



One for the album: Ng (12th from left, front row) together with the participants from the conference.

# Varsity hosts counselling meet

UCSI University recently hosted the Third National Counselling Conference (NCC).

More than 200 from the counselling and education fields took part in the two-day conference.

It was organised by UCSI's Student Development & Counselling Department, which is under the Student Affairs & Alumni division.

Other agencies that were involved in the conference were the Education Ministry, National Population and Family Development Board Malaysia (LPPKN), International Counselling Association of Malaysia, Life Line Association Malaysia, New Opportunity for Wellness and the Malaysian Chinese Community Counselling Association.

The National Counselling Conference was held to empower counsellors, teachers, professionals and parents caring for young peo-

ple who may be struggling with mental health issues.

With the tagline 'Lending Your Hands, Nourishing Our Future', the conference focused on counselling approaches in dealing with teenagers with different issues and challenges.

The conference was opened by Health Ministry Management Services, Administrative and Diplomatic Undersecretary Tengku Azamiah Tengku Ab Majid. She represented the ministry's secretary-general Datuk Dr Chen Chaw Min.

Tengku Azamiah said the conference is a step in the right direction, especially as it centred on enhancing the professional knowledge and skills of counsellors and professional helpers. This will increase their competency in handling various issues affecting teenagers.

"The future lies in the hands of our children – the next generation," she said.

Participants at the conference explored a wide range of topics at various workshops conducted by experienced counsellors.

This included a talk by the keynote speaker Emeritus Prof Datuk Dr Amir Awang, the first Malaysian president of the Asian Psychological and Educational Counselling Association (APECA).

During his talk, Dr Amir shared his knowledge and views on the Islamic perspective of counselling in dealing with teenage challenges.

The conference also featured two plenary speakers.

They were LPPKN deputy director-general (Policy) Dr Anjali Panalal K Doshi and Dr Wan Marzuki Wan Jaafar who is a member of the Board of Counsellors, Malaysia.

Dr Anjali emphasised the importance and effectiveness of the innovative programmes, services and policies that LPPKN offers to resolve the issues and challenges faced by young people.

Dr Wan Marzuki spoke on the different theoretical approaches on becoming a counsellor

as well as the challenges in pursuing the profession.

A forum session on "The Role of Institutions in Nourishing Our Future" was also held. Panelists were UCSI Group founder and chief executive officer Datuk Peter Ng, National Board for Certified Counsellors Malaysia regional director Prof Datuk Dr Susie See and International Counselling Association of Malaysia president Datuk Dr Abd Halim Mohd Hussin.

The panelists discussed the strategies in the role of institutions in nourishing future leaders, overcoming the negative stigma, discrimination and neglect that prevents care and treatment from reaching young people with mental disorders.

Ng said that one of the strategies that UCSI has taken to combat the issue is through the services that UCSI's Student Development & Counselling department offers to the students.

He said the university conducted a number of activities and workshops dealing with counselling services such as 'Meet the Counsellor Week', which was held in collaboration with Life Line Association Malaysia, to raise the awareness on counselling.