

# UMS first university to start KRIS programme

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) is the first university to start the KPT Prihatin Komuniti Sojahtera (KRIS) through Hospital Universiti Malaysia Sabah (HUMS).

According to HUMS Director Professor Dr Helen Benedict Lasimbang, the KRIS programme was initiated by Ministry of Higher Education in 2021 and focuses on university hospitals providing essential community medical services in rural areas in Malaysia.

Six university hospitals around the country were selected for this project and given funds to operationalize community projects.

UMS, however, was the first to be able to start the project, which is a commendable effort given the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic and the multiple ensuing logistic difficulties," she said in a statement here on Monday.

Helen said on the part of HUMS, the programme also is an effort to change the model hospitals operate radically.

Instead of waiting for the patients to come hospital, as is conventionally the case, we are actively bringing the hospital to the patients.

This significantly reduces the treatment gap and helps us get help to the communities who truly need it," she added.

Helen explained KRIS HUMS will be going to all 22 districts in Sabah in its 24 months of operation.

As Hospital UMS is slated to open to the public by the end of 2022, she said the hospital's services are already beginning to take shape.

There are already fully formed dental, eye, women's health, and



UMS Hospital staff posing for a memorable picture during the KRIS program in Labuan.

mental health services operating out of its polyclinic in Taman Kingfisher and at the UMS health centers.

The KRIS programme hence demonstrates that the HUMS services are ready to operate and transfer to village and community levels, in preparation for the formal opening of the building.

KRIS provides a way for us to give critical medical services back to the community, even before our building opens, especially more so in the light of the Covid pandemic, where there is high fear and anxiety about going into hospital settings.

KRIS thus brings the hospital to the public, allowing rural folks in all 22 districts in Sabah to receive the benefits of a portable, mobile, mini-HUMS,

demonstrating once again that healthcare uberisation and client-centered care is the way forward," said Helen.

Meanwhile, the programme director, Dr Yung Choo Tien, informed that HUMS ran its first KRIS programme at Kampung Wasai in Kiulu, Sabah, back in July 2021.

It was followed by five more iterations in close succession: Kg Raganan (Kiulu), Kg Parapat Laut (Kudat), Kg Malubang (Pitas) and Kg Sorinsim (Kota Marudu).

Each iteration of the KRIS programme was a multidisciplinary effort, intending to replicate a mini-Hospital UMS in each village we went.

Hence, to make a difference, rather than merely providing

basic health checks and screening, HUMS's KRIS programme featured a myriad of booths, providing basic dental services, eye services, cervical and breast cancer screening and sampling services, alcohol counseling services, and mental health screening and interventions.

This is because Sabah has the longest distance in Malaysia from a tertiary hospital to the patients; in Kudat division alone (covering Pitas, Kota Marudu and Kudat districts), patients are on average 150km away from any kind of specialist services," she said.

Choo Tien, who is also HUMS emergency physician, informed that the sixth edition of the KRIS was also successfully organized in Kg Layang-Layangan, Labuan Federation Territory recently.

In the Labuan KRIS programme, a total of 61 patients were treated across all the different booths.

The programme was graced by Director of Industry and Community Collaboration Division KPT, Datuk Mohd Sharil Abdullah.

The distinguished guests were all delighted with the programme offered, as they highlighted that HUMS is a pioneer in providing services that are community-focused on nature, in line with the hospital's core values of being Collaborative, Compassionate, Empowering, Sustainable, and Innovative.

Tawau will be the next destination in Kampung Serunding Baru on Dec 10-12 2021," said Choo Tien.