

# *BIG STEPS TO REVERSING CANCER!*

Thanks to you, 2018 has been a year of great achievements.



*POPLOOK, together with Malaysian artist Siti Saleha, designed a limited-edition special range of clothes in conjunction with Pink October. Funds go to our work to improve survival for Malaysian breast cancer patients.*

## *Dear Friends,*

It has been another productive year for all of us here at Cancer Research Malaysia (CRM).

As we move into 2019, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you, and many supporters like you who have supported us to continue our significant work in finding cure for cancers, especially for Asian-centric cancers.

Every one of our wins, every notable milestones in the advancement of cancer research, is attributed to the fact that you have made an important choice to make research a priority in our fight against cancer.

We hope you will enjoy reading our newsletter, find the information helpful and share it with your circle of friends.

Thanks again and let's keep the momentum in making our goal of [#reversingcancer](#) a reality!

**Cancer Research Malaysia**

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## *Achievement Highlights*

*We hope our stories will inspire you to continue your support for our various initiatives in 2019.*



*Maybe all it takes in [#ReversingCancer](#) could be a soy a day.*

### ***It's soy groundbreaking!***

Cancer Research Malaysia is delighted to have published our recent study on breast cancer, which found that breastfeeding, regular exercise, and soy intake are three major factors in reducing the risk of developing the disease in Malaysian women. The data came from a study that we set up since 2003 with University Malaya and Subang Jaya Medical Centre, and where 7,663 Malaysian women contributed.

Although our data shows that women who consume higher amounts of soy have lower risk of breast cancer, we do not know whether women who are approaching menopause or already menopausal can take soy to reduce their risk. To rigorously test this, we will be launching a new study [with University of Nottingham, Subang Jaya Medical Centre, and University of Malaya] in a landmark research to see if Malaysian women who consume soy regularly can reduce their risk of breast cancer later in life.

Email or call us to find out more on how you can contribute.

**Breastfeeding, regular exercise, and soy intake are three major factors in reducing the risk of developing breast cancer in Malaysian women.**

### ***Sounds straight out of a Star Trek movie, but this isn't science fiction!***

Through collaboration with AI experts from University of Malaya and Kingston University UK, we are paving a way towards accessible oral cancer detection with something as simple as an app.

Cancer Research Malaysia, together with University of Malaya won a UK Medical Research Council grant of £146,920 (RM798,693) to develop a phone app for early detection and referral of oral cancers can record risk habits, and send photos of suspicious lesions to specialist for quick referral and treatment.

In Asia where oral cancer is the top 10 most common cancers, and Malaysia where the mobile penetration is one of the highest in the world, this project is set to enable early detection to those most at risk of the disease: those living in rural areas.

Successful treatment of cancer hinges on early detection, seamless patient care and good follow up. Our app powers equitable healthcare by putting tools in the hands of every phone user.

If you would like to know more about this, please call or write to us.

Click [here](#) to listen to the BFM's podcast about our life-saving app.



Audio Podcast Available

*An artificial intelligence-enabled handphone app that could make a difference between a curable early stage cancer and a lethal late stage cancer.*



*Dr Annie Chai, has also won a Best Poster presentation prize at the International Gordon Conference on Nasopharyngeal Cancer in Hong Kong.*

***Our post-doctoral scientist, Dr Annie Chai was awarded the Young Investigator award by the Young Scientist Network Academy of Sciences Malaysia (YSN-ASM), and we couldn't be prouder!***

Our work in using gene editing technology to better understand which drugs are most effective at treating nasopharyngeal cancer.

We use gene editing technology to identify genes that keep cancer cells alive. We'll be able to design drugs that target such genes, thereby effectively killing cancer cells.

***Mapping genetic differences in breast cancer can improve care for undeserved populations.***

Cancer Research Malaysia is undergoing the largest cancer genomics study of women of Asian ancestry to date, highlighting molecular features that could be targeted to reduce the breast cancer mortality gap.

Our study compared DNA and RNA data from Malaysian breast cancer patients to patient databases in the US and UK found that certain aggressive breast cancer subtypes were far more prevalent in tumours from Asian women than in white American or British women. These differences in multiple molecular features could in part explain disparities in breast cancer mortality for women from Malaysia, and perhaps other Asian countries.

The study comparing 1,076 breast tumours from TCGA USA and 576 breast tumours from Malaysia was conducted in collaboration with University of Cambridge, Cancer Research UK Institute and funded by the Newton Fund and Scientex Berhad Foundation.

Although the Malaysian patients were much younger, on average they have higher mortality rates than women from European descent. This study revealed that the Her2 subtypes are more common in Asians compared to Caucasians, raises the possibility that Asian women are more likely to have the aggressive subtypes of breast cancer that requires expensive targeted therapies, beyond the reach of most low and middle income countries.

Knowing this, we are now able to start devising strategies that will make such therapies accessible to women most at risk of breast cancer mortality. That is the power of cancer research, which is only possible with the help of the public.

**Data in our own population is important because without such data, we could make the wrong policies.**



*On Jan 2018, Scientex has agreed to sponsor RM1.3 million over a period of 2 years to fund the operational costs and expenses for cancer research advancement and works to discover new cures for Asian breast cancers. (Left: Mr PJ Lim, Managing Director, Scientex Incorporated Berhad; Right: Toh Puan Dato' Seri Dr Aishah Ong, Chairman of Cancer Research Malaysia)*

**Genetic testing is recommended for all ovarian cancer patients.** But genetic information only saves lives if we can provide men and women with the specialised services to prevent cancer. Cancer Research Malaysia's MaGiC initiative aims to make genetic testing accessible to every ovarian cancer patient in Malaysia.

In April, our genetic counsellors led by Yoon Sook-Yee took a bold step in Kuantan where genetic testing is inaccessible. Partnered with Dr Ahmad Muzamir (Consultant Gynaecologist, Kuantan) and Prof Dr Nur Aishah (Consultant Breast Surgeon, University Malaya) to train doctors from different specialities on genetic counselling and risk management. The clinic in Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan is the first specialised genetic risk management clinic in the East Coast of Malaysia serving patients from Pahang and nearby states. This workshop has also been conducted in Sarawak General Hospital in Kuching and in Hospital Sultan Ismail in Johor Bahru

Sook Yee and team are putting Malaysia on the map, showcasing a new way in improving access at the ESMO Asia oncology meeting.



*Malaysia could be the first country to have ensure that the country's income status is not a barrier to access to genetics services. Thanks to you and all the doctors and nurses who make MaGiC possible!*

**Our work doesn't end at finding a cure for cancer. We're also helping patients living with cancer SURVIVE the disease, and one of the ways is through our Patient Navigation Programme (PNP), conducted in collaboration with the ministry of health.**

Malaysia's breast cancer survival rate is one of the lowest in the region, and one of the reasons is because some groups of women (especially low-income women) find it difficult to access and adhere to diagnosis and treatment. By removing the barriers that dissuade them from seeking treatment, we found that it has freed them to stick to the treatment plan and improve their odds of survival. This would not have been possible without funds raised through Yayasan Sime Darby LPGA, who raised the funds that made this a reality.



**How to fix Malaysia's lost survival rate?**  
Click to read

*With the pilot programme showing promising results, we are now continuing to work with our partners at the ministry of health expanding the programme to KK, Kuching, Melaka and Seremban in order to reach out to more women and save more lives. #ReversingCancer*

## Event Highlights

*None of the achievements we made would have been possible without the generous and consistent support from our supporters. Here are some of the event highlights for 2018.*

### World Reverse Cancer Day



Video available  
Click to view



**Cancer Research Malaysia partnered with Ensemble Worldwide to launch the first World Reverse Cancer Day on 2 April, a reverse on the dates for World Cancer Day which takes place annually on 4 February.**

This inaugural event was in a bid to raise awareness that research is being conducted to reverse the impact of cancer in the lives of Malaysians, as well as increase support for its ongoing research efforts. The event addressed some of the preconceptions and stigma around cancer, and aimed to show the public the significant advances that have been taking place in the prevention, screening and treatment of cancer. Follow CRM's social media today to get updates on how to take part in the second World Reverse Cancer Day on 2 Apr 2019.

***Dr Martin Mellor and Dato' Dr Fuad Ismail pledged to conquer Mount Kinabalu and fundraise to support Cancer Research Malaysia's Work through crowd funding platform during World Reverse Cancer Day in 02, April 2018.***



*Thank you, Dr Martin Mellor and Dato' Dr. Fuad Ismail and all the individuals who have contributed to the #reverseforcancer campaign!*

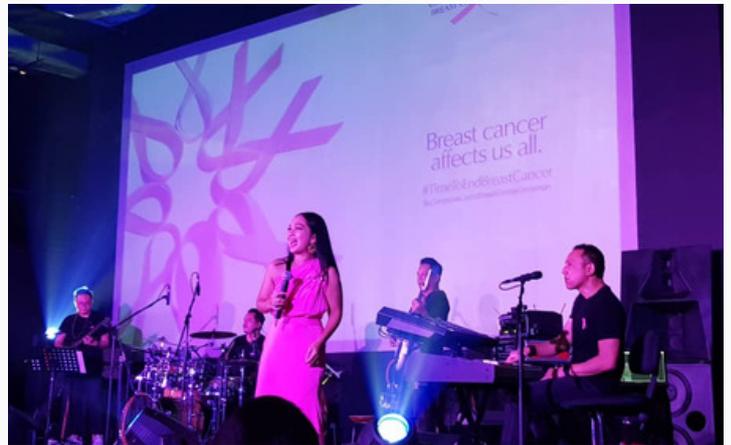
### ***Estee Lauder's Fundraising concert with Sheila Majid***

Breast cancer affects us all. Estee Lauder Malaysia has been a major supporter of Cancer Research Malaysia's efforts to find better ways to treat and prevent breast cancer.

Globally and regionally, they are a major driving force in raising awareness through the pink pin, and raising funds to find a cure and an end to the disease that afflicts so many women.

This year, we are delighted once again to be a beneficiary in a fundraiser concert with Malaysian popstar Sheila Majid.

Funds raised this year will enable the first clinical trial in Malaysia to test whether menopausal women can reduce their risk of cancer just by eating and drink more soy products. All part of our efforts to create better preventative measures for us all.



### ***Rowena Morais Raising Money for Cancer Research***

**Editor, writer, and breast cancer survivor. Rowena Morais has worn many hats, but the last has been the one to leave the deepest impact on her life.**

Knowing how much life can change with a cancer diagnosis, she is determined to turn that around for fellow Malaysians in the near future. By donating her time to raise funds for Cancer Research Malaysia, she is ensuring the work we do in [#ReversingCancer](#) continues to make an impact on Malaysians and the rest of the world.

**Support Rowena.** Every donation of USD50 will give you 30 minutes to Skype with Rowena on various topics, from writing to editing, content marketing to cancer experiences. Check out her Indiegogo to get inspired on how you can too join the fight to put an end to the fear of cancer.



Click here to  
support Rowena  
on **INDIEGOGO.**

**Grassroots fundraising at its best: Bald & Beautiful 3.0**

Bald & Beautiful is back for the 3rd time!

After clipping off the hair on over 1,650 heads, Khind Starfish Foundation effectively raised RM2.3 million through the foundation's charity do, which Cancer Research Malaysia is one of the three selected beneficiaries. Started off with Johor Bharu, BB 3.0 visited several states from July to the grand finale on 6 Oct at Eco Ardence Shah Alam and witnessed a consistent stream of Malaysians, empathetic to the plight of cancer-stricken patients and survivors.

Bald & Beautiful is part of Khind Starfish Foundation's corporate social responsibility bid into cancer research. It is through this event that the foundation and the Khind Group of companies raise funds towards spreading awareness on cancer and providing support for cancer patients.

Every support counts, the more help we get, the closer we are to beating cancer. Write to us to find out how you and your organisation can play a part too!

**This year's Bald & Beautiful 3.0 has unprecedented success because of the enthusiastic support of everyone.**



Klang Valley & Setia Alam



Melaka



Johor Bharu



Labuan



Kuching



Kuala Terengganu



Kota Bharu



Watch the video to find out how these kind individuals participating in this year's Bald and Beautiful 3.0, helping Cancer Research Malaysia's life-saving work in cancer research.

## Speaking with our supporter: Mr Cheng Ping Keat



Mr Cheng is the chairman of Khind Starfish Foundation (KSF) and the Group CEO of KHIND Group.

### **Q: Why support Cancer Research Malaysia (CRM)?**

Cancer Research Malaysia's focus to find cures for cancers that affect Asians, especially Malaysians, touched my heart. I have confidence with the capabilities of the scientists in CRM. The significant progress made by them so far is good evidence that they are heading towards realising their vision of a future free from the fear of cancer.

### **Q: What is your aspiration for contributing to the Vision of Cancer Research Malaysia?**

A: I hope the Malaysian public at large, the Government and the Corporate sector will provide stronger moral and financial support to enable CRM to conduct more research and development activities. This will bring positive impact to human lives. Medical research have already found cures and vaccines for many previously incurable diseases such as polio, TB and certain types of cancers. I believe the same can happen for all cancers

### **Q: What is your role in the vision ?**

A: A Fundraiser and a cheerleader! I plan and pledge to help and support CRM to initiate crowd funding initiatives to get more donors on board to support CRM in a sustainable way. We aim to get 1000 companies and 5000 individuals to contribute RM1,000 and RM100 respectively, every year. I hope to encourage more Malaysians to support CRM to fight the disease. Please join me in this wonderful journey. We will make an impact.

Cancer Research Malaysia is a non-profit organisation solely funded by donations from public, corporations, and individuals.

Thanks to your commitment and with your support, we are able do really significant work that are translational in nature and after 18 years of hard work, we are now closer than ever to a future where cancer becomes a controllable disease. Our dedicated researchers have published more than 160 publications, 4 registered patents, and won multiple science awards, playing a vital role in expending the understanding of cancer and find better ways to treat and prevent cancers. **We look forward to working with you in 2019. To make an impact in reversing cancer, pls visit our website at [www.cancerresearch.my/get-involved](http://www.cancerresearch.my/get-involved)**



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