

## Message from President

### Empowering and Educating

**Dr Christina Ng** MBBS (Melb) FRACP (Aust)  
President and Founder



October and November were two very busy months when EMPOWERED! organised a cancer awareness campaign at PPR Sri Pantai, Pantai Dalam, Kuala Lumpur on 21 November 2010. I am grateful to the working committee of this campaign who volunteered their time to attend the numerous evening meetings to ensure the smooth organisation of the event.

350 residents and children from PPR Sri Pantai and Sentul participated in the workshops. This campaign was organised with a family-theme in mind that included lectures on breast and lung cancers, with three separate workshops for adults and children.

The committee members' (of Persatuan Penduduk PPR Sri Pantai) enthusiastic support are commended - and they have aptly called the campaign "Kesihatan untuk Keluarga Bahagia". Healthcare professionals from the government sector and private hospitals, and local community networks have stepped forward to contribute their time and share their knowledge and expertise with the residents. More stories and pictures of the day are on pages 2-5..

*My Journal – A Resource for Cancer Survivors*, 2nd edition will be available soon in four languages, i.e. English, Bahasa Malaysia, Mandarin and Tamil. The book launch is set for 25 February 2011 at MPH

Megastore, One Utama Shopping Centre, Petaling Jaya. These books will be donated to selected government hospitals and also retailed at selected MPH bookstores. Proceeds from the sale of the book will go to EMPOWERED! charity projects.

In this issue, we feature candid interviews with EMPOWERED! volunteers. Without volunteers' contribution, we would not have been able to carry out all the projects we set out to do. Our heartfelt thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who supported EMPOWERED! from time to time, EMPOWERED! provides numerous volunteer opportunities. If you are looking for something to do, we can help you find it! If you are inspired by our work, do join us and offer your time! Email your questions of interest to: [my.empowered@gmail.com](mailto:my.empowered@gmail.com).

Sponsors play an important part of every campaign that EMPOWERED! runs. The interest shown towards EMPOWERED! projects paved the way for EMPOWERED! to achieve many milestones. All contribution, be it big or small are appreciated. Thank you!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and best wishes for the 2011.

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# Creating Awareness on Cancer

*“Cancer need not be a death sentence. There are preventive steps to be taken as well as treatment and support programmes for cancer patients”*

**EMPOWERED!** The Cancer Advocacy Society of Malaysia, in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department of Malaysia and numerous other like-minded organizations held a cancer awareness programme on 21 November 2010 for over 350 low-income residents of PPR Sri Pantai, Pantai Dalam and Sentul.



*The venue at Medan Sri Pantai, Pantai Dalam, Kuala Lumpur*

## Opening Speech

“We applaud EMPOWERED!’s efforts among the poor, which is one of our department’s target groups. The Social Welfare Department supports such an initiative as it is closely aligned with our mission and vision of developing society towards social wellbeing as well as fostering a prosperous and caring society,” said Puan Noormah Bt Dato’ Haji Abdul Rauf, Director, Social Welfare Department, Wilayah Persekutuan who officiated the event.



*From left: En. Adlan Lobe, Chairman PPR Sri Pantai Residents’ Association, Pn. Noormah bt. Dato’ Haji Abdul Rauf, Director, Social Welfare Dept, WP, Dr Christina Ng, President, EMPOWERED.*

## Workshop Lectures

The workshop activities were focused around raising awareness on lung and breast cancer – the two cancers with high mortality rates.

Following the official opening, educational lectures were given by healthcare professionals on awareness, diagnosis and treatment for both lung and breast cancer.



*Left: Prof. C K Liam, of UMMC, delivering a lecture on lung cancer.*



*Above: Dr Zariahah Mohd Zain, Disease Control Division, Ministry of Health Malaysia, Putrajaya.*



*Below: Dr Azlina Firzah Bte Abdul Aziz - Consultant Breast Surgeon, Pantai Hospital, KL.*



*Lucky winners of the health quiz receiving their prizes.*



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## Creating Awareness on Cancer

### Sharing session by cancer survivor

Being diagnosed with cancer did not prevent Puan Norsaflezah Mohd Salleh from living life to the fullest. Puan Norsaflezah shares her trials and tribulations of her journey with cancer, inspiring the community that a fulfilling life was possible despite being diagnosed with the disease.



Left: **My trials and tribulations** - cancer survivor, Pn Norsaflezah Mohd Salleh shares her experiences.



Take charge of your life  
by making modifications  
to your lifestyle.

### Interactive Workshops

#### 1. *Eat Healthy* workshop

Demonstration of healthy and nutritious recipes on sandwich-making was a popular workshop. At the same time, a talk on nutrition was conducted to reinforce the need for nutritious food intake.



#### 2. *Stay Healthy* workshop

Physiotherapists were on hand to guide participants on the appropriate exercises to undertake daily. At the same time, participants had the opportunity to check their body mass index (BMI).

#### 3. *Breast Self-Examination (BSE)* workshop

For the women, there was a *Breast Cancer* workshop which incorporated breast self examination tutorials, clinical breast examinations by breast consultants as well as an exhibition and question and answer session for them to interact with breast care nurses and cancer survivors on a one-on-one basis.



continued on page 4.....

## Creating Awareness on Cancer

### 4. Children's Workshop – *Stay Away from Tobacco*

110 children, age 9 to 16, gathered at the Dewan Orang Ramai at PPR Sri Pantai for a workshop on Anti-smoking. What started as a group of shy and quiet children soon broke out into excitement and laughter as Andy Loh, the Head of Kids Services from Generasi Gemilang engaged them in fun-filled singing and games.

Key message of “Be Cool, Don’t Be Fool” was constantly reinforced through interactional teaching and object lesson demonstrating the effects of tar and nicotine to the human body. As the children learned the dangers and negative effects of smoking, they were introduced to a balanced and healthy lifestyle as an alternative behaviour – which comprise of healthy relationships, eating, academics and sports.

We wish to thank Adrian Fu of Kinta Medical for his participation in this workshop.



**“We are extremely grateful to EMPOWERED! and their collaborating partners for bringing this awareness programme straight into our homes”**

**En. Adlan Lobe, *President of the Resident's Association of PPR Sri Pantai*, shares his views on the 21 November campaign.**

“Workshops such as this usually require the public to pay for entrance or are conducted at locations that are not convenient for most. This hinders certain groups of people from getting important health information.

We are extremely grateful to EMPOWERED! and their collaborating partners for bringing this awareness programme straight into our homes for the benefit of our residents.

We will share the knowledge gained from this workshop with residents who were unable to attend today's workshop”.



Children displayed their creative side through art by producing posters, postcards, flyers and brochures and went home with prizes and goodies bags.

*Continued on page 5...*

.... from page 4

## Creating Awareness on Cancer

### The Workbook

A workbook containing critical information and graphics on cancer was developed especially for this workshop. All participants received this workbook as part of an educational resource. If you wish to receive this workbook, please email your request to [my.empowered@gmail.com](mailto:my.empowered@gmail.com).



### Media Coverage

The event was covered in the media and you can view these articles by going to the following website links.

- 22 Nov – Harian Metro ([http://www.hmetro.com.my/articles/RM799\\_160ringanbebanpendudukbergajirendah/Article](http://www.hmetro.com.my/articles/RM799_160ringanbebanpendudukbergajirendah/Article))
- 24 Nov – Berita Harian
- 9 Nov – Harian Metro (<http://www.hmetro.com.my/articles/Barahbukanhukumanmati/Article>)
- 17 Dec – Utusan Malaysia ([http://www.utusan.com.my/utusan/info.asp?y=2010&dt=1217&pub=Utusan\\_Malaysia&sec=Kesihatan&pg=kn\\_01.htm](http://www.utusan.com.my/utusan/info.asp?y=2010&dt=1217&pub=Utusan_Malaysia&sec=Kesihatan&pg=kn_01.htm))
- 20 Dec – The Star (<http://thestar.com.my/metro/story.asp?file=/2010/12/20/central/7622268&sec=central>)

## Upcoming Event

### BOOK LAUNCH

#### Cancer Survivors' Handbook, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition by Dr Christina Ng

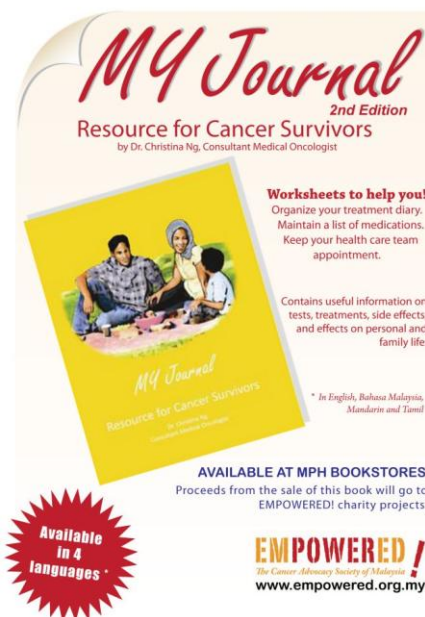
A book designed to help cancer patients better understand their condition and the rigours of treatment so they are better prepared for the days ahead.

Proceeds from the sale of the book will go to EMPOWERED! charity projects.

**Date:** 25 February 2011

**Time:** To be confirmed

**Venue:** MPH Megastore, One Utama, Petaling Jaya



## Getting involved – Volunteers' stories

*EMPOWERED! first colon cancer screening project in April/May 2010 involved many volunteers. Here they share with us their experiences of volunteerism.*

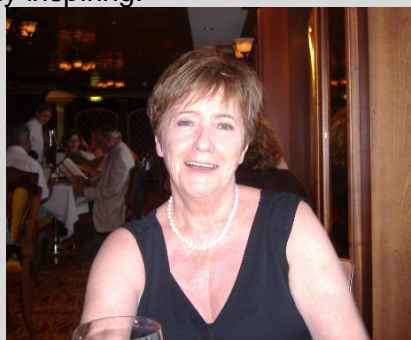
**Datin Paduka Khatijah Sulieman,**  
*Vice-President, National Council of Women and Development (MAKPEM)*



The project was a very challenging one for me.. It took lots of patience and understanding whenever I meet with the community residents in Sentul as they are made up of many many characters and personalities. Somehow with the goodwill and sincerity of helping and reaching out by other groups of volunteers and members of EMPOWERED!, we manage to overcome barriers and met the objectives.

**Mary Anderson,** *volunteer counsellor*

I started as a volunteer with EMPOWERED! in 2009. What attracted me to this charity was its commitment to targeting the poorer members of society. I have a counselling background and was able to assist with workshops that were specific to helping people deal with the possibility that they may have to face bad news. Along the way I have been lucky to meet lots of volunteers who came on board to help with the workshops. Their commitment and dedication was truly inspiring.



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### *Their commitment and dedication was truly inspiring*

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**Mr K C Kong,**  
*Secretary of Stoma Care Society of Malaysia*

I was quite unsure what I could do when the idea of a colon cancer screening project was mooted by Dr Christina Ng in 2009. Being the Secretary of the Stoma Care Society of Malaysia, I knew I had to be in the project as it is directly related to us.

The colon cancer screening project took many meetings and months of preparations to perfect the one day workshop. The workshop was really such a big success that there were participants who told me that we should carry out more similar projects. The volunteers were also very happy that they could contribute in some way to the society and in my mind I thought bless their hearts for their kind thoughts.

The workshop was not the end of it. There were still the results to be handed back and those with blood in their stools needed to go for further treatment. The subjects were very grateful for the help rendered to bring them to Hospital for their doctor's appointments. It was all a win-win situation at the end.

Many people could have done this but no one initiated it. The credit must go to Dr Christina Ng who had sacrificed her time to do this and also the many organizations and persons who have contributed both in terms of time, effort and money to make this a success.

I learnt a lot from the project and I hope the rest who contributed alongside me did as well.

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## Getting involved – Volunteers' stories



**T H Fung,**  
volunteer counsellor

I was invited by my friend, Mr. Ong who is a volunteer in EMPOWERED! , to attend a briefing at a convention hall in Sunway Hospital in March. Not knowing what to expect, I walked into the convention hall on that fateful day, and six months later, here I am sharing with you my experiences in this great life-saving project.

My role in the colon cancer screening project was to provide emotional support to those who were thought to have higher risk of having

colon cancer after the initial test. On the day we broke the news to these individuals, some of them cried and some were terrified. Fortunately we have had some training and role-play (thanks to Mary Anderson and other wonderful volunteers) so we could manage the situation.

I learnt that I didn't really have to do anything special or say some words of wisdom in order to make them feel better. Most of the time, I only looked and listened to the individual with concern, and this was good enough. It was an empowering moment, not only for that individual but for me as well. I am looking forward to contribute again to such meaningful projects in the future.

*You must give some time to your fellow man.  
Even if it's a little thing, do something for others -- something for  
which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it.  
– Albert Schweitzer*



### **Puan Hasnah bt. Abdul Aziz underwent the colon screening test and shares her experience with us.**

“Before I participated in colon cancer screening workshop, I enjoyed eating “cili api”, raw or cooked in variety of styles and a must-have at every meal. My diet consisted of hot spicy foods, which I think caused me to experience stomach discomfort from time to time. But I could not resist.

At the workshop, I took part in the screening test and the exercise workshop. The results from the screening test caused me a lot of anxiety, as blood was found in my stool! For days, I could not sleep and kept thinking of the worst. I was so scared! However it was a great relief to know, after colonoscopy, that the condition was due to piles and not cancer.

It was an awakening period for me – from that day onwards, I eat less “cili api” and practise the exercises I learnt at the workshop. I am very grateful to EMPOWERED! for conducting this workshop. I hope EMPOWERED! will organise more workshops and I will surely encourage my family, friends and neighbours to participate in these life-saving projects.”

**We wish to thank the following organisations and individuals for your contribution to the success of EMPOWERED'S recent Cancer Awareness Campaign at PPR Sri Pantai. Also to all the volunteers who helped out during the event day, thank you for your presence.**

**SUPPORTING BODIES**

Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat  
Persatuan Penduduk PPR Sri Pantai  
Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL)  
Yellow House Society of Kuala Lumpur  
Persatuan Kebajikan Generasi Gemilang  
Malaysian Thoracic Society  
Malaysian Dietitians' Association  
Malaysian Physiotherapy Association  
PRIDE Foundation  
Persatuan Kebajikan HOPE Worldwide Kuala Lumpur  
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Dato Douglas Cheng  
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Ms Chua Wei Wan

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**How You Can Help**

Being a non-profit organization, we rely on your generous donation to help us manage and develop programmes to help the poor who are afflicted with cancer. Send your donation by cheque or money order made payable to **THE CANCER ADVOCACY SOCIETY OF MALAYSIA.**

All cash donations are issued with tax-exempt receipts.