

**NATIONAL CANCER SOCIETY MALAYSIA DONATES TO CHILD CANCER PATIENTS
IN CONJUNCTION WITH INTERNATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER DAY**

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – 14 February, 2019 - In conjunction with International Childhood Cancer Day on 15 February 2019, the National Cancer Society of Malaysia (NCSM) presented a total of RM 5,000 in donation to ten deserving families of children suffering from cancer through its Children’s Cancer Fund. The event, which was attended by the Societies’ principal patron, Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz was held at the Resource and Wellness Centre of NCSM on Thursday, 14 February 2019.

The donation was given through the Children’s Cancer Fund to patients of underprivileged families who reside at NCSM’s Children’s Home Of Hope while they undergo cancer treatment, as well as children who are admitted to the Paediatric Ward (Oncology) of Hospital Kuala Lumpur who are referred to NCSM by the Social Welfare department. The monetary assistance aims to support the families with their expenses and ease their financial burden.

“Refusing or abandoning treatment is a major cause of treatment failure for children with cancer in low and middle-income countries,” says Dr Saunthari Somasundaram, President of NCSM. “Families of a lower socioeconomic status, lower educational status, or those who face long travel times to treatment centres as well as lack psychosocial support are particularly at risk of abandoning treatment.

“This is why our Home is within walking distance to Hospital Kuala Lumpur, and why we provide food, accommodation, as well as a small stipend to the families. These little things go a long way – research shows that they can lower the chances of treatment abandonment.

“One example is how a hospital in Vietnam successfully decreased their abandonment rates from 50 per cent to 5 per cent after providing transport for children to the hospital, and after setting up a parent group.”

Located on the 4th floor of the NCSM building, the Children’s Home Of Hope is financed entirely by voluntary contributions from the public. The home opened in 1996 at the request of the Paediatric Department of Hospital Kuala Lumpur to offer children from outstation who are undergoing treatment with a comfortable place to stay with their caregivers.



The Home features nine rooms in total; seven rooms are for general cancer patients and two rooms specifically catered for bone marrow transplant patients. Each room is fully furnished and provides accommodation for the patient and a caregiver, with housekeeping facilities. The Home is equipped with a playroom filled with toys and books for children to engage in interactive activities. An in-house play therapist, certified by Play Therapy UK conducts therapeutic play sessions with children to help them express their emotions, understand and accept their medical condition and nurture them to be more independent. Additionally, counselling and support services for caregivers, in-house dietary and nutritional advice are also provided.

The celebration of International Childhood Cancer Day (ICCD) on 15 February each year aims to create awareness to reduce childhood cancer mortality and the elimination of cancer-related pain and suffering.

According to the Malaysian National Cancer Registry Report, the top three cancers suffered by children of both sexes aged below 14 years are leukaemia (47.1 per cent in males, 45.5 per cent in females) followed by brain, nervous system (13.8 per cent in males, 16.0 per cent in females) and lymphoma (11.3 per cent in males, 8.4 per cent in females). The number of cases of childhood cancer among children aged 0 to 18 years is 3,892. Out of this, 2,131 (55.7 per cent) cases were males and 1,698 (44.3 per cent) cases were females.

About National Cancer Society of Malaysia / Persatuan Kebangsaan Kanser Malaysia (NCSM)

The National Cancer Society Malaysia (NCSM) is the first not-for-profit cancer organisation in Malaysia that provides education, care and support services for people affected by cancer. Over the last 50 years, it provides holistic cancer support to patients and caregivers. NCSM supports patients in understanding and dealing with cancer in various phases through its five cancer centres – the Cancer and Health Screening Clinic, Nuclear Medicine Centre, Resource and Wellness Centre, Quit Smoking Clinic and the Children’s Home of Hope and has branches in six states, i.e. Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Perak, Penang and Sarawak.

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