

Malaysia joins City Cancer Challenge

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Greater Petaling is the second city in Asia to join C/Can



At the 2019 World Cancer Leaders' Summit in Nur-Sultan (Astana), Kazakhstan, it was announced that the Malaysian city of Greater Petaling is joining City Cancer Challenge (C/Can).

The decision comes one year after the global cancer care community met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, at the 2018 World Cancer Congress, and reflects the deep commitment of key stakeholders in Malaysia to build on the local momentum created by the Congress to develop concrete actions to improve access to quality cancer care for all.

Greater Petaling joins a growing movement of cities around the world working with a multisectoral network of partners to plan and deliver local cancer care solutions. "We are immensely proud to be selected. Malaysia has been progressing steadily to improve its health delivery systems, and this decision will allow us to make great strides in providing better care for our cancer patients" says Dr Saunthari Somasundaram, President, National Cancer Society of Malaysia.

Greater Petaling becomes the second city in Asia to join City Cancer Challenge. "As C/Can expands its work in Asia, the opportunities for cross-city collaboration and knowledge sharing are growing, and we look forward to building on the strong political commitment and civil society movement in Greater Petaling to improve access to quality cancer care services there and in the wider region," says Dr Aung Naing Soe, C/Can Regional Director for Asia.

Supported by the National Cancer Society of Malaysia and the Universiti Malaya, Greater Petaling responded to the call to action made at the 2018 World Cancer Congress in Kuala Lumpur, inviting cities in Asia to join C/Can. Greater Petaling is made up of Petaling Jaya and Subang Jaya, in Selangor, Malaysia's most developed state, and provides cancer care services to a population of just over 1.4 million.

"C/Can will bring together the rich technological capacity and innovative mindsets of the people of Greater Petaling, and coupled with the willingness of our state government to prioritise effective and equitable healthcare delivery, we see great success ahead," says Dr Siti Mariah Binti Mahmud, Selangor State Executive Councillor.

According to latest data from the WHO, 43,837 new cancer cases and 26,395 cancer deaths were reported in 2018 in Malaysia. The three most frequent cancers in men and women (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) in 2018 were breast, colorectum, and lung. (Source: Globocan)

"Malaysia's Ministry of Health welcomes C/Can's efforts to bring together health and non-health sectors to develop innovative, localised solutions for cancer care to tackle the growing burden of cancer," says Datuk DrNoor Hisham Abdullah, Director General of Health, Ministry of Health of Malaysia.

Malaysia is an upper-middle-income country, with the building blocks of a health system firmly in place, but gaps still exist in terms of access to timely diagnosis and care, with relatively low cancer survival rates compared to other upper-middle-income countries. "Through City Cancer Challenge, we hope to streamline the parallel public and private health systems already in place in Greater Petaling to provide better solutions in terms of early diagnosis and treatment, which will finally result in better patient outcomes," says Professor Dr Nur Aishah Taib, Director, UM Cancer Research Institute.