



For Immediate Press Release

Genting Group and Universiti Malaya hold Inaugural Eminent Speakers Conference Series ‘Navigating Towards Healthy Ageing’
World’s foremost, award winning researchers and experts share their insights on healthy ageing

Kuala Lumpur, 28th February 2019 – Today, the Inaugural Eminent Speakers Conference Series was held at the Auditorium, Research Management & Innovation Complex, Universiti Malaya. Four eminent speakers, some of the world’s foremost, award winning researchers and experts shared their insights during the event titled ‘Navigating Towards Healthy Ageing’ on the latest approaches in medical science with respect to healthy ageing, through early detection and novel treatments.

The event was co-organised by Genting Berhad and Universiti Malaya’s Faculty of Medicine in conjunction with the Genting Founder’s Day.

Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay, Chairman and Chief Executive of Genting Berhad said during his opening speech at the conference, “Over the past decade, Genting Berhad has been involved in research and development for new treatments and new ways for early detection of diseases through our investments in life sciences and biotechnology companies. We hope that our investments in these companies will benefit Malaysia, through knowledge transfer via collaborations between these world class companies and researchers with our local universities and local researchers, through bringing cutting edge technology to Malaysia to combat ageing and diseases, and through creating employment in Malaysia. We have already seen the benefit of our investments as three of the four eminent speakers for today’s conference are our invitees and they are founders of life sciences companies which Genting Berhad has invested in over the past decade.”

Also in attendance during the conference were Datuk IR. (Dr.) Abdul Rahim Haji Hashim, Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Malaya, Professor Dato’ Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman, Dean of Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Malaya, members of the life science and medical fraternity, students and the public.

Dr Anders M. Dale, Professor of Neurosciences, Radiology, Psychiatry, and Data Science at the University of California, San Diego, started the conference with his talk titled ‘Integration of Quantitative Imaging and Genetics for Proactive Medicine’. He touched on one of the major challenges in medicine, being the early detection or prediction of disease, to enable proactive intervention. He then presented a novel integrated framework for combining genetic information with quantitative imaging, molecular tests, and other health data, to enable individualised, proactive medicine.

The second speaker was the only Malaysian speaker at the conference, Professor Dr Ng Kwan Hoong, Professor of Medical Physics, Universiti Malaya. Professor Dr Ng is one of the top 50 medical physicists in the world and the first Malaysian scientist to receive the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Award for outstanding contributions to the field of nuclear and plasma sciences and engineering. In his talk titled 'The Age of Precision Scanning – Decoding the Ageing Process', he spoke on Radiogenomics, a new field that analyses large number of scan images to characterise the microscopic appearance and genetic changes of a disease. This approach gives us the ability to examine our cells and tissues with a high level of precision, therefore helping in understanding the ageing process and medical conditions linked to ageing, including dementia.

The third speaker was Professor Claude M. Wischik, Holder of the Chair in Mental Health, University of Aberdeen, and Executive Chairman of TauRx Pharmaceuticals Limited. Professor Wischik is a pioneer in Tau research. In his talk titled 'Developing a Practical Strategy for Maintaining Cognitive Function Later in Life', he explained that the main driver of cognitive decline is the brain pathology originally discovered by Alzheimer: so-called tangles forming inside nerve cells of the brain composed of sub-units of a protein called Tau. He was the first to identify the Tau protein as the main constituent of the Alzheimer tangle and developed the first Tau aggregation inhibitors.

The final speaker was Dr Robert J. Hariri who is a surgeon, biomedical scientist, and a highly successful serial entrepreneur. Dr Hariri pioneered the use of human stem cells to treat a range of life-threatening diseases. He was also the pioneer to recognise the regenerative potential of the human placenta. In his talk titled 'Cell Therapy – Augmented Immunity, Augmented Longevity', he spoke about how recent advances in cell biology and genetic engineering are setting a new direction in medicine, shifting the traditional health care paradigm toward the possibility of regenerative and curative treatments.

The talk was followed by a panel discussion, where the public took the opportunity to pose questions to the panelist comprising Professor Dato' Dr. Adeeba Kamarulzaman and the four speakers. Professor Tan Maw Pin from the Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Malaya facilitated the panel discussion as the Moderator.

As part of the conference, the Malaysian Prime Minister YAB Tun Dr Mahathir Mohammad who epitomizes healthy ageing, held a dialogue with the speakers, and representatives from Genting Berhad and Universiti Malaya to discuss medical advances and exchange ideas on healthy ageing.

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