

PAPER: THE STAR (NATION)
DATE: 03 FEBRUARY 2017
PAGE: 18

Helping cancer survivors move on

Portal to link them with job opportunities

By LOH FOON FONG and PHOEBE KHOR
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: Some cancer survivors need help moving forward with their lives, so a portal that will link such people with companies offering job opportunities will be launched soon.

The Cancerfly Employment Portal is a collaboration by Cancerfly Networks, a social enterprise; the Kuala Lumpur Hospital (HKL) Radiotherapy and Oncology Department; and National Cancer Society Malaysia. It will go live on Feb 20.

Cancerfly Networks founder Dr Sri Ganesh Muthiah said that some 48% of cancer patients suffer financial catastrophe in the first year after diagnosis, according to a study.

Other studies show that many go through economic hardship caused by loss of employment, he said.

"Going back to work will not only enable cancer survivors and their families to be financially independent, it will also help improve their self-confidence and self-esteem," he said.

The portal at www.cancerfly.com will help cancer survivors hunt for jobs while those with their own business can advertise there.

"We hope more companies will participate in the launch of the portal by offering jobs on the site," said Dr Sri Ganesh.

For more details, the companies can send an e-mail to canfly@yahoo.com.

Social entrepreneur Daisy Lee, 51, who had Stage 1 thyroid cancer five years ago, said she had to deal with people's stereotypical perception of cancer patients.

After that, she decided to not just work for herself but to be one of the first to offer jobs to other cancer patients through Cancerfly Networks.

Lee had started Food Sense, a company offering vegan food products, nine years ago, so she decided to appoint cancer patients as agents.

"Cancer survivors must strive for an outstanding life and be the best that they can be," she said.

Mary Chua, 58, a former real-estate and land consultant, was diagnosed with Stage 2 breast cancer in 2011 and had a mastectomy.

She said companies should give cancer survivors jobs even on a part-time basis.

Chua, from Ampang, hopes to use the portal to sell her Chinese ink paintings and the proceeds will go to charity.

HKL Radiotherapy and Oncology department head Dr Ros Suzanna Ahmad Bustamam said it recorded 3,100 new cancer cases last year.

According to the National Cancer Registry, the risk of cancer in males is one in 10 and in females it's one in nine.