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EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY AGAINST HYPERTENSION: A HEALTH EDUCATION INITIATIVE AT SURAU AL-IKHWAN



MEDICAL lecturers (speakers) with members of the Al-Ikhwan Mosque congregation during the community health program.

Dr. Norasikin Ab Azis, Dr. Noor Fahitah Abu Hanipah, Dr. Norhafiza Razali & Dr. Siti Norsyafika Kamarudin

A community health education program was held at Surau Al-Ikhwan, Bandar Baru Sungai Buloh on 14 October 2025. Organized by the lecturers from the Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine UiTM, with the support of the Surau Al-Ikhwan committee members, this program aimed to strengthen the community's understanding of hypertension, one of the most common non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Malaysia.

The main focus of the program was to enhance the knowledge of local residents about hypertension, its complications, and preventive measures. Many individuals are aware of high blood pressure as a common illness, but few truly understand its silent progression and long-term effects on vital organs such as the heart, kidneys, and brain. Through this program, participants were guided to recognize early symptoms, understand risk factors, and appreciate the importance of lifestyle modifications such as maintaining a healthy diet, engaging in

regular physical activity, and managing stress effectively.

The session emphasized the significance of consistent medical follow-up and adherence to treatment. Participants were educated on how proper blood pressure monitoring, together with doctor-prescribed medication, plays a crucial role in preventing severe complications like stroke and heart disease. The facilitators also explained how poor compliance with treatment and irregular blood pressure checks can lead to serious health consequences that may otherwise be prevented through early awareness and proactive care.



DR. NORHAFIZA, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology, explaining hypertension to participants.

The event featured a health talk and a question-and-answer session that encouraged participants to share their personal experiences and seek advice directly from medical professionals. This two-way communication helped translate complex medical information into practical, everyday understanding. The informal and friendly atmosphere also fostered a stronger connection between the community and healthcare educators.

The program successfully enhanced community knowledge and awareness. Pre- and post-assessments showed notable improvement in participants' understanding of hypertension, its



DR. SITI NORSYAFIKA, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology, giving an introduction on how antihypertensive drugs work during the session.

causes, and prevention. Participants also demonstrated better awareness of lifestyle and medication adherence, and many appreciated the accessible approach from this program and expressed intent to apply the knowledge for their own and their families' health.

Beyond hypertension alone, raising awareness about NCDs is critically important because they account for around 72 % of premature deaths in Malaysia ¹ and impose massive burdens both socially and economically. Strengthening health literacy at the community level empowers individuals to make informed lifestyle and treatment decisions,



DR. NOOR FAHITAH, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology, engaging participants in an interactive session to assess their understanding.

which is essential for reducing the enormous cost and productivity losses associated with NCDs¹. The initiative aligns with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), reflecting global efforts to reduce premature deaths from NCDs through education and preventive action at the community level.

Overall, the program achieved its mission by enhancing health literacy, strengthening community partnerships, and promoting a culture of preventive healthcare.

References:

1. Prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases in Malaysia: The case for investment (2024). Putrajaya, Malaysia: Ministry of Health Malaysia.