



Press Release

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DATO' SERI DR WAN AZIZAH, PATRON OF PUSPANITA LAUNCHES PHASE 3 OF ETIQA'S FREE CERVICAL SCREENING PROGRAMME WITH ROSE FOUNDATION

KUALA LUMPUR – Phase 3 of Etiqa's Free Cervical Screening Programme with ROSE Foundation (Removing Obstacles to Cervical ScrEening), was officially launched by YAB Dato' Seri Dr Wan Azizah Dr Wan Ismail, Patron of PUSPANITA (Wives of Civil Servants and Women Civil Servants Association) as part of concerted efforts to eliminate cervical cancer in Malaysia. Funded by Etiqa and implemented by ROSE Foundation, the one-year, nationwide programme is worth RM1.22 million, aiming to screen 5,500 eligible women aged 30 to 65 from identified B40 communities.

Since the inception of the programme, eligible women have been tested using ROSE's innovative cervical screening approach that offers a simple self-swab, that is quick, simple, and painless which is unlike the conventional pap test. Samples are then sent to the ROSE laboratory for human papillomavirus (HPV) polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing with the results communicated via SMS within three weeks. For those women who tested positive for HPV, ROSE Contact Centre will further refer them to government hospitals for follow-up. The screened women in rural or interior areas, however, may decline treatment for various reasons, such as concerns about the cost of treatment or distance to the nearest government hospital and the expense of travelling there. Realising this, Phase 3 of Etiqa and ROSE Foundation introduces on-site colposcopy treatment for those women that can be performed in these communities.

The immediate onsite treatment includes an initial assessment using a mobile colposcopy device that produces high quality images of the cervix. The device can be connected to a smartphone for easy visualisation to support remote consultation if required. Upon assessment, patients with pre-cancer virus will be treated at the location using a Portable Thermal Coagulator. Apart from providing innovative solution to detecting pre-cancer-causing HPV viruses in women, the programme will now empower women to get themselves treated, which will eventually help to save more lives.

The event was graced by YAB Dato' Seri Dr Wan Azizah Dr Wan Ismail, Patron of PUSPANITA (Wives of Civil Servants and Women Civil Servants Association). Also present at the event were Datuk R. Karunakaran, Chairman of Maybank Ageas Holdings Berhad, the parent company of Etiqa General Insurance Berhad, Etiqa Life Insurance Berhad, Etiqa General Takaful Berhad, and Etiqa Family Takaful Berhad, Paul Low Hong Ceong, Chief Executive Officer of Etiqa Life Insurance Berhad, Professor Dato' Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman, Chair of ROSE Foundation, Professor Dr Woo Yin Ling, Founder and Trustee of ROSE Foundation, and Puan Sri To' Puan Seri Norizam binti Che Mohd Nor, Yang DiPertua of PUSPANITA.

In his speech, Datuk R. Karunakaran, Chairman of Maybank Ageas Holdings Berhad said, "We are deeply honoured to be an agent of change in eliminating the third most common cancer amongst women in Malaysia. With the continuous support from Malaysians for Etiqa, today, we are excited to announce Phase 3 of Etiqa's Free Cervical Screening Programme with ROSE Foundation.



Embarking on this new chapter, we hope to reach more Malaysian women and their family members by providing accessible screening and a treatment facility. With proper intervention, we believe cervical cancer among Malaysian women can be eliminated and save lives.”

He added, “Recently, Etiqa’s Free Cervical Screening programme with ROSE Foundation earned Etiqa a recognition at the 2022 Sustainability & CSR Malaysia Awards. In line with our vision of ‘Making the World a Better Place’, fuelled by the support of the nation, this will push us forward in championing this cause for change. To ROSE Foundation, thank you for working hard in reaching to the communities in Phase 1 and 2, and we look forward to make Phase 3 a success.”

Professor Dato’ Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman, Chair of ROSE Foundation said, “Thanks to Etiqa’s sponsorship, we are pleased to introduce the Mobile Colposcopy equipment that enables the volunteer medical teams to travel to rural/interior communities and treat women screened for HPV-positive; with this new equipment, they can receive appropriate support treatment and care.”

“Rated as the third most common cancer amongst women in Malaysia, cervical cancer can be a preventable cancer, provided early and appropriate screening and treatment are administered.

“Program ROSE embraces all aspects of cervical cancer screening that integrates self-sampling, primary HPV testing and digital health platform using mobile technology and ensuring women who require follow-up are linked to care for treatment,” she added.

Paul Low, Chief Executive Officer of Etiqa Life Insurance Berhad said, “Etiqa has always been dedicated to serving our community and our customers. We are proud to play an instrumental role in supporting the vision of seeing more women become aware of the perils of cervical cancer and taking steps towards getting themselves screened. This programme has been designed so that women are able to carry out the simple procedure themselves by using a swab, thus ensuring privacy, and avoiding the discomfort and embarrassment of a pap smear conducted by a doctor at a clinic or hospital.”

Professor Dr Woo Yin Ling, Founder and Trustee of ROSE Foundation said that “Program ROSE has achieved another milestone in cervical screening with the mobile colposcopy and is a step up in our outreach programme that allows on-site medical treatment for women tested positive with HPV particularly in reaching out to remote rural areas. With the mobile colposcopy, Program ROSE can return to the location after the initial HPV PCR self-sampling screening and provide treatment for those tested HPV positive on-site. This helps boost the women’s confidence as they would be receiving linkage to care and further follow-up treatment which is Program ROSE’s integrated approach for cervical screening.”

Added Professor Dr Woo, “Program ROSE will continue with our outreach drive such as working with the community leaders or collaborating with related fraternity to ensure we achieve a wider screening of under-served and underprivileged women in remote areas. Thus far, Program ROSE has been introduced to over 150 health clinics across 12 states. 28 ROSE-friendly government hospitals with over 90 healthcare professionals are now engaged to provide follow-up treatment for the women who have tested positive through our programme. We are grateful for their extended support structure and achievements for Program ROSE.”



Launched in July 2019, Phases 1 and 2 of the programme have screened a total of 13,500 women from identified B40 communities in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak. Through it, more than 800 women tested positive for the virus and subsequently were referred to the nearest hospital for treatment before it potentially progressed into cervical cancer.

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About Etiqa

Etiqa is a multi-channel distributor of Insurance and Takaful products via its 10,000 agency force, 46 branches and 17 offices, over 490 bancassurance network (via Maybank branches, third-party banks, as well as co-operatives and brokers) through its presence in Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia and Cambodia.

In striving to make the world a better place, Etiqa's Sustainability journey focuses on internal initiatives that reduces its carbon footprint and increases its social impact, as well as external solutions that allow its clients to do the same.

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About ROSE Foundation

The ROSE Foundation is a non-profit organisation established in 2019 with the vision of cervical cancer elimination in Malaysia. The foundation's mission is to deliver cervical screening to women in Malaysia using the unique and innovative Program ROSE approach primarily focusing on the under-screened and underprivileged population. More information about the ROSE Foundation is available at <https://www.programrose.org/>.

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