

# Health care sector needs to be innovative: VC

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**KOTA KINABALU:** The health care sector needs to be innovative in tackling new and current issues, said Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Vice-Chancellor, Prof Datuk Dr Kamarudin D Mudin.

He said if current methods are used but produce no results, novel methods should instead be envisioned.

"Public health leaders must take the lead and not be complacent and should be able to think outside the box when necessary. We must move with times or else we will be left out," he said at the 50th and Golden Jubilee Conference of Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health at the Magellan Sutera, Wednesday.

Dr Kamarudin said developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region are in different stages of economic development and have varying levels of health systems.

"For the very poor, outreach of adequate basic health services is still a challenge. For others, the issue is making policy choices on resource allocation and the appropriate balance of public-private interventions to address persistent and emerging health issues," he said.

He said the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had stated that despite progress in the region there are still more than six million children who die before their fifth birthday every year.

"16,000 children die each day from preventable diseases such as measles and tuberculosis. Every day hundreds of women die during pregnancy or from child-birth related complications. In many rural areas, only 56 per cent of births are attended to by skilled professionals. AIDS is now the leading cause of death among teenagers in sub-Saharan Africa, a region still severely devastated by the HIV epidemic," he said.

He said these deaths could be avoided through prevention and treatment, education, immunisation campaigns, and sexual and reproductive health care.

"The Sustainable Development Goals make a bold commitment to end the epidemics of AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and other communicable diseases by 2030. The aim is to achieve universal health coverage and provide access to safe and affordable medicines and vaccines for all," he said.

UMS is the host for APACPH 2018 con-

ference which provides an avenue for the mutual sharing and dissemination of knowledge and expertise for public health care professionals from the Asia-Pacific region.

Opportunities for networking and collaborations are made possible for those seeking to expand their knowledge base and extend their ideas and solutions to benefit mankind, said Dr Kamarudin, adding at APACPH 2018 covers vast and diverse range of topics and expertise, from health policies, non-communicable diseases, infectious diseases, maternal child health, environmental and occupational to the public health law and ethics.

Founded in 1984, APACPH is an international non-profit organisation comprising many of the largest and most influential schools of public health in the Asia-Pacific region. It is dedicated to improving professional education for public health and aims to attain the best possible level of health for people of the nations in the Asia-Pacific region.

UMS was also awarded with a Certificate of Accreditation by APACPH Accreditation Council during the event.