



# IMU VISION AND MISSION

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## 2.1 History of IMU

The International Medical University (IMU) is Malaysia's first and most established private medical and healthcare university with over 23 years of dedicated focus in healthcare education. It is the first university in Malaysia that offers conventional and complementary medicine, all under one roof. Established in 1992, the University enjoys an international reputation, and provides a high standard of education at pre-university, undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional development levels. The IMU's curriculum for its undergraduate programmes has been benchmarked to international standards and is accepted by international partner universities for credit transfer into relevant programmes. The achievement of Tier 5 or "excellent" in the Rating System for Malaysian Higher Education (SETARA) is evidence of the IMU's excellent quality in teaching and learning.

The IMU pioneered the world's first Partner Medical School programme, allowing students to start their education in Malaysia while completing and earning a degree at an international university. Over the last 23 years, the IMU has grown from a medical college with 5 partner universities in 1992, to an internationally recognised higher education institution with more than 30 renowned international partner universities.

The IMU's Learning Model is grounded on its core values, which fosters students' development into knowledgeable and competent healthcare professionals who are critical thinkers, reflective and yet proactive. The aim is to create healthcare graduates who are committed to lifelong learning and are imbued with a sense of good citizenship, leadership and ethical behaviour.

In its continual quest for academic excellence, moving into research was a natural progression with medical and

healthcare-related research, as well as health professional education being key areas of focus. The IMU's research efforts are being further strengthened by the Institute for Research, Development and Innovation (IRDI) which was established in September 2012. The four centres of excellence under IRDI drive the strategised research initiatives.

The university had a major breakthrough in 2010 with the start of its Healthcare Centre which permits the IMU's staff and students to receive and treat patients. The Healthcare Centre, which serves as a teaching site for some programmes, brings the disciplines of allopathic (Western) medicine and those of complementary and alternative medicine together under one roof.

Today the IMU is an integrated medical and healthcare institution, offering education, healthcare and research in partnership with some of the world's most respected individuals and universities in the field of medicine and healthcare.

## 2.2 Global Developments in Education, Research and Healthcare

### 2.2.1 Education

Medical education has undergone a series of metamorphoses; some revolutionary, others more subtle. A major change was that following The Flexner Report of 1910<sup>1</sup> which transformed the nature and process of medical education in America with a resulting elimination of proprietary schools and the establishment of the biomedical model as the gold standard of medical training".<sup>1</sup> The tenet of medical education was preparation in laboratories as a prelude to clinical training; the so-called "traditional curriculum". The Faculty were also freed from patient care and focussed more on teaching and research, so the

educators were no longer healers and the healers were not educators. It is indisputable that significant discoveries were made; molecular biology came into existence, intricacies of biomedical sciences unravelled, even to the cracking of the genetic code and the Human Genome Project. However, there was an uneasy feeling that patients were being used in the service of medicine rather than the other way round. William Osler had warned that the ideals of medicine would change as “teacher and student chased each other down the fascinating road of research, forgetful of those wider interests to which a hospital must minister” and that placing advancement of knowledge as the overriding aspiration of the academic physician was wrong. There appeared to be a misalignment between scientific medicine and professional values embedded in the oaths taken by physicians.

Critics called for a review of the Flexner Report and the resultant changes are now adopted by many medical schools. “Major emphasis is being placed upon the professional formation of students and specific core competencies. Practice-based learning, a Flexner initiative, is supplemented by courses in patient communication, medical ethics and medical humanities. Departments of medical education are now part of medical faculties that train their members to incorporate these ideals into their courses”.

The General Medical Council (GMC) had identified the outcomes of medical education for schools in the United Kingdom (UK) in “Tomorrow’s Doctor” (2003; revised 2009)<sup>2</sup>, which sets outcomes in three categories viz. the doctor as a scholar and scientist, the doctor as a practitioner and the doctor as a professional and standards for delivery of teaching, learning and assessment in nine domains. The Scottish Doctor (2000)<sup>3</sup> (Scottish Deans’ Medical Education Group or SDMEG) also spells out the outcomes that the Scottish doctor has to master on graduation.<sup>3</sup> This document is more or less aligned to the GMC document.

Healthcare in the 21<sup>st</sup> century faces numerous challenges including new infectious diseases, environmental and behavioural risks as a consequence of rapid demographic and epidemiological transitions<sup>4</sup>. Reforms in health professional education are necessary and timely. Increased global interdependence as a result of rapid flow of knowledge, availability of technologies and financing across borders, and migration of professionals and patients have made mutual learning and joint solutions possible. The IMU has also conformed to the global trends, utilising integrated, problem-based approaches to teaching/ learning, moving from systems-based to outcome-based to competency-based curricula. Deficiencies in certain domains that have been highlighted in the GMC and SDMEG documents such as holistic approach to patient support (physiological, psychological, social, spiritual), pain management, patient safety, ethics and professionalism have also been addressed.

### 2.2.2 Research

With non-communicable diseases becoming more important than communicable diseases largely due to health awareness, effective prevention and the advent of effective antimicrobials, researchers worldwide have been turning their attention to cancer research.

Some environmental health problems such as those caused by industrialisation and widespread use of chemicals have resulted in some of our society’s most disputed health concerns such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers and other diseases. Therefore the emphasis is on early detection, and the race is on to isolate more accurate markers for the top cancers like breast, lung, nasopharyngeal, cervical, colorectal, bladder, prostate and lymphoma. There is also a growing interest in herbs as medicines, especially for their anti-inflammatory and anti-mitotic properties which need to be researched on to improve the treatment options that are currently available. The IMU is making significant progress into medical

research nationally and internationally. To realise the 'ASPIRE' initiatives to be an innovative centre of excellence in research, there are four main thrust areas in research under IRDI, viz. Cancer and Stem Cells, Bioactive Molecules & Drug Discovery, Environmental and Population Health and Health Professional Education. The 5-year strategic plan for IRDI is helping to enrich the IMU's research culture and sustain its competitiveness successfully.

### 2.2.3 Healthcare

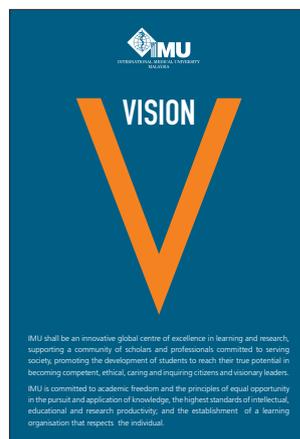
Healthcare delivery is made at three levels; the first contact with patients is made at the General Practitioner (GP) Clinics, the second level is at the District Hospitals, and the tertiary level is hospital-based. The hospitals can be General Hospitals or specialised hospitals.

Healthcare is becoming more complex. Inter-professional collaboration is necessary in order to deliver improved patient care and outcomes with more efficient resource utilisation. Information sharing, coordination and communication among the health professionals are essential to ensure quality and safety of patient care. Consequently, inter-professional learning and innovation in health professional training through increased use of technology are essential.

### 2.3 Current Vision and Mission of the University

The current vision of the University was established in 2001. It states:

*"IMU shall be an innovative global centre of excellence in learning and research, supporting a community of scholars and professionals committed to serving society, promoting the development of students to reach their true potential in becoming competent, ethical, caring and inquiring citizens and visionary leaders.*



*IMU is committed to academic freedom and the principles of equal opportunity in the pursuit and application of knowledge, the highest standards of intellectual, educational and research productivity; and the establishment of a learning organisation that respects the individual."*

As an educational institution, the mission is:

- To further strengthen the IMU as a centre of excellence for undergraduate programmes in medicine, pharmacy and other health sciences programmes
- To establish the IMU as a centre for higher education providing training through multidisciplinary programmes
- To establish the IMU as a centre for postgraduate training and continuing professional education
- To train knowledgeable and skilful professionals with high ethical standards who will be dedicated to serve and improve the quality of life of the community
- To train competent professionals with the use of innovative technologies of knowledge especially ICT in the teaching-learning process

The IMU has achieved much growth and progress in the past ten years. The University has remained true to the key elements of its vision to widen access to professional healthcare education, and to use innovative, integrated

and student-centred means to provide that education. The growth has been supported by heavy investment in infrastructure development and expansion in the campuses in Bukit Jalil, Seremban and Batu Pahat, and in the recruitment of staff of high calibre. To date, the University offers a pre-university programme: Foundation in Science, a range of undergraduate degrees in Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing, Nursing Science, Psychology, Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Biomedical Science, Medical Biotechnology, Dietetics with Nutrition, Nutrition, Chiropractic, and Chinese Medicine, as well as postgraduate degrees in Medical and Health Sciences (by research) and Public Health, Analytical and Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Pharmacy Practice, Environmental Health and Molecular Medicine (by coursework). The student number has doubled over the past ten years, to more than 3,000 currently. Meanwhile, research continues to witness a healthy growth in terms of the number of postgraduate students as well as external research funding at national and international levels.

Under the ASPIRE project (Strategic Plan 2011 - 2015), the respective Schools and Centres in the University have aligned their missions to the University's vision, i.e. "To be a leading private Asian health educator that creates value through integrating education, healthcare and research".

These are:

#### ***School of Medicine***

To be the preferred private medical school in Asia.

#### ***School of Dentistry***

To be a leading private dental school in South East Asia in 2015.

#### ***School of Pharmacy***

To be an iconic School of Pharmacy recognised for its teaching and learning and research accomplishments that creates professionally prepared graduates who are

competent, ethical, caring inter-professional partners committed to serving society.

#### ***School of Health Sciences***

To be a leading private School of Health Sciences producing graduates for the global market, integrating education, healthcare and research.

#### ***School of Postgraduate Studies / Institute for Research, Development and Innovation***

To be recognised as a leading private School of Postgraduate and Research in Asia that creates value through integrating education, healthcare and research.

#### ***IMU Centre for Education (ICE)***

ICE shall be a centre of excellence for Health Professionals Education (HPE) in Asia.

#### ***IMU Centre for Lifelong Learning (ICL)***

To be a leading provider of healthcare continuing education in Asia.

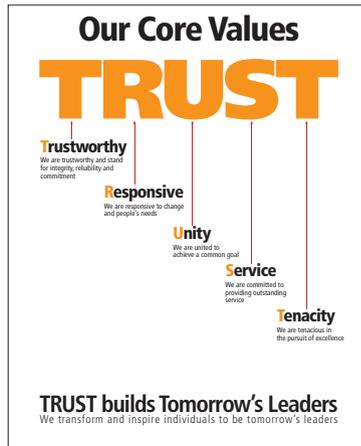
#### ***IMU Healthcare Vision***

A patient-centered teaching and learning tertiary Academic Healthcare Centre delivering international quality standards bringing to the community acclaimed selected centres of excellence.

#### ***Mission***

To surpass the patient expectations with an outcome meeting progressive international standards delivered by an integrated professional team.

## 2.4 IMU Core Values



The five core values of the University are **TRUST**, which is the acronym for trustworthy, responsive, unity, service and tenacity. It is the University's aspiration that through **TRUST**, individuals are transformed and inspired to be tomorrow's leaders. These core values underpin everything we do in the University.

**Trustworthy** – We are trustworthy and stand for integrity, reliability and commitment.

**Responsive** – We are responsive to change and people's needs.

**Unity** – We are united to achieve a common goal.

**Service** – We are committed to providing outstanding service.

**Tenacity** – We are tenacious in the pursuit of excellence.

Besides, all academic and corporate activities are driven by 3 I's (**Innovation, Imagination and Insight**). These include curriculum design, teaching and learning and research.

## 2.5 Challenges

The working group has identified three challenges in achieving its vision through focus group discussions and interviews with staff, practitioners, students and alumni. These are:

1. Improving social, cultural and physical well-being of the staff, students and community that we serve.
2. Aligning graduates with the paradigm shift in healthcare globally.
3. Shaping the future of healthcare through innovation, imagination and insight.

The university has an international community of staff and students, coming from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Several initiatives have been taken by the university to ensure a harmonious working atmosphere through mutual respect and understanding, such as regular social functions and activities organised under the Human Resource Department's staff engagement programmes. Besides the regular recreational and fitness classes, an online nutrition and wellness module has been developed to promote healthy lifestyle among staff.

Student support services are constantly upgraded, including support services for international students to help them to get to know the local culture and customs. The IMU has also received students from universities abroad to undertake research for a short stint in the IMU.

The students have interacted well with each other and learnt much about each other's culture through the interactions. Besides, mobility programmes have been introduced to enable staff and students to be exposed to international experience and widen their perspectives. This is increasingly crucial for personal and professional development in this globalisation era.

Through the IMU Cares programmes, staff and students are actively participating in various community engagement projects. In 2013, the Kampung Tekir project won the First Place in the MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship. This international recognition is a great motivation to all staff and students to continue to serve the societies in need.

In working towards equity and health for all, the goals of medicine in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have emphasised on disease prevention and health promotion, and provision of basic services through primary care (The Goals of Medicine: Setting New Priorities, Hastings Centre Report, 1996)<sup>5</sup>. Access and equity are the major concerns of the current healthcare system. This must be tackled on the basis of the ethical principle of justice and a patient-centred system. Health professional education should focus on core competencies beyond the command of knowledge and facts. The competencies include patient-centred care, interdisciplinary teams, evidence-based practice, the use of new informatics and integration of public health. Competency-based approach therefore forms the basis for the design of curricula in the IMU, and curricular activities must promote innovation, imagination and insight as much as possible, centred around the core values of the IMU.

## 2.6 What is This Document About?

This document aims to elaborate on the vision and mission of the University to cater for the interest of all the stakeholders of the University, i.e. students, staff, Partner Universities, Ministry of Education / Malaysian Qualifications Agency, Ministry of Health, professional bodies, shareholders, health professionals, industry, sponsoring bodies and community. The original vision of the University was written in early 2000's. To date, the university has evolved from offering two programmes (Medicine and Pharmacy) at that time to currently more than 10 programmes including Dentistry and a variety of Health

Sciences programmes at pre-university, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Besides, the University has undergone a steady growth in research and healthcare. A sound comprehension of the vision and mission will set forth the standard for the university operations. This together with the core values form the guiding principles for the institutional development in education, research and healthcare.

The goals are to:

- i. Establish a learning organisation that respects individuals and is committed to serve society.
- ii. Appoint the highest calibre staff and provide opportunities for personal and professional development.
- iii. Uphold academic freedom.
- iv. Produce graduates who are professional and lifelong learners.
- v. Incorporate the principles of equal opportunity in the pursuit and application of knowledge, the highest standards of intellectual, educational and research productivity.
- vi. Deliver quality services for education and healthcare.

## 2.7 Strategies to Realise the Vision

The working group has identified three areas that the University should focus on in order to achieve our vision:

- i. Alignment with corporate culture and value system
- ii. Investing in people
- iii. Student recruitment and linking with alumni

The various departments must work hand-in-hand to ensure excellence in service delivery, be it education, research or healthcare. A corporate culture based on our core values must be established. The importance of teamwork, collaboration, maintenance of competence, client-centred and quality service must be emphasised in our value system, exemplified through leadership and ingrained into organisational behaviour. The principles of professionalism and ethics must be clearly defined and measurable. These should be embedded in daily activities, continuously strengthened through reflection and feedback.

The success of the University depends largely on its people. A good value system and sound educational philosophy will attract high calibre staff to join the University. As a learning organisation, the University has been investing heavily on the personal and professional development of staff. A university that respects individuals and academic freedom, with a reward system that commensurates with the individual's efforts and success will be able to retain high performing staff. The University promotes innovation, imagination and insight, and respects differences in beliefs and opinions despite the diverse backgrounds, all of which bring about commitment and contributions that will advance the University's goal of becoming Asia's leading private health educator.

The students and alumni are by and large the custodians of the image and reputation of the University. Student selection must be stringent and mechanisms must be in place to rectify undesirable attitudes and behaviours. A 21<sup>st</sup> century graduate should be a global citizen who is kept abreast with global issues, and able to transform lives through creation, sharing and application of knowledge. Through the IMU Cares programmes, the students learn to connect with the society and work in partnership with the communities. The University should also maintain a strong relationship with its alumni and engage them in its

development. Alumni members can act as mentors to the students, providing them with a real world insight into the workplace from a graduate perspective and advice on the current economic climate that determines the employability of the graduates. Students who have benefited from their overall student experience are more likely to return and contribute to the alma mater in many ways. In summary, a strong alumni association builds a network of future leaders who work together to improve the lives of the others.

## 2.8 References

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