

Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and Nursing Hosts 2021 FERCAP Conference

Thursday, 09 December 2021 WIB, By: Salma




The 21st Forum for Ethical Review Committees in the Asian & Western Pacific Region (FERCAP) conference has kicked off today. Following the withdrawal of South Korea, the UGM Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and Nursing (FKKMK) served as this year's host instead of next year.

Dean of the UGM FKKMK Professor Ova Emilia said UGM is one of the motors for FERCAP's involvement in Indonesia. Conceived in Bangkok, Thailand, on 12 January 2000, FERCAP aims to improve the understanding and implementation of ethical review of behavioral and biomedical research in the Asian and Western Pacific region. As an ethics committee forum, FERCAP helps ensure discoveries comply with law and regulations and consider the safety of the people involved in the research.

"The role of such an ethics committee is very important. For example, when a drug is found to be able to cure a disease, there must be an academic study of it, not just a testimony," said Ova on Tuesday (7/11).

Dr. Arif Budiyanto added, with 15 countries registered as members, FERCAP is integrated with WHO



and functions as a body that provides accreditation or standardization to ethics committees in the region.

“Our ethics committee has been recognized since 2012. So, we have an SOP that has been standardized and accredited by FERCAP three-yearly. Indonesia now has 11 recognized committees and will rise to 17 once the six committees are officially added this year,” said Arif.

Professor Tri Wibawa, as one of the organizers of the conference, said the main challenge faced by the committees during the pandemic was the demand to work faster without compromising quality. Ethics committees are often asked to quickly assess new vaccine or drug protocols in light of immediate use or emergency, which sometimes results in essential steps being skipped during the process. Such practice is not allowed as it potentially harms the research subject.

“Committees at FERCAP are different from others, which concern professional ethics. Ours has only one job, to ensure the people involved in the research are properly protected,” said Tri.

In addition, ECs are responsible for confirming the research protocol has prioritized patient/participant safety. Ideally, those patients should receive extra care throughout the study, diagnosis, therapy, and so on.

“We have to convince the participants that the risks posed are proportional to the ensuing benefits for science, technological advances, and the patients themselves,” said Tri.

Author: Agung Nugroho

Related News