**Number of Blood Pressures Taken: 2865**

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Story :  

“What Are Your Numbers” was the theme for World Hypertension Day 2016. The Malaysian Society of Hypertension (MSH) in collaboration with the Department of Primary Care Medicine, University Malaya Medical Centre (UMMC), Kuala Lumpur, held an exhibition and screening and awareness campaign for Hypertension on 20th-22nd April and 16th-20th May 2016. Screening campaigns were also done at other sites under the auspices of MSH in collaboration with the individual centers at community clinics (Tanglin Health Clinic and Lahad Datu Health Clinic) and at a public hospital in Ipoh.

The prevalence of hypertension in Malaysia is high. Our national survey of 1996 found that amongst adults aged 30 years and older, the prevalence of hypertension was 42.6% with a very high unawareness of 64.5%. Because of the high prevalence and high unawareness, we did a simple cost-analysis based on the screening done on WHD 2015 and found that it costed only US$ 2.70 to identify an individual who was unaware of his elevated blood pressure status. This actually makes it very cost-effective to screen.

We screened a total of 2865 individuals at all the different sites.

At the UMMC, several teams comprising of primary care physicians, dieticians, smoking cessation teams and nurses participated in the screening campaign... Here we screened 2321 individuals. 536 (23.1%) individuals were found to have elevated blood pressure (≥140/90mmHg) and 215 (40.1%) of them were not aware that they had elevated blood pressure.

For those found to have elevated BP a note with information about hypertension and its complications was given to them. They were further advised to consult their family doctors or primary care physicians or do home blood pressure measurements for confirmation of their elevated BP status. For those with elevated BP but unaware, we followed up with telephone call 2-4 weeks after the screening campaign to ascertain their “true” hypertension status.

At the same time during the screening campaign, we also promoted healthy lifestyle changes including a low salt diet, to increase physical activities and advocated smoking cessation. Very importantly we advised those with normal BP to have their BP screened every year.
Subjects who were aware of their hypertension but who were not controlled, we emphasized the importance of good blood pressure control.

Our most recent national survey in 2015, showed a slight lower prevalence of hypertension of 39.6%. We hope that with all the efforts of screening, at least the unawareness of hypertension will be lowered.
Report prepared by
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