

# Faculty of Psychology UGM Asks Policy Makers to Discuss Pasung Practice

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Faculty of Psychology of Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) hosts *International Workshop on Free Pasung Program*, themed *Eliminating Restraint of Persons with Mental Illness in Indonesia: A Review of Progress*. The workshop that tries to make review of the Indonesia Free of *Pasung* Programme runs from 23-24 September 2017 at the Faculty of Psychology UGM, presenting speakers from Indonesia, Australia and the UK. It is attended by experts, policy makers, and general public who are interested in the issue.

Resource persons of the workshop include Prof. Harry Minas (University of Melbourne), Dr. Erminia Colucci (Middlesex University, London), dr. Irminsyah, Sp.KJ. (Former Director of Mental Health Unit, Ministry of Health Indonesia), Drs. Bambang Sugeng, MM. (Ministry of Social Affairs), and others.

Prof. Hary said currently there were still cases of *pasung* (wooden stocks) of people with mental disorder across the world, such as the Philippines, India, China, and Indonesia. Hary said Indonesia is the only country that has included the issue in the government programme. According to Hary, there are several reasons why *pasung* practices are still found in the country, including minimum health access and services. He said staff and facilities in mental health basic services have to be present among society. They can help treat mental disorders since the beginning, hence no need for

*pasung*.

“Members of society would often get confused when one of their family members suffers from mental disorders. Their ignorance and limited access to mental health services make them do the *pasung* practice,” said Hary. Another reason for *pasung* practise is poverty and limited funds for mental health services.

Another speaker, Irmansyah, said after the launch of Indonesia Free of *Pasung* programme in 2010, many people had been released from the practice. Irmansyah added that treatment of victims differed by case with some people need only to go to the community health centre while others have to be treated intensively at the hospital.

Vice-Dean of Research and Community Service, Prof. Kwartarini Wahyu Yuniarti, M.Med.Sc., Ph.D., expected the workshop would bring together experts and researchers with policy makers. Kwartarini said the programme would generate a draft proposal or blueprint to address the issue.

“Going forward, this kind of meeting will run routinely to present Psychology research to be implemented in the society.”

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