



# Berita NSM

A Publication of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia

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Official Launch & 10th Anniversary Celebration



Nutrition  
Month  
Malaysia

turns 10!

**N**utrition Month Malaysia celebrated its 10th year by focusing on families, with the theme 'Let's Create Healthier Families'.

See inside for more on NMM 2012's activities, as well as a trip down memory lane to revisit the highlights of NMM over the decade.

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Congratulations to  
Dr Tee E Siong,  
President NSM for being awarded the  
Research Gold Medal by the Rotary Club  
of Kuala Lumpur DiRaja  
in April 2012

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## A word from the President



### A new milestone

Every year, there are many things for members of the NSM to look forward to. In 2012, the highlight was the 27th Scientific Conference, which is an annual event highly anticipated by nutritionists in the country.

Besides sharing views and experiences, the conference participants also take this opportunity to do a lot of networking with their peers, creating an exciting buzz throughout the two-day event. You can read more about the conference in this issue of Berita NSM. In this newsletter, we always make the effort to highlight the various awards and prizes given out to young and veteran researchers, including the NSM prizes, poster prizes, Young Investigators prizes and publication prizes.

The other main event for the NSM was Nutrition Month Malaysia (NMM) 2012. This year marked the 10th year of NMM and it was commemorated with a bang. The NUTRI-FUN Land Carnival was the central aspect of NMM this year, which was themed 'Let's Create Healthier Families'. Continuing the tradition of the past few years, a new booklet for the public was launched and outreach activities were carried out to disseminate the messages of healthy eating to more Malaysians.

We have dedicated a section in this issue of Berita to highlight the best parts of NMM throughout its 10-year journey.

Apart from the annual conference and NMM, the second half of 2011 and the first half of 2012 were busy times for the NSM. Several community-based programmes were launched in collaboration with other professional NGOs, the private sector and the government, including the Mi-CARE Nurse Training programme, Mothers' Smart Choice, Healthy Kids, Teen Voices, the Sarawak obesity prevention workshop as well as other campaigns and publications. You will find updates and details about these programmes in the following pages.

Along with writeups on the Ajinomoto (Malaysia) Bhd scientific update and the ongoing scientific collaborations with the government, you will have plenty to read about in this issue of Berita.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the office bearers for the 14th NSM Council (2012-2014). I look forward to working together with the new Council on many more exciting programmes ahead.

**Dr Tee E Siong**  
Editor-in-Chief  
President, NSM

#### NSM Publications Committee

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# 27th Scientific Conference Current Concerns and Challenges in Nutrition 24-25 May 2012

**N**utrition awareness in Malaysia has come a long way in the past few decades. With the advancement of nutrition science in the country and greater awareness of healthy eating, we now know more about the role of food and its components in human health.

The Nutrition Society of Malaysia has contributed to this increasing level of awareness, through its initiatives to promote nutrition science and educate the community over the past 27 years.

While Malaysia has largely overcome the problem of under-nutrition among its population, the nation faces more complex nutritional challenges than ever, including chronic, lifestyle-related diseases that are becoming the leading causes of death and disability.

To address the high prevalence of these chronic diseases and their risk factors, the NSM's 27th Annual Scientific Conference chose the theme of 'Current Concerns and Challenges in Nutrition'.



The conference kicked off with a keynote lecture on the topic 'What is the role of nutrition in managing and preventing chronic diseases?' by Prof Dr Christiani Jeya Henry, Director of Clinical Nutrition Sciences from the Singapore Institute for Clinical Sciences. In his presentation, Prof Christiani highlighted the opportunities and the challenges faced by healthcare authorities in arresting the increase in chronic diseases.





There was also a symposium session for participants to share updates on nutrition interventions that have been implemented for various target groups, including intervention programmes initiated by the NSM.

A session on maternal and child nutrition was another highlight of the conference. In this session, the presenters discussed the implications of maternal and childhood nutrition in the outcomes of lifelong health. A variety of other contemporary research topics were also presented in other symposium sessions, including updates on food and nutrition innovations.

A record number of 160 posters on research findings were displayed, many of which were by young researchers.

The conference was officially launched by Datuk Dr Lokman Hakim bin Sulaiman Deputy Director-General of Health (Public Health) from the Ministry of Health, Malaysia.



The NSM Prizes are awarded to undergraduate and postgraduate candidates from local universities completing their thesis projects in the area of Human Nutrition.

This year, six Postgraduate Prizes and eight Undergraduate Prizes were awarded.



Winners of Undergraduate Prizes



Winners of Postgraduate Prizes

### Undergraduate Prizes

1. **W Nurul Ashikin W Mohamad**  
"Quality of life of normal weight, overweight and obese primary school children in Kuala Lumpur." (School of Healthcare Sciences, UKM)
2. **Chong Yuk Mey**  
"Development of nutrient calculator for children's food frequency questionnaire." (School of Healthcare Sciences, UKM)
3. **Teh Yi Yan**  
"Oral health status, oral health-related quality of life (QHRQOL) and nutritional status among Chinese senior citizens aged 55 years and above." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UPM)
4. **Alimuddin bin Alias**  
"Effects of spray dried red pitaya (*Hylocereuspolrhizus*) powder supplementation on plasma glucose level and lipid profiles of hyperglycemia induced rats." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UPM)
5. **Aina Shuhada binti Mohamad**  
"Disordered eating, self-esteem, body weight status and physical activity among female college students." (School of Health Sciences, USM (Kubang Kerian))
6. **Lee Pooi Shan**  
"Obesity and fast food consumption among adolescence in Kota Bharu, Kelantan." (School of Health Sciences, USM (Kubang Kerian))
7. **Tan Min Yen**  
"Lactose tolerance and intolerance among staff and students in Universiti Malaysia Sabah." (Dept of Food Science and Nutrition, Universiti Malaysia Sabah)
8. **Lim Yee Ven**  
"Association of parental feeding styles and practices with fast foods consumption among primary school children in Gombak, Selangor." (Dept of Food Science and Nutrition, UCSJ University)

### Postgraduate Prizes

1. **Dr Lee Lai Kuan (PhD thesis)**  
"The risk factors and effectiveness of fish oil supplementation on cognitive function of elderly people with mild cognitive impairment." (School of Healthcare Sciences, UKM)
2. **Dr Gan Wan Ying (PhD thesis)**  
"Psychological distress as mediator between personal, lifestyle and socio- environmental factors and disordered eating among university students." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Medicine and Health Science, UPM)
3. **Dr Cheah Whye Lian (PhD thesis)**  
"Analysis of biological, behavioral and environmental determinants of malnutrition: A study of malnourished children in Tumpat, Kelantan, Malaysia." (School of Health Sciences, USM (Kubang Kerian))
4. **Wee Bee Suan (MSc thesis)**  
"Physical activity, waist circumference and body composition of children in relation to metabolic syndrome indicators." (School of Healthcare Sciences, UKM)
5. **Suriyati Muhammad Alinafiah (MSc thesis)**  
"Effects of Malaysian cocoa powder consumption on biochemical parameters stratus of healthy subjects at UPM." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UPM)
6. **Rashidah binti Mohd Yusof (MSc thesis)**  
"Determination of macronutrients in selected foods found in Kelantan." (School of Health Sciences, USM (Kubang Kerian))

### NSM Publication Prize 2012

The NSM Publication Prize for the years 2008-2012, for publications in the field of infant and childhood nutrition, are funded by Dutch Lady Milk Industries Bhd. For the year 2012, the Selection Committee decided to award 5 prizes as all the applications were acceptable, and recognizing that not all the 3 prizes were taken up in previous years.

The recipients for the category of 'Infant and Childhood Nutrition', in 2012, are:

#### Dr Mohd Nasir Mohd Taib

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Putra Malaysia

For his publication titled 'Child feeding practices, food habits, anthropometric indicators and cognitive performance among preschoolers in Peninsular Malaysia' (Appetite 58:525-530, 2012)

#### Prof Dr Poh Bee Koon

Nutrition Program, School of Healthcare Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

For her publication titled 'Waist circumference percentile curves for Malaysian children and adolescents aged 6.0-16.9 years' (Int J Pediatric Obesity 6:229-235, 2011)

#### Serene Tung En Hui

Department of Food Science and Nutrition, Faculty of Applied Sciences, UCSI University

For her publication titled 'Familial and socioenvironmental predictors of overweight and obesity among primary schoolers in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur' (Mal J Nutr 17(2):151-162, 2011)

#### Tan Sue Yee

Nutrition Program, School of Healthcare Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

For her publication titled 'Predicting energy requirements of paediatric patients with disease: which methods are appropriate' (Pediatric Health 4(5):479-489, 2010)

#### Wee Bee Suan

Faculty of Medicine and Health Science, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Kuala Terengganu

For her publication titled 'Risk of metabolic syndrome among children living in metropolitan Kuala Lumpur: A case control study' (BMC Public Health 11:1-7, 2011)

## Young Investigators' Symposium Winners

#### First prize – Chong Kar Hau

"Agreement between quantitative ultrasound (QUS) with dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) techniques in measuring bone health status among Malay children." (School of Healthcare Sciences, UKM)

#### Second prize – Ong Zi Yin

"Postprandial effect of trans free palm margarine, interesterified palm olein, and interesterified fully hydrogenated soybean oil blend on insulin sensitivity and inflammatory markers in human volunteers." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UPM)

#### Third prize – Tan Huey Ghee

"Parental perception of child's weight status among preschool children in St. Theresa Kindergarten, Kuala Terengganu." (Dept of Food Science and Nutrition, UCSI University)

#### Consolation prizes – Sharifah Nur Umairah Tuan Yahya

"Relationship between dietary pattern and body mass index among primary school children." (Faculty of Health Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA)

#### Consolation prizes – Won Su Yun

"Effects of chemotherapy on nutritional status of pediatric and adolescent cancer patients in Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia." (School of Health Sciences, USM (Kubang Kerian))

## Poster Prizes

#### First prize – Lee Khe Yin

"Validation of the Malaysian Cohort Physical Activity Questionnaire (PAQ-MC) with Actical accelerometer among adults aged 35 to 65 years." (School of Healthcare Sciences, UKM)

#### Second prize – Ong Min Li

"Depressive symptoms among community-dwelling Chinese elderly in Mambang Diawan, Kampar, Perak: The relationship between physical activity and anthropometric status." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UPM)

#### Third prize – Lim Jing Yi

"The ability of Zea mays ear in enhancing nutritional composition and changing textural and sensory properties of bread." (School of Health Sciences, USM (Kubang Kerian))

#### Consolation prize – Nur Huda Abdul Rahim

"Nutrition knowledge, physical activity, dietary intake and body weight status among teachers in Petaling District, Selangor." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UPM)

#### Consolation prize – Teow Ying Liang

"Maternal nutritional status and pregnancy symptoms among healthy and gestational diabetic women." (School of Health Sciences, USM (Kubang Kerian))

#### Consolation prize – Yeak Zu Wei

"Determination of macronutrients and isoflavones contents in soy based local dishes." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UKM)

#### Consolation prize – Goh Huay Woon

"Validation of Healthy Eating Index (HEI) For Malaysian Adults." (School of Healthcare Sciences, UKM)

#### Consolation prize – Nain Farahin Mohd Tahir

"Rice consumption pattern (amount and type) in relation to glycemic control among individuals with type 2 diabetes mellitus." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UPM)

#### Consolation prize – Chong Yi Lu

"Comparison of the effect of boiling, deep-frying and grilling on the content of phosphorus and protein in chicken (Gallus Domesticus)." (Dept of Nutrition and Dietetics, UPM)

## NSM Publication Prize 2012

The Publication Prize in the field of Maternal Nutrition, for the year 2012- 2015, is sponsored by Fonterra Brands (M) Sdn Bhd.

The recipient for the category of 'Maternal Nutrition', in 2012, is:

### Loy See Ling

Nutrition Programme, School of Health Sciences,  
Universiti Sains Malaysia, Kubang Kerian

For her publication titled 'Higher intake of fruits and vegetables in pregnancy is associated with birth size' (Southeast Asian J Trop Med Public Health 42(5):1214-1223, 2011)

## 27th Annual General Meeting

The 27th AGM took place on 23 March 2012 and was attended by 43 members. During the meeting, the minutes of the 26th AGM, the NSM Council Report 2011 and the Treasurer's Report 2011 were adopted without any major issues.

Among the other matters discussed at the AGM were the bidding for the International Congress of Nutrition 2021 and the Allied Health Profession Bill.

The office bearers for the 14th Council were also elected at the AGM.

## Annual Conference & AGM

### APPLY FOR THE NSM PUBLICATION PRIZE 2013!

The NSM Publication Prize is aimed at encouraging and promoting local research publications in nutrition science.

Members of NSM are invited to apply for the prizes under the following categories:

**Infant and Childhood Nutrition – cash prize of RM2,000 and certificate from NSM (sponsored by Dutch Lady Milk Industries Berhad)**

**Maternal Nutrition – cash prize of RM2,000 and certificate from NSM (sponsored by Fonterra Brands (M) Sdn Bhd)**

**Dairy Nutrition – cash prize of RM2,000 and certificate from NSM (sponsored by Fonterra Brands (M) Sdn Bhd)**

**Bone Health and Nutrition – cash prize of RM2,000 and certificate from NSM (sponsored by Fonterra Brands (M) Sdn Bhd)**

**Human Nutrition – cash prize of RM2,000 and certificate from NSM (sponsored by Kraft Foods Scientific Affairs, Regulatory Affairs and Nutrition (SARAN) Asia Pacific)**

Applications must be received before 15 April 2013.

Visit Nutriweb ([www.nutriweb.org.my](http://www.nutriweb.org.my)) or email NSM President at [president@nutriweb.org.my](mailto:president@nutriweb.org.my) for more details on the submission procedure.

## 14th NSM Council (2012-2014)



Sitting: (L-R) Assoc Prof Dr Zaitun Yassin (Hon. Treasurer), Prof Dr Mohd Ismail Noor (Vice-President), Dr Tee E Siong (President), Prof Dr Norimah A Karim (Hon. Secretary) and Dr Mahenderan Appukutty (Asst. Hon. Secretary)  
Standing: (L-R) Ms Tan Sue Yee, Assoc Prof Datin Dr Saifah Mohd Yusof, Dr Mohd Nasir Mohd Taib and Ms Roseline Yap Wai Kuan (Council Members)  
Not in picture: Assoc Prof Dr S. Mellayan and Assoc Prof Dr Tony Ng Kok Wai (Hon Auditors)



## Nutrition Month Malaysia turns 10!

**N**utrition Month Malaysia (NMM) Programme celebrated its 10th year with a big 2-day family carnival on 14-15 April 2012 at the Mid-Valley Exhibition Centre, Kuala Lumpur.

The programme, themed 'Let's Create Healthier Families', was launched by Minister of Health Malaysia Dato' Sri Liow Tiong Lai.

The NUTRI-FUN Land Carnival was filled with fun and informative games and activities to promote healthy eating habits and active lifestyle amongst Malaysian families. There was an interactive area for families to learn about the Food Pyramid, discover calories and fats found in common Malaysian meals, learn healthier ways to

choose foods, develop smarter shopping habits and jumpstart fitness regimes. As always, the public could also go for free nutrition screenings to find out their Body Mass Index (BMI), blood pressure, blood cholesterol, blood glucose and body fat. A highlight of NMM 2012 was a new booklet for the public, titled 'Hal-Hal Pemakanan Keluarga: Pakar Menjawab Isu-isu Lazim Yang Ditanyakan' which covers twenty frequently asked questions about family nutrition-related problems.

Other outreach activities that were successfully carried out included 20 NutriFun school roadshows in the Klang Valley, 10 roadshows in Ipoh and another 10 roadshows in Johor. There were also Nutrition Interactive Club sessions during after-





school hours in 4 selected primary schools. All these activities were aimed at interacting directly with children in order to convey basic healthy eating and lifestyle principles in fun ways.

An educational combo kit containing materials such as the Kembara Alam Sam comic book, mini booklet titled ‘Tip Gaya Hidup Sihat’, foldable pyramid, and vouchers to redeem NMM publications were given out to primary school children (to be given to their parents) through the outreach activities.

NMM 2012 has also successfully published 4 educational press articles, contributed various nutrition articles to magazines, and conducted interviews of nutrition experts in TV programmes.

All the activities of NMM 2012 were made possible through corporate sponsorship from A.Clouet & Co (KL) Sdn Bhd (Ayam Brand), Gardenia Bakeries (KL) Sdn Bhd, Kraft Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Malaysia Milk Sdn Bhd (Vitagen), Nestle Products Sdn Bhd, Summit Co (M) Sdn Bhd (Biogrow Oats BG22) and Yakult Malaysia Sdn Bhd.

## Family Eating Matters

Members of the public do not get to meet experts like nutritionists and dietitians very often. As they are eager for information about healthy eating, they may turn to other sources of information, such as friends, relatives, magazines and, most commonly, the Internet. They may even get information from salespeople who promote all kinds of “health foods” and supplements.

But how much of this information is accurate and based on scientific evidence? How do people sift through all the confusing and contradicting facts to get to the truth?

The new booklet produced in conjunction with Nutrition Month Malaysia (NMM) 2012, ‘Hal-Hal Pemakanan Keluarga: Pakar Menjawab Isu-isu Lazim Yang Ditanyakan’, will help to answer some of the most common concerns that people have about nutrition, especially family-related

eating matters. Twenty most frequently asked questions are answered in an unbiased manner and presented in a simple tip-like format for better understanding.

The questions are divided into 7 sections: Toddlers and Preschoolers, Primary-Aged Children, Adolescents, Adults, Families, Weight Management and Physical Activity.

These are questions that members of NSM, the Malaysian Dietitians Association and the Malaysian Association for the Study of Obesity most frequently encounter when they meet the public – by compiling these questions into a booklet, we can now reach out to families and give them accurate advice even when they are in their own homes.



# A decade of



The NSM, together with our expert partners, the Malaysian Dietitians Association (MDA) and the Malaysian Association for the Study of Obesity (MASO), embarked on the Nutrition Month Malaysia campaign in 2002, with the idea of having an annual month-long observation that would remind Malaysians about the need to practise healthy eating and guide them on basic nutrition principles.



2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007



# celebrating nutrition

This idea came about as non-communicable diseases were on the rise in Malaysia and the key to preventing these NCDs was to improve the nutritional status of Malaysian families.

For a decade, NMM has been a regular occurrence in our country, featuring many educational

activities, such as roadshows and seminars, media promotion and free publications.

NMM has gotten bigger and better over the years, and it has become an event to look forward to every April!



07

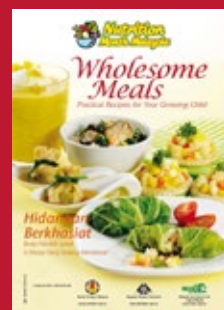
2008

2009

2010

2011

2012



# Philips Mother's Smart Choice

Mothers have always been concerned about their children's nutrition. Should the baby be breastfed? When should she start feeding the baby solid food? Making good nutritional choices for their babies can be challenging, especially when many mothers today are juggling work and home responsibilities.

To address these mothers' concerns, the NSM spearheaded a three-phase programme, Mother's Smart Choice (MSC), which aims to promote good infant nutrition and offer practical tips that the working mother can incorporate into her daily schedule. MSC was launched in 2011 in collaboration with the Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Malaysia (OGSM), Malaysian Paediatric Association (MPA) and the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN). The programme is sponsored by Philips AVENT.

For its first phase, MSC focused on breastfeeding. To promote breastfeeding and to assist mothers to breastfeed successfully, MSC published the free illustrated guidebook *Breastfeed with Confidence*. The guidebook was bilingual (English and Bahasa Malaysia). It was promoted in major newspapers as well as through educational posters distributed to major hospitals and maternity centres. A series of talks, conducted by nutritionist Fatimah Salim, was held to give nurses a scientific update on breastfeeding.

Additionally, MSC produced a programme video to advocate breastfeeding. This video featured messages from local celebrity mothers Sazzy Falak, Aishah Sinclair, Shalin Zulkifli and Amber Chia as well as advice from Dr Poh Bee Koon and Dr Kiren Sidhu.

MSC will continue in 2012, this time focusing on complementary feeding for children aged 6-12 months while continuing to promote breastfeeding.

## PHASE I HIGHLIGHTS TO DATE

- Over 10,000 copies of *Breastfeed with Confidence* were distributed to major private hospitals and LPPKN clinics. Positive feedback has been received from nurses and mothers who find the guidebook useful.
- Over 150 educational posters were sent to hospitals and clinics.
- The MSC programme video was delivered to 15 hospitals and maternity centres in the Klang Valley.
- To date, 10 nurse talks had been conducted in the Klang Valley, 3 in Penang and 1 in Johor. Feedback from nurses is positive, with many finding the talks useful and to be updated on future MSC events.

**Breastfeed with Confidence**  
Practical Tips for the Modern Mother

**Menyusu Dengan Yakin**  
Tip-Tip Praktikal untuk Ibu Moden

Spearheaded by  
Dianjur oleh  
Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM)

In collaboration with  
Dengan kerjasama  
Obstetrical & Gynaecological Society of Malaysia (OGSM)  
Malaysian Paediatric Association (MPA)  
National Population & Family Development Board (LPPKN)

Supported by  
Disokong oleh  
PHILIPS AVENT



# Mi-CARE Nurse Training Programme

The Mi-CARE Nurse Training Programme was officially launched on February 11, 2012. This training and education programme is spearheaded by four leading professional bodies in Malaysia; the Obstetrics and Gynaecological Society of Malaysia (OGSM), Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM), National Midwifery Society of Malaysia (NMSM) and Malaysian Paediatric Association (MPA).

The entire content of the Mi-CARE programme is developed and delivered by a team of experts in obstetrics and gynaecology, nutrition, physiotherapy and paediatrics. It utilises an entirely holistic approach which covers aspects of care for mothers (before, during, and after, pregnancy), and care for infants from birth till up to 12 months of age. The infant care aspects include care for newborns, complementary feeding and many other relevant topics.

The programme's main objective is to empower nurses, nurse aides and midwives from both private and government O&G, paediatric clinics and maternity centres. This is achieved by providing them with relevant information on pregnancy, labour, birth and post-partum care. They are then able to provide accurate information and advice to expectant or new mothers.

There are two main activities under Mi-CARE: workshops for nursing staff and midwives, as well as the Mi-CARE Telephone Advisory Service (1-800-88-9033) to provide advice on maternal and infant care for the general public.

The two-day workshop consists of twelve modules; covering the care of pregnant women, nutrition during pregnancy, the baby's birth, postpartum care, nutrition during lactation, postpartum family planning, pre and post-natal postures and exercises, breastfeeding and common problems, neonatal care, complementary feeding, caring for the newborn, and mental health during and after pregnancy.

There are nine Mi-CARE workshops planned for 2012 which will cover various major towns throughout Peninsular Malaysia. Since the programme launch, four workshops have been successfully conducted and a total of around 370 nursing staff and midwives from both the private and government sector have been trained.



# Healthy Kids Programme

The Healthy Kids Programme (HKP) entered its second year in 2011, focusing on the awareness and research component in 2011 and 2012.

The HKP is a collaborative education programme between the Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM) and Nestle Malaysia with the aim of improving nutrition knowledge and promoting healthy lifestyle among school-going children in the country. The programme has two main components: the awareness-raising component to reach out to children and parents, as well as the research component to study the effectiveness of nutrition education interventions.

The ultimate goal at the end of the 3-year project is to develop an interactive nutrition education module that the Ministry of Education can utilise for implementation in all schools in the country.

In 2011, the awareness component focused on building and improving the dedicated HKP website ([www.healthykids.org.my](http://www.healthykids.org.my)). More interactive games for children were added to make the learning process more fun and engaging. Articles and recipes were also added to make the website relevant and interesting for the parents. Some of the articles were also made available in Bahasa Malaysia. With these new features and improvements, more efforts in promoting the website needs to be done in 2012 to further increase the number of hits and to reach out more effectively to more parents and children.

The research component, the “Evaluation of Nutrition Education Package for Primary School Children” started in 2011. This was a 3-year intervention study (2011-2013) to develop, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of nutrition education modules appropriate for primary school children.



## STUDY RESULTS HIGHLIGHTS

A total of 207 children from 6 schools in the Klang Valley were selected to be the intervention group and 179 children from another 6 schools as control group.

The children in the intervention group were taught basic healthy eating and active lifestyle principles in 6 educational sessions. The children were also given a set of worksheets, goal cards and leaflets for parents to bring home. Both groups of children were given questionnaires at the end of the study to compare the differences in their nutrition knowledge, attitude and practices.

Results:

- Increase in the children’s nutrition knowledge.
- Increase in the children’s nutrition attitude.

- Increase in the children’s nutrition practices.
- Significant differences between the beginning and end-of-the-year data within the intervention group for nutrition knowledge and nutrition practice.
- Improvements for some selected practices, with a decline in the percentage of children purchasing food such as nasi lemak and nuggets while the percentage of children drinking plain water and consuming bread and cereals increased.

In 2012, which is the second year of the research component, the intervention “educational” sessions will focus more in depth on nutrition, learning about food groups and its functions as well as getting the children to be more active in sports.

# Teen Voices

The NSM collaborated on another initiative with the Malaysian Paediatric Association (MPA) in an effort to engage with adolescents in the country and to amplify positive teen voices. This new programme, called Teen Voices, also features the involvement of several other professional bodies on teenage health and well-being namely, Malaysian Psychiatric Association, Malaysian Association for Adolescent Health (MAAH) and National Population & Family Development Board(LPPKN).

Teen Voices was launched on 12 August 2012, in conjunction with International Youth Day. The launch celebrated the positivity of teenagers in Malaysia, with the hope of creating a lasting impact on them so that they would be empowered to grow up to become respected individuals within society.

Prior to the launch, the programme also held an inaugural Expert-Teens Meeting, where representatives from the five professional organisations met with the programmes Teen Ambassadors, aged 13-18, to have a roundtable dialogue on issues affecting adolescents.

Among the activities under Teen Voices will be a magazine, written by teens for teens, that will be distributed in all schools and colleges nationwide. This magazine is expected to have the largest ever circulation of any magazine for teenagers in Malaysia.

Another component of Teen Voices will be Teens' Connect!, whereby the team of experts engage these teenagers in their various educational institutions, to conduct mini informational and educational sessions with them. The programme will also work with LPPKN to promote the use of its Café @ Teen for peer-to-peer interaction using the internet and social media.



## WHAT THE TEEN AMBASSADORS HAVE TO SAY

“I find Teen Voices particularly relevant to us teens as it uses our language and speaks directly to us; not down to us.” ~ Zaim Zhafri Zulklifi, age 15

“Teen Voices is cool! I am proud to be a part of it.” ~ Phang Roze-Nn, age 18

“I hope Teen Voices will encourage more “peaceful” conversations between adults and us, teenagers. Seldom we find a place where we are heard by adults, and I salute Teen Voices for creating this possibility.” ~ Bryan Wong Ter-Wen, age 17

# Sarawak Heart Foundation workshop on obesity prevention

A workshop for the prevention of overweight and obesity was organised in Sarawak (14-16 November) by the Sarawak Health Foundation, with the technical assistance of NSM and Malaysian Association for the Study of Obesity (MASO).

The expected output from the workshop was a set of programmes and activities that are practical and can be implemented in Sarawak for the prevention of overweight and obesity. It is envisaged that the action plans will be implemented, first on a pilot scale in selected sites, and then refined for implementation in other regions of the state.

The participants of the workshop were from organisations and individuals who are anticipated to

participate in implementing the identified intervention programmes and activities. These included principals and senior teachers from various kindergartens and schools in Kuching; nutritionists, dietitians, health education officers, doctors, nurses, non-governmental organisations, and other relevant stakeholders that are involved in promoting healthy eating and active living.

Workshop participants were given the task to brainstorm and recommend appropriate action plans for the prevention of obesity in Sarawak. Programmes and activities that are appropriate for the identified settings, ie school, workplace, and community settings were recommended.

## WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Following active discussions among the participants, numerous recommendations were put forth, largely focusing on children.

Highlights of recommendations:

- Assign nutritionists to preschools and schools, in order to carry out growth monitoring of children in all schools and to counsel children (and parents) who are overweight or obese. The nutritionists should also provide appropriate guidance and periodic review of foods sold in school canteens.
- Standardised weighing scales should be provided to all preschools and schools and teachers trained in the measurement and recording of body mass index.
- Intensification of nutrition education activities and physical activity in all preschools and schools. Physical education teachers should be assigned to every school, to organise activities related to physical activities, and to collaborate with the nutritionists.
- 1Sarawak Breakfast Club, where preschools are to provide nutritious breakfast for children. In conjunction with this, brief nutrition promotion activities as well as physical activity sessions could be carried out.
- Regular healthy lifestyle sessions in the community, promoting healthy eating for parents-to-be and promoting good nutrition when eating out and in the workplace.

It is to be hoped that Sarawak will be able to implement these recommendations successfully.

Congratulations to Prof Ismail Mohd Noor for being elected as Kesatria of MyCEB by the Minister of Tourism, to promote Malaysia as a convention hub.



# Wonders of Wholegrains

**N**SM and Nestlé Breakfast Cereals (NBC) has teamed up for a campaign called 'Bringing Back the Wonders of Wholegrains', aimed at reminding Malaysians about the importance of wholegrains and why we must bring it back to the table.

One of the activities under this campaign was a booklet, titled 'Wonders of Whole Grains', which was launched by NSM and NBC on 30 May 2012.

The booklet was conceived to increase awareness on the health and nutritious value of wholegrains among Malaysians. The contents were developed to help the public understand the various health benefits of wholegrains in reducing the risk of chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and aid in managing weight and promote good bowel health. Other information included were tips on how to identify and consume wholegrain products as well as creative wholegrain recipes for the whole family, to help Malaysians incorporate wholegrains into their daily diet.

Under this campaign, NSM and NBC also published 3 articles on the wonders of wholegrains in major newspapers.



# Healthy Eating during Pregnancy and Lactation

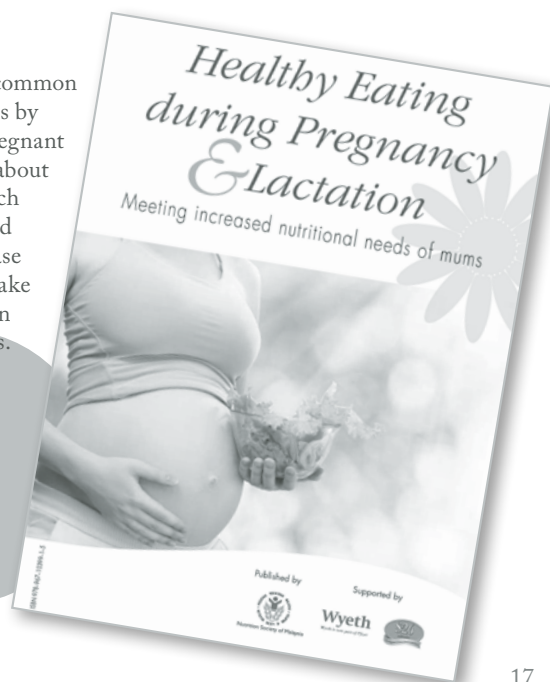
**I**n 2011, NSM produced a booklet titled 'Healthy Eating during Pregnancy and Lactation: Meeting increased nutritional needs of mums', with the support of Wyeth Malaysia.

The booklet covered the various aspects of healthy eating throughout pregnancy, to help mums-to-be nourish their unborn babies and set the right foundation for their babies' healthy growth later in life.

The 16-page booklet included tips for healthy and safe food intake, sources of essential vitamins and minerals, pregnancy and post-natal exercise guide, and even advice on eating well during confinement.

One of the highlights of the booklet was the summary of a woman's nutrient needs before, during and after pregnancy. These nutrient intake diagrams are able to

answer common questions by many pregnant women about how much they need to increase their intake of certain nutrients.



## Malaysian Journal of Nutrition

The Malaysian Journal of Nutrition (MJN) reached a milestone in November 2011, when it was selected by the US National Library of Medicine to be indexed and included in the MEDLINE database. In the future, citations from the articles indexed, the indexing terms and the English abstract printed in the journal will be included and searchable using PubMed.

In the second half of 2011 and the first half of 2012, three issues of the MJN were published (Vol. 17, No. 2 & 3; Vol 18, No 1).

The August 2011 issue (Vol. 17, No. 2) published a variety of papers from Malaysia, India and Thailand. There were two papers in this issue on food fortification, with an editorial on the topic by the MJN editor Prof Dr Khor Geok Lin.

The December 2011 issue (Vol. 17, No. 3) featured a guest editorial by Noel W. Solomons, Scientific Director

for the Center for Studies of Sensory Impairment, Aging and Metabolism (CeSSIAM) in Guatemala. Dr Solomons wrote a personal commentary on the XI Asian Congress on Nutrition 2011 in Singapore.

The April 2012 issue (Vol. 18, No. 1) featured three international papers from Bangladesh, Vietnam and India.



## Scientific update with Ajinomoto: ‘The Fifth Taste, Umami’

The NSM organised its first scientific update of 2012 on 23 March, with the support of Ajinomoto (Malaysia) Berhad. The topic was ‘The Fifth Taste, Umami’, presented by Dr Alexander Bachmanov from the Monell Chemical Senses Center, USA.

Dr Alexander started off with an overview of taste physiology in the human body, explaining taste receptor cells and taste perception. Although it is traditionally believed that there are four basic taste qualities (sweet, salty, sour and bitter), he introduced the concept of the fifth taste, which is “umami”. He elaborated on the umami taste receptor, which is said to provide convincing evidence that umami is one of the basic tastes.

The presentation also covered the physiological significance of umami preference and the synergism

between glutamate and the umami taste receptors. He talked about why umami substances act as flavour enhancers and how they can be combined with glutamate, which provides further physiological and therapeutic effects.



## Announcement!

NSM is bidding to host the IUNS (International Union of Nutritional Sciences) 22nd International Congress of Nutrition in Kuala Lumpur in 2021. This bid is supported by the Malaysian Convention and Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB).

# MOH Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents

NSM council members have been actively involved in the MOH Technical Working Group (TWG) on Dietary Guidelines for children and adolescents. Prof Mohd Ismail Noor chairs this TWG and NSM is represented by Dr Tee E Siong and Ms Fatimah Sulong. A draft set of 16 prime messages has been agreed upon by the TWG. Members of the TWG have been assigned specific messages to prepare supporting information.

Several meetings were held over the year to discuss and fine-tune the messages and the write-up of the Dietary Guideline. A consensus meeting was held in April 2012.

Besides Prof. Ismail and Dr Tee's involvement in this committee, other Council Members involved were Dr Mohd Nasir Mohd Taib, Prof Dr Norimah Karim and Dr Mahenderan Appukutty.

## Ministry of Health Subcommittees

NSM has been a member of the National Coordinating Committee on Food and Nutrition (NCCFN) since its inception and has been playing an active role in the development of various policies and national action plans. Dr Tee E Siong represents NSM in its annual meeting, chaired by the Deputy Director of Health (Public Health), MOH. The NCCFN oversees the implementation of various activities and programmes identified in the NPAN.

Prof Dr Norimah Karim represents NSM in the Technical Advisory Committee on Food Regulations of the MOH. This Committee, chaired by the Senior Director of the Food Safety and Quality Division of MOH considers recommendations from the various Expert Groups of the MOH and approves regulations based on these recommendations. Dr Tee chairs the Expert Group on Nutrition, Health Claims and Advertisement as adviser to the MOH.

Prof Dr Amin Ismail continues to represent NSM in the Codex National Sub-Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses. This sub-committee discusses agenda items and prepares national position papers for meetings of the Codex Committee on

Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses. Dr Tee chairs this sub-committee as adviser to the MOH.

Dr Tee represented NSM in the Food Safety and Nutrition Council meeting, held on 8 December 2011. This is a yearly meeting Chaired by the Minister of Health. Two proposals were made to the Council for support, namely a framework for the reduction and control of antimicrobial resistance and a proposal to establish a policy on advertising of foods and drinks to children. There were several other presentations made to the Council, including a paper by MASO on Prevention of Obesity in Malaysia and a presentation by FMM on Prevention and Control of NCDs.

Dr Hazizi Abu Saad represents NSM in the Technical Working Group on Nutrition Promotion. This Committee is chaired by Pn Zalma Abd Razak from MOH. The TWG group is one of the working groups under the main body of National Coordinating Committee on Food and Nutrition (NCCFN). The main aim of this TWG is to integrate and work collectively with government sectors, NGOs and private in promoting healthy eating among public.

## Allied Health Professions Bill

At the 9th Allied Health Scientific Conference (10-11 Sept 2012), Minister of Health Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai announced that the draft of the Allied Health Professions Bill was finally ready. The draft Bill was displayed on the Health Ministry's website [www.moh.gov.my](http://www.moh.gov.my) for public viewing from 1-21 Oct 2012. The Minister expects the Bill to be tabled in Parliament early next year.

Dr Mahenderan Appukutty represents NSM in the discussions related to drafting of the Bill and the associated Regulations. A Technical Working Group on Nutrition under the AHP has been established, chaired by Ms Rokiah Don, the Director of Nutrition Division of MOH. There are 11 members in this WG and Dr Tee, President of NSM, represents NSM at this WG.

## Diary of Conferences and Seminars

### 2012

#### **Healthy Ageing 2012 Conference**

15-16 November, 2012, Frankfurt

[www.bridge2food.com](http://www.bridge2food.com)

#### **6th Congress of the International Society of Nutrigenetics /Nutrigenomics**

18-21 November, 2012, São Paulo, Brazil

[www.criticaldietetics.org](http://www.criticaldietetics.org)

#### **6th Asian Conference on Food & Nutrition Safety**

26-28 November, 2012, Singapore

[www.ilsiacfns2012.com](http://www.ilsiacfns2012.com)

#### **ASEAN Sports University International Conference**

13-14 December, 2012, Vientiane, LAOS

<http://sports.uitm.edu.my/auscic2012/>

### 2013

#### **Healthy Aging in Asia – Strategies to Meet Health & Lifestyle Challenges**

4-5 March, 2013, Singapore

[www.ilsa-healthyaging2013.com](http://www.ilsa-healthyaging2013.com)

#### **International Society for Behavioral Nutrition & Physical Activity**

22-25 May, 2013, Ghent, Belgium

[www.isbnpa2013.org](http://www.isbnpa2013.org)

#### **28th NSM Annual Scientific Conference**

29-30 May, 2013, Kuala Lumpur

[www.nutriweb.org.my](http://www.nutriweb.org.my)

#### **8 Asia Pacific Conference on Clinical Nutrition**

9-12 June, Tokyo, Japan

[www.apccncongress.org](http://www.apccncongress.org)

#### **2nd International Conference and Exhibition on Nutritional Science & Therapy Conference**

15-17 July, 2013, Philadelphia, USA

[www.omicsgroup.com/conferences/nutritional-science-therapy-2013/index.php](http://www.omicsgroup.com/conferences/nutritional-science-therapy-2013/index.php)

#### **Pharma-Nutrition 2013 -The conference on the interface between nutrition and pharma**

15-17 April, 2013, Singapore

Email: [content-pharmanutrition2013@elsevier.com](mailto:content-pharmanutrition2013@elsevier.com)

#### **4th International Symposium on Energy and Protein Metabolism and Nutrition (ISEP)**

9-12 September, 2013, Sacramento, California, USA

<http://isep.ucdavis.edu>

#### **20th International Congress of Nutrition**

15-20 September, 2013, Granada, Spain

[www.icn2013.com](http://www.icn2013.com)

#### **World Diabetes Congress**

2-6 December, 2013, Melbourne, Australia

<http://www.idf.org/worlddiabetescongress>