

Malaysia

Health Roadshow

Living in A World with COVID-19
– Continuing Safeguards for the
Population in Malaysia



Key takeaways from EU-ABC's
3rd Health Roadshow

Opening Remarks

SPEAKER



Yang Berbahagia Dato' Sri Norazman Ayob

Deputy Secretary-General (Finance)
of the Ministry of Health

Key takeaways:

- As part of Malaysia's efforts to tackle the surge in costs for treatment and curative care due to the rising burden of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) and a rapidly aging population, Malaysia is transitioning its emphasis from sick care to preventive and promotive healthcare, empowering individuals to proactively manage their own well-being.
- This is extremely timely because based on a 2017 report by Malaysia's Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO), direct healthcare costs from diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer in Malaysia exceed RM9.65 billion yearly. Moreover, the focus on a preventive health approach has also been outlined in the country's recent Health White Paper publication. The paper highlighted the use of data collection and analytics to drive more evidence-based preventive public health interventions such as vaccination programs, early diagnostic community screening initiatives and nutrition programmes.
- Importantly, Malaysia's allocation for public health in the 2023 budget, at 1.98% of the country's GDP, falls short of the WHO's recommended minimum of 5%. As such, to enhance public health services, it is essential to foster collaboration between the government and the private sector, ensuring an optimal synergy for the benefit of the population.



Keynote Address

SPEAKER



Dr Azizan Binti Abdul Aziz
President
Malaysian Medical Association

Key takeaways:

- The inception of the Sector Productivity Nexus under the Malaysian Productivity Blueprint in 2017 heralded an era of systematic improvements to address challenges faced by private healthcare, which included shortages of medical specialists, setting up private hospitals, developing aged care facilities, and addressing issues related to third-party administrators. This was a commendable effort that supported the symbiotic relationship between the public and private sectors.
- As the country transitions towards an aged society by 2030, the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has been at the forefront of developing and implementing healthcare strategies targeted at elderly at risk for NCDs, especially since NCDs are highly prevalent in later life. In 2018, MMA set up a committee for the health of seniors which comprised of experts sharing best practices on elderly care and keeping abreast of the latest updates of such care.
- Key health strategies to address the burden of NCDs in Malaysia include capacity building of healthcare professionals around key public health topics such as women's health and vaccination. Furthermore, health screenings for NCDs are being rolled out across 14 MMA state branches.



Panel Session 1: Tackling NCDs to Build a Healthier Malaysia

SPEAKERS



Professor Dato' Dr Syed Mohamed Aljunid
President
Malaysian Health Economic Association



Professor Dr Rohana Abdul Ghani
President
Malaysian Obesity Society



Cihan Serdar Kizilcik
VP & General Manager
Novo Nordisk Malaysia



Chris Humphrey
Executive Director
EU-ASEAN Business Council

Key takeaways:

- The shift away from curative care to preventive care is imperative to future-proof Malaysia's healthcare system. However, there is a lack of incentive for primary care providers to refocus their efforts on preventive services. Thus, there is a need for the co-creation of innovative funding mechanisms to support and incentivise both public and private healthcare providers to tackle the NCD crisis.
- Although public hospitals cover 75% of hospital beds, 70% of specialists operate in the private sector, demonstrating the need for more trained healthcare professionals to improve service delivery through accessible and timely care and ensure that patients receive the right intervention at the right time. Capacity building of healthcare

professionals improves the patient pathway for obesity and ensures the continued, multi-disciplinary support necessary for the full cycle of care to ensure that no one falls through the gaps of care or not initiate care for obesity.

- Obesity has been recognised as a NCD by WHO and has been identified as a complex chronic condition closely interrelated with other NCDs, including diabetes, heart disease and certain types of cancer. Highlighting its connection to these prevalent NCDs on public platforms can raise public awareness, influence health attitudes and behaviours and promote early intervention to better shape the environment and health attitudes to address obesity.



Panel Session 2: Advancing the Self- Care Ecosystem in Malaysia

Key takeaways:

- Advancing the self-care ecosystem involves cultivating health literacy and encouraging positive health-seeking behaviours and self-care practices at three distinct levels: the individual, the family, and the community.
- Empowering individuals to adopt self-care as an instinctive health behaviour starts with enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their health. Promoting health literacy within families helps foster a supportive environment where members can share knowledge and encourage the family unit to embrace healthier lifestyles. This creates a ripple effect in which well-informed individuals positively influence their peers, cultivating a collective awareness of health at the community level.
- Industry stakeholders play a pivotal role in public health awareness in facilitating these improvements through collaborative public awareness campaigns by avoiding the use of complex medical terminology and jargon in their communications. By employing plain language and providing accessible information, they can bridge the knowledge gap, making health-related content



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Azrul Mohd Khalib
Founder & Chief Executive
Galen Centre for Health and Social Policy

SPEAKERS

more understandable and relatable for individuals and families alike. This approach ultimately contributes to healthier communities, diminishes healthcare disparities, and benefit society as a whole.

- Crucially, pharmacists play a pivotal role in this endeavour to promote self-care. Positioned at the intersection of healthcare providers and patients, pharmacists serve as accessible and trusted sources of information and guidance. Their specialised knowledge of medications, treatments, and healthcare renders them indispensable in educating individuals about responsible self-care practices. They can provide recommendations on over-the-counter medications, suggest suitable self-care measures, and furnish crucial details on appropriate medication usage. Consequently, this enables accessible and timely care at the community level to complement empowered self-care habits and behaviour, eventually moving from sick care to health care.

Panel Session 3: Strategies to Reverse Health Crises Today and Tomorrow



Dr Azizan Binti Abdul Aziz
President
Malaysian Medical Association



Professor Dr Zamberi Sekawi
Professor of Medical Microbiology and
Consultant Clinical Microbiologist,
Universiti Putra Malaysia



Ashok Perumal
Public Affairs Lead (MY/SG), Sanofi



Kandyce Ong
Lead, Industry Engagement,
Medical Devices Industry Group,
Singapore Manufacturing Federation

SPEAKERS

Key takeaways:

- Vaccines represent one of the most cost-effective interventions, yet there remains a significant lack of public awareness and uptake of influenza vaccination in Malaysia, with only approximately 1 – 3% of the population availing themselves of this proven and safe preventive measure.
- Expanding access to life-course immunisation necessitates collaborative efforts from both the public and private sectors. Vaccines should be integrated into the overarching preventive strategy and advocated to be included in both national and private insurance coverage. Healthcare providers



should also be incentivised to incorporate vaccination as part of routine care.

- Highlighting the dual benefits of immunisation—disease prevention and the active promotion of overall health and well-being—aligns with government priorities of reducing healthcare costs, alleviating the strain on healthcare systems, and enhancing citizens' quality of life. Furthermore, it underscores the long-term economic advantages of investing in immunisation, as healthier populations lead to increased workforce productivity and decreased healthcare expenditures. When presented as a comprehensive strategy that not only guards against infectious diseases but also contributes to broader health promotion, life-course immunisation becomes a more enticing and persuasive proposition for government support and endorsement.

Panel Session 4:

Futureproofing Malaysia's Health System: Why Change Cannot Wait

SPEAKERS



Azrul Mohd Khalib
Founder & Chief Executive
Galen Centre for Health and Social Policy



Dr Khor Swee Kheng
Chief Executive Officer
Angsana Health



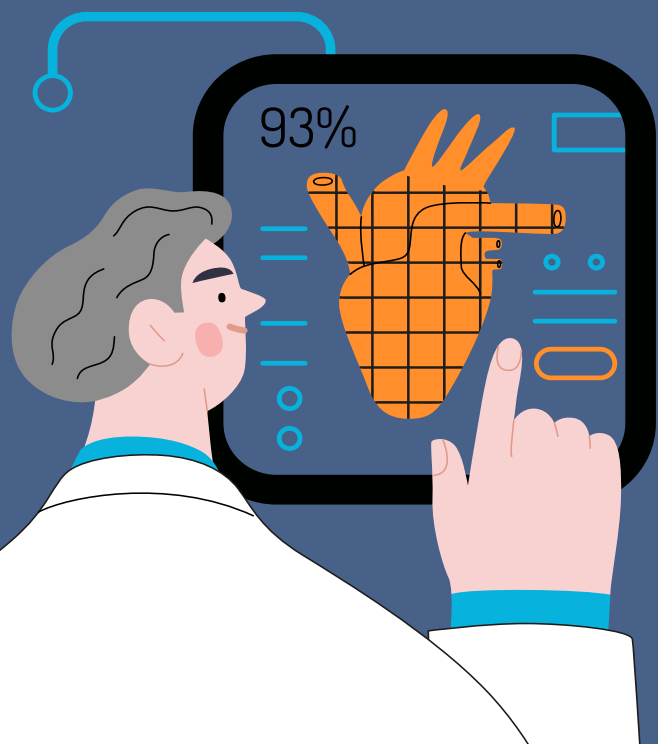
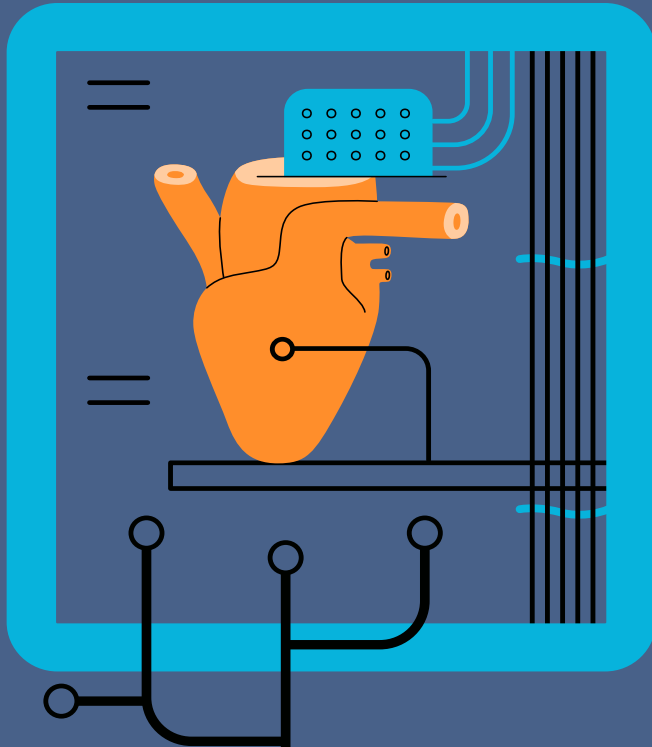
Louis-Georges Lassonery
Managing Director
Zuellig Pharma Malaysia & Brunei



Chris Humphrey
Executive Director
EU-ASEAN Business Council

Key takeaways:

- Leveraging technology plays a pivotal role in efficiently managing the healthcare supply chain and ensuring the timely delivery of medical devices and medications. Specifically, health technologies can be categorised into three main areas: Data, Devices, and Pure Digital. 'Data' encompasses programmes or devices that generate a wealth of data, such as electronic health records. 'Devices' refer to newly developed medical technologies, while 'Pure Digital' represents innovative approaches to bridging healthcare and improving health outcomes, such as the use of AI.



- Establishing a guiding law is vital for fostering structured collaboration between the public and private sectors in public-private partnerships. Such legislation forms the cornerstone for creating an ecosystem where both sectors can collaborate effectively and seamlessly. It offers clarity regarding roles, responsibilities, and legal obligations, ensuring that objectives are in sync and risks are appropriately shared. By specifying the rules of engagement, a guiding law facilitates the development of trust and confidence between public and private entities, thus encouraging private sector investment and participation. This legal framework can also outline mechanisms for transparency,

accountability, and dispute resolution, guaranteeing that partnerships are conducted with integrity and in the public's best interest.

- While there is a growing emphasis on investing in customised solutions, readily deployable systems offer immediate solutions to address pressing healthcare issues without time-consuming and costly development associated with custom solutions. In many instances, these "systems" can seamlessly integrate into existing infrastructure, enabling clinics and hospitals to enhance operational efficiency and patient care without rendering their previous investments obsolete.



Closing Remarks

SPEAKER



Prof Amrahi Bin Buang

President
Malaysian Pharmacists Society



Key takeaways:

- The recently unveiled Malaysia Health White Paper offers a comprehensive framework revolutionising the provision of health services in Malaysia. By presenting a clear and strategic roadmap, this White Paper empowers Malaysia to synchronise its healthcare endeavours and efficiently allocate resources to meet both current and future health needs. It serves as a catalyst for cultivating a more resilient and responsive healthcare system capable of adapting to the evolving healthcare landscape and demographic changes.
- The growing engagement of the private sector in public healthcare is a source of optimism for many. Private sector investments can bridge funding gaps, thus alleviating the strain on government budgets and potentially extending healthcare access to underserved populations. Moreover, the industry's expertise in management, technology, and data analytics has the potential to enhance the overall efficiency and effectiveness of public healthcare delivery.

