

43 per cent Sabahans experience stress, mental issues — UMS lecturer

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KOTA KINABALU: All parties need to work together as a society to tackle mental health issues via prevention and early detection, said a lecturer of the Medicine and Health Sciences Faculty, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Dr Nicholas Pang Tze Ping.

Dr Nicholas said mental health issues could range from any mild stress up to severe mental illness and there were several very effective psychological interventions that could be used to help people cope with stressful situations.

"This will help us as a society to shift our focus away

from mental illness, towards mental wellness. Instead of only acting when people are mentally unwell, let us use the tools we have to keep people in wellness," he said in a statement.

He said the National Health and Morbidity Survey 2015 found that 29.2 per cent of Malaysians had stress or mental health issues and Sabah recorded 42.9 per cent of its people having experienced stress or mental health issues.

This compares with 39.8 per cent of people in Kuala Lumpur and 39.1 per cent in Kelantan, he added.

"Hence, it is very important

that we do not focus on the raw figures and should devote our energies to working together to tackle these issues," he said, adding that, it would also require good research from universities and health-care sectors.

Dr Nicholas, who was also the 2nd Borneo Quality of Life Conference 2019 deputy chairperson said, UMS pledged as an academic institution it would be a responsible and devoted "public think-tank", to run mental health projects and conduct appropriate good quality research commissioned by the Sabah government. - Bernama