

The Breast Cancer Teaching and Awareness Roadshow 2022: Outcomes from a pilot healthcare provider and public health awareness outreach programme in Sabah.

Nurshuhadah Jaafar ^a, Siti Zubaidah Sharif ^a, Lee Chang Haur ^a, Ho Kah Yee ^a, Pang Fui Tin ^b,
Nik Amin Sahid Nik Lah ^c

a. Breast and Endocrine Surgical Department, Queen Elizabeth Hospital II, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

b. Radiology Department, Queen Elizabeth Hospital II, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

c. Surgical Department, Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences, University Malaysia Sabah, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

Introduction: Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer with 1 in 8 of all new cancer diagnoses and is currently the 5th highest cause of overall cancer mortality globally. In Malaysia, breast cancer was reported to have the highest incidence (17.3%) of all new cancer cases and was the 2nd highest cause (11.9%) of overall cancer mortality. Epidemiologic data from 2012-2016 reported that 57.1% of cases diagnosed in Sabah were stage III and IV, slightly higher compared to the national incidence of 47.9%.

Methods: The Breast Cancer Teaching and Awareness Roadshow 2022 was a year-long programme led by the Pink Ribbon Centre (PRC) of Queen Elizabeth Hospital II in collaboration with various local and national non-profit organizations with the primary aim of increasing awareness of early detection and diagnosis of breast cancer among the public and healthcare providers in the various districts of Sabah. Twelve districts in Sabah were identified as pioneer locations whereby a 2-day event was held, consisting of one day of educational roadshow for healthcare personnel and another day of public engagement through breast cancer screening and awareness activities.

Results: Through the public screening programme, 1897 participants were screened, of which 659 were given outpatient routine screening mammogram appointments and 163 (8.6%) who were found to be symptomatic referred for urgent diagnostic imaging. Of the symptomatic group, 4.3% participants were diagnosed with invasive carcinoma (71% stage I, 29% stage II). The execution of this programme has shown reduction in number of Stage III and IV patients in Sabah specifically local data from Queen Elizabeth Hospital II 60% (2020 & 2021) to 56% (2022).

Conclusion: Great support from various organizations in bridging the inequities in breast cancer outcomes is required with systematic improvements in access to resource-appropriate and reinforcing the value of effective early detection programmes.