

SERUMPUN 2025:

Strengthening Regional Ties through Pharmacy Education and Cultural Exchange

By: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Shahezwan Abd Wahab & Dr. Aida Azlina Ali

From 10 to 23 July 2025, the Faculty of Pharmacy, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), welcomed delegates from Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia, for the Scholarly Engagement for Regional Understanding and Multicultural Perspectives in Pharmacy (SERUMPUN 2025) programme. This two-week mobility initiative was designed to combine academic excellence, practical skill development, cultural immersion, and community service, fostering a deeper understanding of pharmacy practice within the Southeast Asian context.



Academic Excellence in Action

The programme opened with a warm welcome from Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Shahezwan Abd Wahab, Programme Director, followed by an introduction about the faculty and programme by Dr. Aida Azlina Ali. Participants were then taken on a guided tour of UiTM's Faculty of Pharmacy and its state-of-the-art laboratories. The academic sessions were diverse and impactful, covering a wide range of pharmacy-related disciplines. Highlights included Cardiology Therapeutics, where participants explored the latest management strategies for hypertension, atrial fibrillation, and hyperlipidaemia, and the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) workshop, which offered hands-on experience in molecular techniques essential for modern pharmaceutical research.

Participants also visited the Makerspace Lab to discover the applications of 3D printing in pharmacy, attended a thought-provoking session on The Social and Clinical Dimensions of Pharmacy Practice, and gained insights into the vital work of the Pharmacy Enforcement Division in ensuring safe and legal medication use. Digital health and telepharmacy were brought to life through interactive demonstrations, giving participants practical experience in virtual patient counselling and medication review.



Immersive Cultural Experiences

Beyond the classroom, SERUMPUN 2025 provided opportunities for cultural enrichment. A special excursion to the National Botanic Garden Shah Alam gave participants the chance to explore Malaysia's rich biodiversity, with a focus on medicinal plants and their applications in traditional and modern healthcare. The activity fostered dialogue on shared natural heritage and encouraged cross-cultural exchange between Malaysian and Indonesian participants, strengthening friendships and mutual understanding.

From Classroom to Community

A distinctive feature of SERUMPUN 2025 was its emphasis on community engagement. In collaboration with the Pusat Aktiviti Warga Emas (PAWE), participants conducted health screenings, including blood pressure, BMI, and bone density checks, and provided personalised medication reviews. These sessions underscored the pharmacist's role in promoting public health and preventing falls among older adults, particularly through education on fall-risk-increasing drugs (FRIDs).



Learning in Real-World Settings

Participants also toured Hospital Al-Sultan Abdullah (HASA) to observe hospital pharmacy operations, gaining a clearer understanding of clinical pharmacy services and interprofessional collaboration. The programme concluded with an invigorating hike along the Cadamba Trail in UiTM's green campus, where participants learned about medicinal plants in their natural habitat, blending health, wellness, and environmental appreciation.



A Model for Regional Collaboration

SERUMPUN 2025 demonstrated how international academic partnerships can be both intellectually enriching and culturally transformative. By combining scientific knowledge with cultural exchange, the programme not only enhanced the participants' professional competencies but also fostered lifelong friendships and collaborative opportunities.

The success of SERUMPUN 2025 was made possible through the dedication of the organising committee, facilitators, and support staff. Their collective effort ensured a seamless integration of academic, cultural, and community elements, making the programme a model for future regional collaborations in pharmacy education.

As the closing ceremony ended, one thing was clear, SERUMPUN 2025 was more than just a mobility programme. It was a celebration of shared learning, cultural appreciation, and the spirit of ASEAN cooperation in advancing pharmacy practice for the benefit of the communities we serve.

