Grooming graduates with passion

NEWCASTLE University Medicine Malaysia (NUMed) gives students an environment where they can learn from the best, gain ample practical experiences and lead a fulfilling lifestyle.

Its modern, well-equipped and well-resourced campus is led by a highly-accomplished international faculty, who deliver curriculum that reflects the latest trends and developments in medical studies.

Located within EduCity, it is removed from the stresses and distractions of big city life, yet remains close enough to various amenities and attractions should one need them.

It is unsurprising then, that many see it as one of the most conducive and cost-effective places in the country to gain UK medical qualifications, according to Dean of Research Dr Michaela Goodson.

“Our undergraduate programmes in Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, as well as the Foundation programme, utilise the same up-to-date content as the UK campus.

“Students also get to spend part of their studies in the UK, where they get acquainted with the healthcare practices, ways of communicating with patients and diseases prevalent in different setting.

“Notably though, NUMed students often do better than their UK counterparts,” Dr Goodson reveals, attributing it to the top-notch education the students receive here. About 10% of the teaching faculty are from the UK. Of those, 80% were formerly practicing doctors. It allows them to impart on students, a wealth of knowledge based on real-life experiences.

This underscores NUMed’s firm belief in evidence-based medicine, an approach to medical practice that relies on research to substantiate why one treatment method is better than another.

“We keep a low student to lecturer ratio. Teaching in smaller groups creates a more interactive atmosphere where students feel less intimidated to ask questions, have discussions or critically appraise something.

“We’ve also tweaked our curriculum to get students into the clinical setting quicker. Previously, it was in their third year, but now it is part of the first year.

“They rotate around urban and rural hospitals, gaining exposure in different environments.

“In their fourth year, students have the opportunity to choose what they want to study for six months, and see if they would like to specialise in that as a career.

“They also get six weeks to practice medicine anywhere in the world under supervision. Many from previous batches opted to go to lower income countries to serve the populations there.

“In such instances, they get lots of hands-on experiences treating patients. Not only does this cultivate a sense of responsibility, it teaches them how to apply what they learnt,” she points out.

Another advantage in studying in an overseas campus of a prestigious UK university, is that it allows graduates to obtain UK medical registration. This gives them a higher chance of being able to practice there, if they want to.

Elaborating further, Dr Goodson says, “EduCity is essentially one big, diverse campus. There are many inter-varsity sporting contests and social events. The location affords easy access to Singapore, and has a lower cost of living compared to Kuala Lumpur. And there’s no traffic.

“The food is great and accommodations are easy to find. It is a rapidly developing area, and more and more new amenities are coming up.”

This year has seen the fifth cohort of Medicine and third cohort of Biomedical Science graduates receive their scrolls. A second batch of foundation students are set to follow suit in the coming months.

Dr. Goodson adds, “Graduates often remark that they found their study experience at NUMed highly satisfying.

“Ultimately, our role is to produce competent professionals that can contribute towards improving standards of healthcare in Malaysia, and create better patient outcomes in the long term.”

The lecturers from the UK are formerly practicing doctors who willingly share real-life experiences, says Dr Goodson.