

PRESS RELEASE

UiTM towards becoming the robotics rehabilitation research hub in healthcare

The effectiveness of rehabilitation intervention always relies on the intensity, frequency, task specificity, and bio-feedback from the given treatment. However, fulfilling these requirements have always been a struggle, which is very much dependent on the availability of human resources, funding, and equipment. Robotics intervention has long been recognized for its potential to assist and augment the process of rehabilitation decades ago. The hit of the pandemic Covid- 19 has exalted its significance and relevancy to be adopted in clinical rehabilitation practice.

Rehabilitation robotics is not new in Malaysia. Several rehabilitation centers and hospitals have invested significantly to adopt this sophisticated and high technology to adjunct the conventional rehabilitation management. This progressive development is in line with the soaring of the rehabilitation medicine fraternity, which is demonstrated by approximately 110 Rehabilitation Physicians offering these specialized services. In addition, with the booming of three stand-alone rehabilitation hospitals and an increase of other governmental and non-governmental health facilities offering rehabilitation services, this technology needs to be integrated to ensure the gaps in the clinical practice are addressed effectively.

However, rehabilitation robotics applicability is always limited by its high cost to match the return of its shown benefit. There are still major research questions on how best we can optimize its' use. Realizing this problem, UiTM has stepped forward proactively, providing an ideal platform to drive strategic university-industrial partnership, with the goal to strengthen research activities and be part of the frontiers in producing new knowledge and cultivating the best clinical practices.

UiTM, with its excellent track record and experience in multi and transdisciplinary research pertaining to technological advancement in healthcare, has attracted many international and national collaborations. Recent MOA signing with Angel Robotics Co. Ltd. and strategic partnership with Daehan Rehabilitation Hospital, a Korean based stand-alone private rehabilitation hospital in Putrajaya Malaysia, **with an industrial grant worth RM 770,000 and two exoskeleton angle robotics worth RM 400 000 each, led by Associate Prof. Dr. Fazah Akhtar Hanapiah**, further validates UiTM as a crucial leading player in catalyzing technological research in healthcare. **This MOA between UiTM and Angel Robotics Co. Ltd. marked the first collaboration with a Korean start-up company that creates and innovates wearable exoskeletal robots.** Through this intelligent partnership with Angel Robotics, UiTM is now directly partnering with the top four prestigious Rehabilitation institutions from the Republic of Korea, which are:

- i. Severance Hospital (Yonsei University College of Medicine)
- ii. Samsung Medical Centre

- iii. Seoul National University Hospital (National Traffic Injury Rehabilitation Hospital)
- iv. National Health Insurance Service Ilsan Hospital

This collaboration brings a more significant impact to society, building a supportive teaching and learning environment and upgrading the clinical service to a state-of-art rehabilitation service. Besides this Angel Robotics collaboration, UiTM has engaged with other prominent players in the robotic industry, such as Fourier Intelligence in the upper limb robotic research project. UiTM as a rehabilitation-technological hub is further magnified with the ongoing collaboration with Fraunhofer Institute IEM of Germany, a research organization, prioritizing key future-relevant technologies and commercializing its findings in business and industry.

The new opening of Hospital UiTM Puncak Alam has further strengthened UiTM to provide an excellent avenue to become an ideal research hub. Equipped with up-to-date medical equipment, highly skilled experts, and its strategic location in the booming developing Bandar Puncak Alam, the three million population would access high-quality medical services. This factor also makes it an excellent research venue with the potential to provide a large population pool that is vital in recruiting research participants. In addition, the UiTM academicians from the well-regarded Faculty of Medicine will provide essential service and contributes knowledge about research conduct, especially in ethics, data analysis, and its interpretation, which are critical in producing high-impact research.

UiTM is always committed to its mission and vision to be a world-renowned university. UiTM strives and is ever ready to build its capacity and expand its' potential to propel the country towards excellence. Becoming a robotic research hub, especially in rehabilitation medicine, is pivotal in accelerating UiTM in achieving its goal.

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ABOUT UiTM

As the largest comprehensive university in Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) has expanded its visibility through collaborations with universities worldwide. It continues to provide access to higher education, playing its role in nation building by unleashing potentials, shaping the future.

Providing innovative education within reach at its 35 campuses and 26 faculties across Malaysia, UiTM offers over 500 academic programmes at Foundation, Pre-Diploma, Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD level, as well as Professional Programmes. Today, UiTM is a proven premier higher education institution of choice.

Amongst its long lines of accolades, UiTM is ranked 105th in the QS Asia University Rankings 2022, placed 651–701 in the QS World University Rankings 2022, and was in the 101-200th position in THE Impact Rankings 2021. In 2021, the Hospitality and Leisure Management subject was placed at 51-100 in the world, and 12 of UiTM subjects were ranked in the QS World University Rankings by Subject. UiTM also ranked 150th in the UI GreenMetric (UIGM) World University Rankings 2021. In 2020, UiTM won gold for the Best International Print-ads at the QS APPLE Creative Awards.

With over 900,000 alumni in science, technology, humanities and entrepreneurship, UiTM offers opportunities to shape leaders at national, industry and global levels and is well poised to become a globally renowned university by 2025.

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