

Asian Childhood Cancer Survivors:

The Declaration of Yogyakarta

The improvement of cancer treatment over the past decades has given a lot of positive impact towards childhood cancer patients in various countries in Asia. The increasing number of cured patients is due to the achievements of the research in pediatric oncology and to the support by many people involved in this issue.

As the largest continent in the world and with a great number of developing countries, Asia cannot be separated from cancer problems as a part of the on-going development in health issues.

Cancer treatment always involves the support by the family, from doctors, nurses, the hospital, the government and the survivors themselves. With the harmonious collaboration among all these stakeholders, we hope cancer can be detected sooner which would improve treatment outcomes for the benefit of the patients.

At the SIOP/ICCCPO meeting in Yogyakarta on April 21th - 24th, 2012, survivors from all over Asia gathered, shared their experiences and voiced their opinions as part of the efforts to improve cancer treatment and make it better accessible for all cancer patients in Asia.

The survivors from Asia thus state the following:

To cancer patients:

- Keep on fighting against cancer, because cancer can be cured by medical treatment and with a fighting spirit.
- Cancer is not a death sentence; you are not different from any other kid.
- If we succeeded going through the treatments, you can succeed too.

To the patient's parents:

- Accompany the patient with love as the power of love is the energy source for the patient.
- Strengthen the patient and the survivor's confidence so that he/she can live a normal life.
- Don't be over-protective, but show your children that they can compete in the real world.
- Always give them the biggest smile as they need a strong parent to make them strong.

To the people in general:

- Cancer is not a scary illness, nor a contagious one. We all have the right to get proper treatment.
- Recognize reliable information about cancer, especially related to early symptoms and a positive perspective about cancer.

To the government:

- Provide full health and social security to cancer patients.
- Make sure that the ministry of health makes cancer medicines available for everyone.
- All public hospitals should be able to provide proper specialized service for pediatric oncology.
- Provide special education for cancer patient while in treatment.

To doctors, nurses and the hospital:

- Be a wise doctor and a friend of the patient.
- Be a nurse who always gives smiles and calmness to the patient.
- Hospitals should be special places and allow survivors groups access so that they can give support to others in the process of healing.
- Provide integrated psychosocial services to patients and parents.

To childhood cancer survivors:

- Please join the survivor community in your city or country so that you can support childhood cancer patients.
- Network with other childhood cancer survivors from all over Asia to share experience and information and to help increasing the survival hope in cancer patients.
- Become an important part in the society and give testimony that cancer survivors have strong personalities and are able to compete.

So, these are our thoughts, written in a declaration, which we call the “Declaration of Yogyakarta” as a sign of our love and our hope that more childhood cancer patients will enjoy the beauty of life on earth.

Yogyakarta, April 24th, 2012

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