

Cancer Research Malaysia says #reverseforcancer on World Reverse Cancer Day

Research will reverse the stigma of cancer

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – 2nd April 2018 – Cancer Research Malaysia, working alongside Ensemble Worldwide, IPG Mediabrands Malaysia’s creative agency, has inaugurated the very first World Reverse Cancer Day at APW, Bangsar.

World Reverse Cancer Day launched on 2 Apr (02/04) reverses the dates for World Cancer Day which takes place annually on 4 Feb (04/02). The campaign seeks to raise awareness that research is being conducted to reverse the impact of cancer in the lives of Malaysians.

Chief Executive Officer of Cancer Research Malaysia, Professor Dr. Teo Soo-Hwang OBE comments about the message behind reversing these dates, “At the beginning of the last century, cancer was a death sentence, but now, 1 in 2 patients survive at least 10 years, and many even longer because of research done to improve prevention, detection and treatment of cancers. As a global cancer research community, we believe that by 2050, 3 in 4 patients will survive at least 10 years, but in order for us to get there, we need to continue to invest in research. We are working towards a day when the big “C”, which is what cancer is often called, is transformed to a disease that we can control and no longer feared and it can be – hence, our logo is a small c in reverse!”

Cancer Research Malaysia has a number of key corporate partners who have enabled research programmes to be established in breast, ovarian, oral, nasopharyngeal and prostate cancer. However, many of the discoveries are stuck because of the lack of funding support. To continue to raise awareness, funding and support for its ongoing research efforts, Cancer Research Malaysia sought the creative services of Ensemble Worldwide. The team collaborated to devise the idea of World Reverse Cancer Day to highlight the message and importance of research towards reversing cancer, and finding a cure. The #reverseforcancer campaign seeks to drive awareness towards the day, and serve as a simple but memorable message for the public.

Speaking about the campaign, Executive Creative Director of Ensemble Worldwide, Chan Woei Hern said, “We wanted to give a voice to the great work Cancer Research Malaysia is doing, and to reach the public in an impactful way to spread the message beyond existing corporate donors. World Reverse Cancer Day was a natural extension of that, serving as the landmark event to drive home the message that cancer cures are within reach provided there is more support and funding towards research initiatives. In time we hope more partners as well as more research organisations around the world pick up and adopt World Reverse Cancer Day.”

The #reverseforcancer challenge which was driven by social media influencers encouraged the public to post their own reverse video or photo on social media and challenge their friends to do the same. The #reverseforcancer event was open for the public at APW, Bangsar over the weekend of 31 March - 1 April, providing an opportunity for Malaysians to get up close and personal with Cancer Research Malaysia’s top researchers who provided workshops and information around the themes of genetics, immunotherapy, mobile innovations and the progress towards eradicating cervical cancer.

The event addressed some of the preconceptions and stigma around cancer, and aimed to show the public the significant advances that have been taking place in the prevention, screening and treatment of cancer.

Professor Teo added, “Lots of people suffer from cancer and the number is set to double in the next 30 years. Malaysians have been very generous in an umbrella for those who are suffering today, but most are not aware that supporting medical research through donations will ensure that we have a better chance of shifting the clouds so that we will need less umbrellas in the future. Moreover, many are not aware that cancer research is

being conducted right here in Malaysia, focusing on cancers common in Asians, with an emphasis on the unique aspects of genetics in Asians.”

Cancer Research Malaysia is leading the way in cancer research, in particular for efforts in improving the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of cancers and for developing research collaborations between Malaysia and Britain, specialising in Asian genetics and cancers prevalent within Asian communities. Yet there is still a need for wider understanding from the public and continuous support for the non-profit organisation to keep going.

Professor Teo said, “When Cancer Research Malaysia started 17 years ago, we were backed by corporate donors who placed their trust in our scientists to set up a research organisation from scratch. Today, we are moving from laboratory research to discoveries which could change the treatment for cancer patients, and it takes a massive effort and investment in people as well as in projects to test these discoveries in patients. This is why we are appealing to the public to support us, much like how the public in UK and USA support Cancer Research UK and the American Cancer Society respectively. Our donors have supported us tremendously by paying for the majority of the staff salaries and infrastructure. This means that public donations can be used directly to enable us to take our discoveries further into the clinic to benefit more patients. Without this support, all the effort of the global teams that we have put together, might come to nothing.”

She added, “People have expressed their fascination at the audacity to declare World Reverse Cancer Day, which is really a fantastic idea from team Ensemble. We at Cancer Research Malaysia are also incredibly enthused and overwhelmed by the amount of support we have received from partners and sponsors who have helped bring this event together.”

Woei Hern added, “This event was a culmination of all parties coming together for a great purpose, and we couldn’t have pulled it off without the help of all partners involved.” Ensemble Worldwide worked closely with parent network IPG Mediabrands to deliver pro bono PR, media consultancy and services, alongside complimentary media space from Mediabrands’ partner media owners.

The Ensemble team worked across several parties to bring World Reverse Cancer Day to fruition. SKINNYFATKIDS (SFK), an experience design agency with offices in Malaysia and Indonesia supported largely by bringing together the brand experience at APW and fleshing out the reverse campaign experience for the public to a tangible space. SFK’s past assignments include DHL, Electrolux, Ferrari, BonusLink, Tiger Beer, Nespresso and Pacific Place to name a few.

Ensemble also partnered with Grim Film, a production house that creates original content for its own YouTube channel which currently has over 170,000 subscribers. The founder, local YouTube artist, Jared Lee, and his team were instrumental in the production of the reversing cancer brand film for Cancer Research Malaysia, and supported with bringing together a group of KOLs (key opinion leaders) for the #reverseforcancer initiative. These KOLs included Venice Min, Dan Khoo, Luna Tasha, Brandon Ho, Pauline, Lizz Chloe, Jin Lim, Elfira Loy, Brian See, Cody, Ernest, Joey Leong and Michelle Leong.

Alongside this, Studio DL provided complimentary professional photography for the KOL shoots as well as space for the filming of the brand film.

Art Printing Works Bangsar, known as APW, served as the host venue for the entire campaign, providing complimentary rental of space and substantially reduced charges. The Riu creative platform also supported by providing an opportunity for a complimentary booth space for Cancer Research Malaysia to promote the event.

3ciety, a homegrown startup for customised merchandise, sponsored and subsidised the bespoke World Reverse Cancer Day merchandise, and provided support via an online marketplace for continued engagement with the brand.

Doodle Malaysia, a loose community of artists supported the event by providing a live visual art display, with the message of reversing cancer, and a hidden message to behind it, for members of the public to “find the ‘C’”.

Professor Teo comments, “The team really immersed themselves into understanding the narrative of reversing cancer, and how to get that message out to the public by looking across every single touchpoint. We are now one step closer towards our goal of reversing cancer, and getting there each day.

Echoing the reversing cancer brand film being launched today, the message to the public is that Cancer Research Malaysia is spearheading the fight against cancer in Asia, and based right here “in our tanahair”.

“We need your support to keep going,” says Professor Teo to all of Malaysia.

The Reversing Cancer film is ready for view here:

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About Cancer Research Malaysia

Cancer Research Malaysia (CRM) is an independent and non-profit cancer research organisation based in Malaysia. Funded by donations and research grants, CRM conducts research in niche cancers often found in the Asian population.

Cancer – the big ‘C’ – continues to be a stigma, only spoken about in hushed whispers; how it’s bad karma, how much it costs, and that nothing could be done. Confronting this stigma head on, CRM has been reversing this language of cancer, transforming the big ‘C’ to a little ‘c’, developing tools backed by good research to truly fight cancer on all fronts.

CRM believes that the grip of cancer in our lives will soon be reversed, and wants researchers to win the war against cancer by turning it around with new ways of prevention and cure. CRM wants to empower the public through impactful outreach programmes, with the hopes that Malaysians will respond differently to cancer by coming forward for screenings and going through with treatments.

<https://www.cancerresearch.my/>

About IPG Mediabrands

IPG Mediabrands was founded by Interpublic Group (NYSE: IPG) in 2007 to manage all of its global media related assets. Today, we manage over \$39 billion in marketing investment on behalf of our clients, employing over 10,000 marketing communication specialists in more than 130 countries.

IPG Mediabrands is a new world agency group designed with dynamic marketing at its core. Our speed, agility and data smarts ensure we continue to create growth for many of the world’s biggest brands. IPG Mediabrands’ network of agencies includes UM, Initiative, BPN as well specialty business units including Ansible, Cadreon, Healix, Identity, the IPG Media Lab, MAGNA, Mediabrands Insights, Orion, Rapport, Reprise and Society.

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