

Novartis Malaysia offers ‘smile’ and ‘hope’ to breast cancer victims/survivors

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Kuala Lumpur, 26 October 2022 — In conjunction with Breast Cancer Awareness month, innovative healthcare solutions provider Novartis Malaysia has joined forces with the Medical Education Association of National Cancer Institute (NCI) to inspire and honor the strength and survivorship of breast cancer patients, especially those within the public healthcare system.

In recent times, Malaysia’s public healthcare has improved with better inroads for breast cancer patients to access the latest innovative therapies like targeted therapies.

This campaign aimed to inspire and provide hope to breast cancer patients, including advanced breast cancer (aBC) patients, will be accorded a better quality of life with early screening as well as access to treatment and targeted therapies.

Themed *Senyuman dan Harapan* (Smile and Hope), the program kickstarted on Oct 17 by featuring a series of activities and an exhibition showcasing inspiring artworks from breast cancer survivors.

Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) namely Kenwork and Yayasan Budi Penyayang participated in the campaign, too. These artworks serve as a platform for patients to inspire others by sharing their experiences living with aBC.

The installation and exhibition artworks displayed will be permanently located at Galeri Senyuman dan Harapan at Level 4 of NCI. Anchoring the gallery is a beautifully handcrafted *Pohon Harapan* (Tree of Hope) by KakiSeni with inspirational messages by the artist and breast cancer patient.

The Galeri Senyuman dan Harapan was launched in the presence of Yayasan Budi Penyayang Malaysia’s chairman Nori Abdullah (wife of Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin).

“Apart from re-imagining medicines to improve and extend people’s lives, Novartis is also committed to re-imagining hope for breast cancer patients,” commented Novartis Malaysia & Brunei country president Elwakil Mohamed.

“Our purpose is to educate, inspire and empower breast cancer patients to not lose their hope as there are progressive treatments available that have shown positive results.”

“In the recently launched National Strategic Plan for Cancer Control Programme 2021-2025, there were requests to include new targeted therapies in the Health Ministry’s Formulary. Our collaboration with NCI is the perfect way to showcase the indomitable spirit of those battling breast cancer or beating the disease,” he added.

NCI director Dr Mohamed Anis Haron described the collaboration with Novartis Malaysia as important in raising breast cancer awareness, particularly on early screening and innovative therapies that provide quality of life.

“Despite the prevalence of breast cancer in Malaysia, understanding of this remains low. I hope this initiative with Novartis Malaysia will revive the patients’ spirit in accessing the right screening and treatment,” he enthused.

About Novartis

Novartis is reimagining medicine to improve and extend people’s lives. As a leading global medicines company, we use innovative science and digital technologies to create transformative treatments in areas of great medical need. In our quest to find new medicines, we consistently rank among the world’s top companies investing in research and development. Novartis products reach nearly 800 million people globally and we are finding innovative ways to expand access to our latest treatments. About 108,000 people of more than 140 nationalities work at Novartis around the world. Find out more at <https://www.novartis.com>.

About Novartis Malaysia

Novartis Malaysia has been present in Malaysia since 1971. Following the merger of Sandoz and Ciba-Geigy, Novartis was formed in 1996. In 2015, Kuala Lumpur was chosen as one of the five Novartis Global Service Centres which delivers a broad variety of services to the Novartis group of companies worldwide. Services offered by the Kuala Lumpur team include IT, People & Organization Services, FRA Operations, Procurement Services, Real Estate & Facilities Services and CONEXTS contributor by Clinical Research Malaysia in sponsored research with 16 research projects, leading the market of other healthcare players in this sponsored research space.

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