

UMS launches HOPE Project to provide medical access

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KOTA KINABALU: The Asian Medical Students' Association (AMSA) of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FPSK), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) launched the inaugural HOPE Project to provide medical access to suburban communities.

Limited access to medical care is a longstanding issue in Sabah especially among suburban and rural folks, where health care centres are sparse and the journey to get to one is daunting, said HOPE Project programme director Young Teck Seong.

With that in mind, Young said through HOPE, which stands for Health, Opulence, People and Education, the initiative was aimed at disseminating health awareness and encouraging a healthy lifestyle among people in suburban Penampang.

"In addition, we hope that participants would empathise with the situation of people in suburban areas. This is a crucial aspect of making us a well-rounded doctor in the future; we don't treat conditions, but we treat the person with a condition," he said at the launch of HOPE Project at UMS FPSK, yesterday.

According to Young, the project was initiated by the Public Health Department of AMSA UMS, to realise AMSA Malaysia's Health Day 2019 with the theme Inclusivity in Healthcare, What about Us?

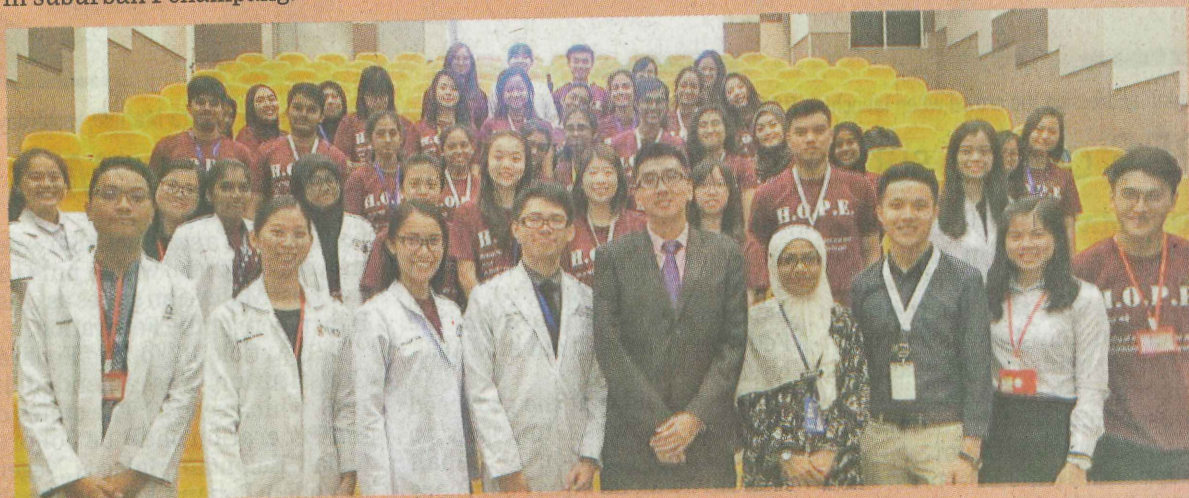
Between April 5 and 8, the project will be carried out at the Donggongon Market, Kampung Kitau, SK St Aloysius Limbanak and SMK Limbanak.

Apart from UMS students, 56 other participants are

involved in the project, from University Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Monash University, UCSI University, MAHSA and Newcastle University. A total of 11 students from Zunyi Medical University, Guizhou, China are also participating.

"HOPE Project is something new and unique for UMS. It also acts to strengthen ties between universities as well as improve skill set of students. I hope those participating in this project would be able to help targeted communities, in addition to sharing health information," said FPSK Deputy Dean of Student Affairs and Community Network, Dr Yeap Boon Tat.

Among activities planned for HOPE Project include health screenings and talks, as well as sex health education.



Front row, from fourth left: Young and Dr Yeap with participants of HOPE Project after its launch, at the UMS Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.