



Media Release

AIA Calls on Malaysians to Get Real About Their Health

Empowers Malaysians to Take Charge of their Health by Making Better Choices

KUALA LUMPUR, 11 August 2015 – We often do not notice the state of our health, but our loved ones do - this is the message behind **The Health Report Card by AIA**, a project aimed at encouraging Malaysians to take control of their health amidst the rising trend of lifestyle-related diseases in Malaysia.

Speaking at the launch of the campaign, Thomas Wong, Chief Marketing Officer of AIA Bhd. (AIA) said, “Our insights show that many Malaysians spend most of their time worrying about the wellbeing of their loved ones, be it their children, their spouses or their parents, and as a result, they tend to overlook their own health. We hope that our message will inspire all Malaysians to first look inward and start adopting lifestyle habits that will allow them to lead longer and healthier lives.”

To bring to life this message, AIA conducted a dipstick survey among primary school students in the Klang Valley to assess the state of their parents’ health. Over 200 students answered questions that covered nutrition, physical activity as well as emotional wellbeing.

“Children are very observant by nature, and as such, it was fascinating to get their candid responses to questions on their parents’ health. Unsurprisingly, their responses reflected what we probably know, but are reluctant to admit – that we do not exercise enough, we spend too much time at work or on our mobile devices, and our diets are not as nutritious as they should be. Are we setting a good example for our children or will the cycle of poor lifestyle choices continue into the next generation?” posed Thomas.

Lifestyle-related diseases such as hypertension, heart disease, cancer and high cholesterol are on the rise in Malaysia. In fact, recent reports place Malaysia as the fattest country in Southeast Asia¹, cases of diabetes and kidney disease are in the millions (3.2 million² and 2.5 million³ patients, respectively, in 2014) and one in four Malaysians are expected to be diagnosed with cancer before their 75th birthday⁴.

¹ [“Malaysia is fattest country in South-East Asia”, The Star Online, January 2014](#)

² [Source: International Diabetes Federation \[www.idf.org\]](#)

³ [“2.5 mil Malaysians suffer from kidney disease”, theSundaily, February 2014](#)

⁴ [Source: National Cancer Society of Malaysia \[www.cancer.org.my\]](#)

Dr. George Lee, Consultant Urologist at Gleaneagles Kuala Lumpur said, “The rise in lifestyle-related diseases can be attributed to three main drivers: poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles and work-related stress. In Malaysia, it is not uncommon for people to be sitting at their work stations for hours on end and eating out at odd hours of the night. Couple this with the fact that most Malaysians do not exercise regularly and you have a national health situation that could soon reach crisis levels if left unchecked.”

These poor choices over nutrition and fitness as well as sedentary habits are not only affecting individuals and their families, but it also has a spillover effect on the larger community. “As a market leader in Employee Benefits, AIA has seen the impact the declining health trend has had on companies’ productivity and medical expenses,” said Jamie Yu, Chief Officer of AIA Health Services Sdn. Bhd.

With medical inflation reported at 12% per annum⁵, the rising cost of healthcare is another reason for Malaysians to start taking stock of their health. AIA claims data showed a 19% and 41% increase in the average cost per admission for diabetes and heart disease, respectively, between 2010 and 2014.

“Lifestyle related diseases are impacting families not only physically and emotionally, but also financially. There are many cases of medical bankruptcy due to the inability of families to cope with the cost of medical care, especially when they have to pay out of their own pockets owing to inadequate medical coverage. We are asking Malaysians to take their health seriously so they can live long and happy lives,” Jamie said.

Dr. George says, “While we do have cause for concern, there is good news. Lifestyle-related diseases are very much in our control, so there is an opportunity for all of us to turn this situation around. The first step is to know your health status, understand your potential health risks and adopt a lifestyle that will enhance your wellbeing. The earlier you detect a lifestyle disease, the easier it is to manage. In fact, the survival rate for many cancers is as high as 80% if detected early.”

Consultant dietician, Indra Balaratnam, also weighs in on the importance of nutrition in the fight against lifestyle-related diseases. “Rather than experimenting with different fad diets, small changes in our eating habits can go a long way. We can start by eating out less, staying away from processed foods, eating smaller meals more frequently, piling up on vegetables and

⁵ [Towers Watson 2014 Global Medical Trends Survey Report](#)

snacking on fruits and nuts. As you adapt to these small changes in your lifestyle, you will soon realise that taking care of your wellbeing is not so hard after all.”

To get people to start thinking about their own health, AIA has launched an online campaign inviting Malaysians to send health report cards to their loved ones. “Unless we identify our weaknesses, we cannot correct them. Sometimes, we need to hear the truth about our lifestyle from our nearest and dearest before we will start to take action,” says Thomas.

Malaysians can send their loved ones a Health Report Card by going to www.healthreportcard.com.my. A report card will be sent to your loved one based on your assessment of their eating habits, physical activity and emotional well-being. For every Health Report Card shared on Facebook, participants will receive a voucher from Lovy Pharmacy for spreading the message of good health. You can also look out for our Health Troopers who will be out and about Klang Valley encouraging people to show their loved ones they care by sending them an honest assessment of their health.

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About AIA Bhd.

AIA Bhd. is a leading insurer in Malaysia, where we have been privileged to do business since 1948. We offer a suite of high-quality products including Protection, Health, Personal Accident, General Insurance, Employee Benefits, Retirement and Family Takaful solutions to meet our customers’ protection and financial security needs at every life stage. Through our wide and diverse distribution footprint which comprises a 16,000-strong Life Planner force, our exclusive bank partner’s branches nationwide as well as corporate sales teams and brokers, we give our customers the choice of deciding how, when and where they connect with us.

Part of the AIA Group, the largest independent publicly listed pan-Asian life insurance group, AIA Bhd. has the financial strength, experience, service centre network and a well-trained team of more than 2,000 staff to serve our 3 million customers nationwide. As at end 2014, AIA Bhd.’s total asset worth was RM46 billion, with a paid-up capital of RM767 million.

About AIA Health Services Sdn. Bhd.

AIA Health Services Sdn. Bhd. is a wholly-owned subsidiary of AIA Bhd. Established in 1996, AIA Health Services is an in-house third party administrator that manages an extensive panel of medical providers as well as medical claims processing and billing for AIA Bhd. and AIA PUBLIC Takaful Bhd.

With more than 200 employees, AIA Health Services takes pride in servicing AIA Bhd.’s 3 million customers and 16,000 Life Planners. The company operates a 24-hour call centre that provides customer and business partner support for specialist outpatient and inpatient treatments. In addition, our country-wide general practitioner network of 2,000 clinics is equipped with electronic data capture facilities that give our customers the option to enjoy cashless payment when they visit the doctor. We also work with our healthcare providers to obtain the best possible rates for all our customers. Other services we provide include medical advisory and claims management.

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