project.

Haemophilia is a life-long genetic condition that prevents blood from clotting properly due to the lack of clotting factor. In Kenny's case, he is suffering from Haemophilia A, or a deficiency of clotting factor VIII.

Kenny suffers from a severe form of haemophilia. His condition includes swelling and internal bleeding in knee and ankle, as well as elbow. He is confined to the wheelchair on a regular basis as his condition makes him

unable to walk.

However, things are about to change for the better for Kenny. Under a collaborative clinical venture between Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and the National Blood Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Kenny will seek treatment at Hospital Kuala Lumpur from May 29 to June 3.

He will undergo laboratory assessment and clinical treatment, as well as being attended by hematologists, haemostasis laboratory specialist, orthopaedic surgeon, pathologists and physiotherapists.

The effort was the result of the Haemophilia Health Camp organized by the School of Medicine, UMS in April, following the setting up of its new Haemostasis Laboratory.

UMS deputy vice chancellor Prof Dr Rosnah Ismail said the camp was attended by

35 haemophilia patients from Sabah and Sarawak, as well as 15 patients from Peninsular Malaysia.

Kenny stood out from the crowd during the camp.

"Kenny is a bubbly and intelligent boy, but he was confined to a wheelchair since last year.

"He has painful swelling on his left knee and ankle due to frequent bleeding in the joints," she said at a press conference here yesterday.

Hence, the School of Medicine came out with the project 'A Life Without Wheelchair, Kenny! - A Haemophilia Patient' to help the boy in order for him to lead a normal life. The project is the first in Sabah to assist haemophilia patients.

Upon returning to Sabah, further follow-ups will be done by the Haemostasis Lab and the Duchess of Kent Hospital, Sandakan.

Rosnah added that

public awareness about haemophilia is still relatively low in Sabah, particularly in the rural areas.

She further said psychological and emotional support from the community and the public is important for the parents, as they have to deal with the emotions arising from haemophilia.

The Rotary Club of Likas Bay also pledged to provide assistance to Kenny.

Also present at the press conference were vice president of Rotary Club of Likas Bay, George Ligungjang, past president of Rotary Club Likas Bay, Datuk Dr Johnson Tee, senior lecturer of the Haemostasis Laboratory at the UMS School of Medicine, Dr A Thiruchelvam and deputy dean of the School of Medicine, Associate Prof Dr Muhammad Tauffik Md Noor.