

# Growing Impact of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

*International SOS encourages organisations to proactively focus on employee health and wellbeing to help stem NCDs resurgence and increase productivity*

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, June 8, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The recent increase in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) cases, not just in Malaysia but globally, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is something International SOS, the world's leading security and health services company, predicted. In line with this, International SOS has been working closely with Malaysian and International organisations to renew their focus on employee health and wellbeing as part of their 'Duty of Care' responsibilities and workforce resilience.

The rise in NCDs over the last two decades, which has been amplified by the pandemic, poses a major concern to the healthcare services in Malaysia. According to 'The direct healthcare cost of non-communicable diseases in Malaysia' report[1] released by the Health Ministry Malaysia and the World Health Organisation (WHO), NCDs are the main cause of death and disability in Malaysia. The joint study also highlighted that NCDs growing prevalence is placing increased strain on the country's health system through a rising demand for health services.



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Dr Chan Yanjun, Medical Director, Singapore & Malaysia, International SOS, shared, “Most recently, according to data obtained by the Health Informatics Centre of the Ministry of Health’s Planning Division[2], we have seen an increasing number of patients in the Emergency and Trauma Departments around the country. One of the key factors for this is the impact of COVID-19, which has increased the number of NCD cases and health complications due to the decrease in NCDs screening and many having had their treatment disrupted during the pandemic. Another challenge, that people living with NCDs face, is accessing essential medicines because of the current global environment and supply chain disruption.”

‘The direct healthcare cost of non-communicable diseases in Malaysia’ report[3] also noted that coupled with lost productivity costs, the combined annual cost burden of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer was estimated at RM22.5 billion. Malaysia is an ageing nation – in 2020, a World Bank study found that at least 14% of the population was expected to be aged above 65 by 2044, with this age group expected to exceed 20% of the population by 2056, giving it the status of a “super-aged nation”. With an ageing population and more people expected to live with NCDs in the long-term, MOH and WHO estimated an increase in the health and economic burden from chronic conditions over time.

Dr Chan continued, “With experts warning that the cost of treating NCDs will continue to increase in the coming years due to the nation's growing aging population, everyone needs to play their part to help stem this nationwide challenge. Businesses must play a more proactive role in the health of their employees, not just to mitigate the impact of a future pandemic, but also to address other ongoing health issues, such as NCDs and mental health, affecting their team members. Implementing robust employee wellness programmes that are designed to effectively manage and reduce the risk factors for NCDs and other diseases is essential. This will not only help increase their team’s productivity and retention, but will greatly benefit the organisation’s operation resilience as a whole.”

While COVID-19 was a wake-up call for many companies around the world regarding the health and wellbeing of their workforce, it has also brought about an evolution in the role organisations play in employee wellness, which now includes managing and reducing the risk factors for NCDs and other diseases. In addition, the pandemic has accelerated the need to build a safe, resilient and sustainable future for the workforce. As failure to do so could result in a backwards step in productivity, employee retention and business resilience.

Jing Tan, Regional General Manager and Director of South East Asia, International SOS, added, “To respond to the growing health challenges in Malaysia and globally, employee wellness needs to be carefully considered. To deal with this, an organisation needs strategic advice, vision and long-term plans, which is why investing in both emotional health and physical wellness support is now essential. Those that can best help employees navigate changing working environments and risk factors, will be rewarded with increased employee resilience, loyalty and productivity.”

From managing a resilient workforce, to reviewing and implementing, employee wellness programmes, travel policies and journey management plans, International SOS' global health and security advisors are on hand to help businesses ensure a healthy and safe workforce. For further information on how International SOS supports organisations and their people around the world, visit <https://www.internationalsos.com/>.

Here are the links to the mentioned statistics/research/study :-

- [https://www.moh.gov.my/moh/resources/Penerbitan/Rujukan/NCD/NCD\\_Laporan/HEALTH-COST\\_of\\_NCDs-7a-WEB.pdf](https://www.moh.gov.my/moh/resources/Penerbitan/Rujukan/NCD/NCD_Laporan/HEALTH-COST_of_NCDs-7a-WEB.pdf)

- <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2023/02/15/health-minister-says-increase-in-ncd-cases-among-factors-for-emergency-dept-congestion-at-hospitals/55070>

[https://www.moh.gov.my/moh/resources/Penerbitan/Rujukan/NCD/NCD\\_Laporan/HEALTH-COST\\_of\\_NCDs-7a-WEB.pdf](https://www.moh.gov.my/moh/resources/Penerbitan/Rujukan/NCD/NCD_Laporan/HEALTH-COST_of_NCDs-7a-WEB.pdf)

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