

700km cycling event to raise funds for early cervical cancer detection

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Prof Adeeba: Most women are not screened for cervical cancer regularly, with two-thirds (67%) of cases being presented in the late stage.

The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) is organising Sepeda Amal Borneo – a seven-day bicycle ride from Kuching to Bintulu, Sarawak, from July 15 to 22.

Covering 700km, the ride aims to raise funds in support of “Program ROSE” (Removing Obstacles to Cervical Screening) while increasing cervical cancer awareness.

The average distance covered per day will be between 100 and 150km and the number of participants will be capped at 16 cyclists.

Designed specifically for Malaysian women, Program ROSE integrates self-sampling, primary HPV testing and digital health platform using mobile technology to ensure that women who require follow-up are linked to care for treatment, if necessary.

This evidence-based approach can help save lives and spare women and their families from the suffering and financial hardship associated with cervical cancer.

“We hope to drive home the importance of self-screening for cervical cancer.

“MMA hopes corporate organisations and the public will give their support towards this initiative aimed at raising awareness about one of the most common cancers among women,” said MMA president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai.



Dr Muruga: Although Pap Smear screening is available at many healthcare centres, only 25% of eligible women had taken the test from 2013 to 2017.

Funds raised from the cycling event will go to the MMA Foundation, which will channel the money towards ROSE Foundation for the programme and cervical cancer outreach community development drive.

In Malaysia, cervical cancer is the third most common cancer in women after breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer affecting women in the productive age of 15 to 44.

“Although Pap Smear screening is available at many healthcare centres, only 25% of eligible women had taken the test from 2013 to 2017.

“We hope that through these efforts, more will be encouraged to take the important step of testing.

“It is always best to be up to date on your health status so that the best health outcomes can be achieved,” said Dr Muruga.

Meanwhile, ROSE Foundation chair Professor Datuk Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman said, “Cervical cancer can be detected and prevented early with accurate HPV PCR self-sampling and appropriate follow-up as well as treatment.

“Regrettably, most women are not screened for cervical cancer regularly, with two-thirds (67%) of cases being presented in the late stage.

“We want to change that, and our goal is to encourage more women to undergo this self- screening for HPV to allow for early detection of abnormalities and subsequently be linked to care.

“We thank MMA for selecting ROSE Foundation as the recipient of this year’s Sepeda Amal Borneo 2023 fundraising cycling event.

“The support and contributions from generous individuals and organisations will enable Program ROSE to screen more women annually,” added Prof Adeeba.