

Stroke**news**

YES! THERE IS LIFE AFTER STROKE

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25
YEARS
SERVING
THE STROKE
COMMUNITY



Patron's Message



**YABHG TOH PUAN
DATO' SERI HJH DR
AISHAH ONG**
NASAM Patron

It gives me great pleasure to wish NASAM Happy 25th Anniversary.

I have not regretted becoming a Patron when invited by Janet. I am delighted to be associated with an NGO like NASAM, which is doing a fine job supporting the stroke community nationwide. It has come a long way since its founding – from nothing in 1996, to what it is today – a non-profit organisation totally committed to assisting stroke survivors with their recovery.

A strokee I know personally who underwent physiotherapy for his stroke at NASAM PJ vouched for the commitment, dedication and care of the therapists.

I really enjoy working with Janet and her team.

Congratulations Janet and NASAM.

Founder Chairman's Message

NASAM is my calling from God to serve the stroke community. It's the reason for my debilitating stroke in 1989.

The past 25 years would have been a real impossibility without the support and dedication of volunteers, donors, staff, caring members of the public and, most importantly, abundant blessings from God.

Although they were very challenging years, they were, at the same time, extremely fulfilling and rewarding because we can see the difference our service has been making to the stroke communities and their families. This has been our much cherished reward.

At NASAM we advocate prompt rehabilitation for the stroke survivor and counselling for the carer. Over the years we have encouraged and guided thousands of stroke survivors and their families to begin a new journey and to celebrate life after stroke.

NASAM has succeeded despite huge challenges because we have remained very focused on our mission. We wish to be able to continue serving the stroke community in Malaysia for many more years to come. We want to give stroke champions a second chance to live life to the fullest no matter what the odds!

Praise God for guiding NASAM.



Janet Yeo
Founder Chairman

EARLY BEGINNINGS...



NASAM's first Board formed in 1996. From left: Kuek Hong Chew, Christine Harvey, Dr Ng Wai Keong, Stella Ooi, Indra Naidu, Kamsiah Bostock, Patricia Khong, Janet, Mageswari Suppiah, Eng Lian Geok and Ricky Ngiau.



Current Board members (front left): Margaret Low, Betty Chew, Janet, Edmond Lim. Back left: Stella Ooi, Kiang So Peng, Eng Lian Geok and Yap Yoke Fui. Absent: Dato' Ng Koong Sinn.

The National Stroke Association Of Malaysia (NASAM) was set up in 1996 with a mission to provide affordable, stroke specific rehab therapy and post-stroke support to stroke survivors and their families, as well as to create stroke awareness among the Malaysian public. Our tagline has always been 'There is Life after Stroke'.

We are probably one of the few stroke associations in the world that serve the community with a stroke specific rehabilitation programme. Most other associations offer only advocacy and/or education.

We are carrying out our objectives via eight stroke centres throughout Malaysia, namely in PJ, Penang, Sabah, Ampang, Malacca, Perak, Johor and Kuantan. These centres provide affordable stroke specific rehab on a daily basis, Monday to Friday. Stroke survivors have a choice of group therapy or a customised one-on-one therapy, or both. In special cases rehab is provided pro bono.



The seed for NASAM was sown on August 8, 1995 when Janet Yeo's story appeared in a newspaper – the New Sunday Times. Her story of recovery from her stroke prompted an avalanche of response from the public. This eventually resulted in the formation of a Stroke Support Group (SSG). Initially the group met at her office for talks by healthcare professionals. As word about the SSG's work got out, many pleaded for greater service that could cater to more strokees. Hence NASAM was born.



Outings and socialising are very much a part of stroke recovery at NASAM. Even in the early days strokees were taken out to celebrate life.



As word got around numbers attending rehab increased, making it necessary to shift to a bigger, more permanent space.

NASAM has achieved many significant milestones but, with the rising numbers of stroke cases, there's still more that needs to be done. Today one-out-of-every four people is affected by stroke, and more than 50,000 people get a stroke every year in Malaysia. Yet stroke is preventable.

Stroke Facts


1 in 4 people will suffer a **stroke** in their lifetime


7 out of 10 stroke survivors become dependents


50K new cases every year

40% affected below age **60**

3rd common cause of death 

THEIR SAY

Dedications And Perspectives

ENG LIAN GEOK

Board Member and Treasurer

In December 1996, I heard from a friend about Janet Yeo's work to help stroke survivors. My friend was helping to look for volunteers and suggested that I might consider having a chat with Janet.

The chat finally took place in 1997. Seeing how the community would benefit from NASAM's work, I offered myself as a volunteer. Janet proposed me as a candidate for election, as a committee member at NASAM's first AGM in March 1997. I was elected. Later at the first committee meeting I was voted in as the Honorary Treasurer, due to my financial background. That started my journey with NASAM.

From a personal perspective, serving NASAM has given me the opportunity to interact with stroke survivors. I admire their determination, grit and discipline in striving to continue to improve themselves day after day to overcome obstacles and face life with optimism. I admire their belief that if they keep on trying their best, they will succeed in leading a better life. Indeed, these are lessons that we can all learn from the stroke survivors and put to use in our daily lives.

STELLA OOI

Board Member

I have been with NASAM since its early days when it started as a Stroke Support Group, in response to an overwhelming response from stroke survivors, carers and the public, who were eager to learn from Janet's recovery from a stroke.



Till today my greatest fulfillment is seeing a strokee walking out our doors independently after arriving in a wheelchair or with a walking aid. The lives of thousands of strokees have changed for the better in the past 25 years. Many have recovered fully to return to work. Others have benefitted either physically or emotionally.

I appeal to more people to come forward and support NASAM by donating generously so that it can continue to give stroke survivors a brighter future.

NASAM held its first AGM in March 1997. From the onset, the committee decided that these core values be adopted and practised:

- Established as a non-profit organisation entirely for the benefit of the stroke community
- To depend entirely on the generosity of the public
- Donations to be used wisely with no abuse of public trust
- Transparency and accountability to be the key factor at all times
- For every Ringgit received in donation, a substantial sum be channelled towards rehabilitation and the remaining portion towards administration
- Donations should never be used for any other purpose except for the above

Eng Lian Geok was the key person to put together NASAM's financial procedures. Eng, as he is popularly known, has steadfastly served the Association and continues as Treasurer.

NASAM's first physiotherapist Doreen Tan recalls: "We had about four strokees in the beginning. The numbers grew very quickly and our daily two-hour sessions crept from the porch into Janet's house. Not long after, we realised we needed extra hands and that's when volunteers first came to our rescue. Admittedly, it was an ad hoc and, at times, a chaotic environment, but it was definitely fun filled and satisfying. Soon after it evolved into a place where strokees and caregivers could gather for therapy, advice, information, friendship and, at times, a shoulder to cry on. It was a place where strokees could be understood...where a void could be filled. This is what Janet dreamt of and more."

As the group grew, it was clear that a more conducive place was required and so the Yeo

family generously offered one of their homes in PJ. In the early days there were no funds to draw on. All expenses were borne by Janet and the volunteers.

Christine Harvey, a UK qualified nurse drafted the therapy training programme and trained the early batches of volunteers. Her training programme became the blueprint for all NASAM clubs until qualified physiotherapists were employed to replace the volunteers.



Christine (standing) at a volunteer training session.



Strokees, caregivers, volunteers celebrating NASAM's first anniversary.

Finally in 1996, NASAM became a registered organisation and the first Board was formed. This made it easier to plan and organise more services for stroke survivors. The catalyst for the registration came in the form of a substantial donation from Tan Sri Yong Poh Kon of Royal Selangor International (a Malaysian pewter manufacturer and retailer).

MARGARET LOW
Board Member



When I was young, I experienced how a stroke debilitated and impacted a person. My grandmother had a stroke and could only look at us with tearful eyes that reflected despair. One of my uncles also suffered a stroke and it dramatically changed him from a jolly and caring person into a helpless, tearful and hopelessly dependent person. The lives of his immediate family were very much affected. He seemed to be without hope until he passed away.

Then, an icon from the ad industry I was in, suffered a stroke. I was sad for her knowing what she would have to go through. But, amazingly, after a while, she bounced back into her work rhythm and more than that, she started NASAM to help other stroke victims adjust and live a second time round.

What is unique about NASAM is that Janet knew from her experience – how a strokee felt and the challenges that had to be overcome, so she implemented rehabilitation programmes... not only physio but other programmes that encouraged them to live life fully. It is a privilege to be on the board of NASAM, to be part of the dream team that works towards injecting hope, life and joy back into the lives of strokees.

DATO' NG KOONG SINN
Board Member and Chairman – NASAM Kuantan



NASAM to any layman is just another Non-Governmental Organisation, but to the stroke communities and their families it is a symbol of HOPE. It is the beginning of a new life for strokees irrespective of race, religion or whether rich or poor.

Viva la NASAM. Happy 25th anniversary and let's continue serving the stroke communities.

KIANG SO PENG
Board Member



We live in a world full of challenges. Aside from my faith in God that drives me forward, I am a strong believer in determination, hard work and inner strength, in order to live our lives to the fullest.

Having said that, there are times in our lives when we need a helping hand in order to get back up on our feet. NASAM is that helping hand.

Its philosophy in empowering stroke survivors to lead meaningful lives essentially means NASAM acts as a catalyst, helping victims become victors. As a board member, it has indeed been a privilege to lend my support towards NASAM's mission, vision and cause. Over the years I have seen countless people who have benefitted from our efforts, and have had their dignity and pride restored. It is a reward I greatly value and treasure.



Celebrating NASAM Malacca's official opening.

Also playing a key role in the formation of NASAM was pioneer Kamsiah Bostock. She drew up the constitution and helped with the registration. "If not for Kamsiah, I would not have had the courage to move ahead," adds Janet.

By 1999 the numbers grew to such a level that new premises were needed. The look and feel of this centre in Section 7, PJ (the present premises) was

the brainchild of Janet's husband Yeo Chee Yan. He saw a similarity between strokees re-learning basic skills and children going to kindergarten. So his concept included happy, open places with bright, cheerful colours.

Bobby Lee, an art director, developed the colour scheme, while Doreen saw to the layout of the rehab area. Janet took responsibility for the garden, to create a green sanctuary. This design and layout would be later applied to all NASAM clubs.

In March 2000, the PJ Club was ready to be occupied. The lean staff was supported by volunteers who played a major role in the early days.

By 2001 the numbers seeking rehab called for full day rehab programmes. This meant that full time rehab therapists had to be employed. Due to a shortage of such professionals locally, NASAM had to hire from abroad.

DOREEN TAN **First Physiotherapist**

My friendship with Janet Yeo spans many years. It started as a physiotherapist - patient relationship in 1990, after her stroke. We spent many hours in her home learning from each other. She would often voice her frustrations over the lack of information, support and affordable therapy for stroke patients and caregivers in Malaysia.



Janet would say: "I want to start a Stroke Support Group."

Me: "It's a big commitment, are you ready for it? Where are we going to hold it? Perhaps you should focus on your therapy first."

Not one for waiting, Janet quickly put into motion her dream and thus NASAM was born.

My early years were an incredible experience. I've been enriched with friendships that I made and to see NASAM grow to what it is today is so gratifying. I'm so glad Janet didn't listen to my doubts.

Bravo to Janet for her vision, and to the team, therapists and volunteers too, as well as the carers. Above all, bravo to the Strokees.

DATIN TUNKU RAFIDAH BINTI TUNKU MUSTAPHA
Chairman – NASAM Ampang



Firstly, I would like to thank all our volunteers, friends, families, corporations and the Rotary Club of Ampang for giving us their warm and unstinting support. Without this we would not have been able to run for so many years.

When I was invited to be chairman, I wondered what experience I could bring. Soon I realised that empathy for the struggle of stroke survivors and understanding the need for a positive, 'can do' environment, would be the prerequisites of the job.

I have seen frail stroke survivors and their care-worn carers coming to us on their first day looking disheartened and unsure of themselves. In a couple of weeks, I see in them a renewed enthusiasm and a recharged energy. This to me is the most rewarding aspect of our work at NASAM.

We have come this far and I am sure we will be able to continue to stay relevant by adapting to the times.

I would like to end with this quote: "Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change."

JANE CHONG
Chairman – NASAM Johor



I came to NASAM in 2007 as a volunteer. I heard about the organisation through a friend whose sister is a volunteer in the PJ Club.

A group of us travelled to Kuala Lumpur to visit NASAM clubs and understand the nuances of setting up and running a stroke rehab centre. A member of this group was the late Phoon Chee Yap, who was well-known as a reputable entrepreneur in Johor Bahru. When we met, he was retired and already into social work.

He started his journey as Chairman of NASAM Johor, a position he held till his last breath on October 10, 2017. I took over the position upon Janet's request and am currently leading the team.

I am grateful and delighted to be with NASAM as it is an opportunity for me to devote time to caring for the society I live in.

We have a dedicated physiotherapy team and NASAM Johor has a wonderful, caring stroke community with great team spirit.

OVER THE YEARS... A LIFELINE FOR THOUSANDS

NASAM's journey from a porch, backed by the vision of a few people with huge hearts, soon moved across state boundaries to touch the lives of thousands of families. By the time it celebrated 15 years of service there were eight clubs around Malaysia.



From a porch to eight rehab clubs.

Through the years, NASAM improved its primary rehab services that cover physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, counselling and a wide range of social activities.

New programmes included holistic healing modules such as Head2Heal, which encompasses



One-on-one speech therapy.

the Ambassadors Programme that trains stroke champions in public-speaking and empowers them to partake in special activities, such as media interviews and stroke awareness or educational programmes. There is a Mentoring Group managed by stroke survivors to offer a lifeline to those newly affected by a stroke and to give hope to those struggling with recovery. Both these peer-to-peer programmes epitomise the amazing possibilities of stroke recovery.



Public speaking training for and by stroke survivors.

At NASAM, we strongly believe that recovery is not merely about an arm or a leg, but more critically about a holistic approach that rebuilds confidence, stimulates the brain, motivates the broken spirit and helps to reintegrate a stroke survivor back into society and, in fact, also empowers them in a way that they are able to give something back to society as well. NASAM has been steadfast in achieving this mission involving the Mind, Body and Spirit.

Evolving to meet needs of the community.

Since 2020 Telehealth programmes were developed to better serve the community during

JASMINAH ALI
Chairman – NASAM Sabah



Backtrack to 2001. I returned to Sabah from Australia, a fresh physiotherapy graduate on a one-year sabbatical. Personally, at that stage I did not want to do anything related to physio. But soon I heard that a stroke association was being formed by Dr Choo Khim Wei of Queen Elizabeth Hospital and volunteers were needed. That's how I got started with NASAM Sabah.

NASAM Sabah was born in 2001 and my private clinic was born in 2004. It will always be my 'first born', my first life achievement. I feel so blessed that I can continue as a volunteer for so long and wish to thank my supportive family, husband, children and work partner, all of whom understand the need to help NASAM Sabah.

The journey of 21 years with NASAM Sabah has been filled with excitement, frustrations, empowerment, fulfilment, gratitude and thankfulness. NASAM Sabah is unique and will always have a special space in my heart. This journey has also shaped me as a person and as a therapist.

Despite Covid and the two-year gap in active, physical rehab, NASAM Sabah has endured and pulled through in a positive way. I hope in the future we will be able to touch more strokees and provide better services in accordance with Janet's dream and vision for NASAM.

Thank you NASAM SABAH for being a part of my growing journey.

ANG CHUI HONG
First Chairman – NASAM Penang



In 1995, a couple, both physiotherapists, supported by NASAM, set up a Stroke Support Group in Penang. They were in need of volunteers.

My sister and I came to know about it when we brought our mother, a stroke survivor, for physiotherapy sessions at their clinic. We volunteered and continued until after they left Malaysia about two years later.

We had to borrow various premises from people who were kind enough to let us use available space. Those nomadic days of assisting stroke survivors and their families were most memorable. Thanks to the spirit of true friendship, the Group grew and the Penang Stroke Club was launched in 1997.

In 2000, as office life became more hectic, I had to pass the baton to others who could afford more time to do justice to the club.

Congratulations NASAM! There Is Life After Stroke!

the pandemic and to allow a strokee anywhere in the country to join a NASAM programme. Physiotherapy, speech and occupational therapies are offered via Zoom. To also facilitate recovery, and in tandem with our mission to create awareness and education, regular webinars are hosted and talks given in work environments, higher learning institutions and at community levels.



Over the years, NASAM has become a model for many other countries that are developing support systems. A 15-member delegation from the Institute of Geriatric Medicine from Thailand's Ministry of Public Health visited NASAM to observe our activities. It exchanged viewpoints to gain knowledge for establishing the first Geriatrics and Gerontology Model Institute in Thailand.

As a credible Stroke Support Organisation (SSO) we have been invited to collaborate with selected agencies. We are partners with the Malaysia Stroke Council (MSC) and pharmaceutical company Boehringer Ingelheim on stroke awareness projects such as the Angels Initiative and other public campaigns. We are a member of the World Stroke Organisation (WSO) and participate in global programmes.

By the time we turned 20, we conceived a one-of-its-kind-in-the-world sporting event – NASAM Stroke Games in 2017. Inspired by the Invictus Games – an international adaptive multi-sport event created by Prince Harry – it used the power

of sport to inspire greater recovery. The idea was conceived by Janet. Activities were modified to suit the functional level of stroke survivors. The event showed the world the amazing abilities of stroke survivors and how they are able to challenge themselves.

“It was a dream come true,” said Janet after the first Games. “My heart burst with pride and joy, my eyes blurred with tears at the opening ceremony when our champions marched into the stadium, waving and smiling proudly. It was yet another endorsement of our mantra... **Yes! There is Life After Stroke.**”

The huge success of the 2017 Games led to a second instalment in 2019. Armed with true grit and determination, stroke survivors competed in a wider, more challenging range of modified sports, including track events. In conjunction with the Games our tagline has since progressed... to ‘Celebrating Life after Stroke’.



MAGESWARI SUPPIAH
Vice Chairman - First Board

Joy, laughter, fun, determination, perseverance...are words that resonate with me till today when I hear the word NASAM, even faraway in Scotland where I now live.



When I started at NASAM as a volunteer, I was the President of the Physiotherapy Association of Malaysia. I joined NASAM's amiable team after I attended that first meeting in Janet's office, in 1995. Over the years Janet, as founder and chairman, kept the ethos of the organisation rooted. Thanks to the sound leadership, NASAM has grown phenomenally from its humble beginnings. Among my favourite recollections are the occasions spent at the durian orchard in Kuala Kubu Baru, Selangor, where the NASAM families would come together and share a feast.

Thank you NASAM for the many cherished memories.

DR BARRY TAN
Past Chairman – NASAM Perak and wife Kim, a dedicated volunteer

Twenty-five years of unequal service to the stroke community of Malaysia, the immeasurable benefit to stroke survivors who have reclaimed their lives and dignity in this period...all started with a dream by a stubbornly determined survivor, Janet Yeo.



It was realised with the support of many players from all around the country, who gave themselves, their time and their finances. All this allowed NASAM to take root and blossom, deliver hope to countless survivors, raise stroke awareness among the public and provide support to many family carers, who had their lives upended by one life changing event.

We salute all these supporters and the stroke survivors who showed 'Yes! There is Life After Stroke'. We are privileged to be a part of this journey and are humbled and grateful for the lessons we have been taught in the process. Congratulations to Janet and all at NASAM today. We wish you strength and resilience in continuing your work into the future.

SONG CHIN YEN
Caregiver

To me NASAM is a place where stroke survivors and their families find hope and motivation, enabling them to move forward. Our mother Bang Ah Lan, now 77, had a stroke in July 2021. She made remarkable progress in six months. From being bed ridden to independently walking in the house with minimal assistance. We are grateful to the therapists at NASAM Perak who made this possible. May NASAM continue to shine and bring hope to those in need.





NASAM also successfully showcased the abilities of the stroke community via other exciting and healthy events such as Colour Walk, Fun Fair In The Park and Walk For Health.

All these extended programmes are working well as part and parcel of the healing process that's so crucial following a stroke. They are unique to NASAM as no other stroke organisation, government or stroke hospital or clinic have such rehab programmes other than the typical clinical ones.

These are now a signature of NASAM and stem from our unique and holistic stroke specific rehab programmes, where stroke survivors participate in therapy along with their peers. This encourages bonding, sharing and caring. It is inspiring to watch stroke survivors motivate one another to try harder, push further and achieve more during their therapy sessions in an environment that is like their second home. No other organisation in Malaysia conducts rehab therapy on a peer-to-peer basis.

An essential alternative to public facilities or private care.

NASAM believes that it has made a difference in the lives of stroke survivors and their families. We are confident that we have motivated survivors to take huge leaps in recovery.

Our stroke specific rehab programme is internationally recognised and much sought after. Local universities like MAHSA, Ramsay Sime Darby, UNISEL and UTAR also send their students on a regular basis to train at NASAM. Students from overseas include those from Japan.

Over the years our services have also been acknowledged with awards – internationally, we were recognised for being a positive force for change in the community by a global agency BrandLaureate. Our Johor team bagged the prestigious Iskandar Malaysia Social Hero Awards for its dedicated service in the health category.

As a SSO we continue to:

- Represent the views of stroke survivors and their families on how to improve stroke care
- Organise services and support in the community using trained professionals and volunteers
- Raise awareness about stroke and the need for greater resources
- Share experiences in dealing with problems resulting from stroke
- Provide relevant information to stroke survivors and their caregivers
- Support Government and Private initiatives to help prevent stroke

Our public hospitals cannot provide daily rehab services to stroke survivors and not everyone can afford private care. With all our breakthrough achievements in the past 25 years, we stand steadfast in our belief that NASAM is relevant and that there is so much more that can be achieved as we move forward.

ANN CHEAM

Stroke Survivor and First Chairman – NASAM Perak

I suffered an ischaemic stroke at 42. I was devastated not knowing what life would be like after the stroke. At that time I was a volunteer at a rehab facility in Ipoh. While I started to regain some motor ability with regular physio, I still felt a sense of loss and despair.



My neuro encouraged me to check out NASAM in PJ. After reading a newsletter, my husband and I made a trip to PJ. I was very quickly motivated by the positivity and determination of the strokees at the centre and was inspired by the club's mission and vision. At that very moment, I felt that Ipoh should have a stroke-specific facility like this to help stroke survivors.

As soon as we got back to Ipoh, I started to enlist a few friends and together with my husband, we convened our first meeting. We then had another meeting-cum-training session with NASAM on what it takes to set up a centre. We were granted some seed money to get things moving. Shortly after, events unfolded very quickly and smoothly. We rented and renovated a venue (where NASAM Perak still stands). All relevant approvals from the authorities were obtained and soon the centre was up and running.

We worked hard during the early days to raise funds and we were very lucky to have good support from volunteers.

To me, NASAM represents HOPE just like its tagline: `There Is Life After Stroke`.

This was precisely what I saw and felt during my first encounter with NASAM and that was when I saw the need to `bring NASAM home to Ipoh` ... the rest is history.

Today, 18 years on, it is very heart warming to learn that Nasam Perak is doing well and that many have walked through our doors and come out physically and emotionally stronger, just as I did after a stroke.

DR. WAN ASYRAF WAN ZAIDI

Vice Chairman of Malaysia Stroke Council, Stroke Neurologist – UKM

Congratulations to NASAM, the champion of stroke support organisations in Malaysia, for the past 25 years. That's definitely an achievement!



NASAM has shown remarkable resilience throughout the years and continues to fight for stroke survivors even during the challenging Covid pandemic. It is important for us – the healthcare & business communities and the public – to support NASAM. We have to lend them a hand to drive forward their stroke awareness programmes and comprehensive services to support life after a stroke.

Great work National Stroke Association of Malaysia! Malaysia Boleh! Happy 25th Anniversary!

THE FUTURE... A HELPING HAND

As we stride forward, after major disruptions by the Covid 19 pandemic, our biggest concern revolves around sustaining NASAM's services. "There are still uncertainties arising from the lingering pandemic and our ability to continue helping the stroke survivors will depend on continuous financial and other support from all levels of society," cautions Treasurer Eng Lian Geok.

Operating NASAM's head office and eight stroke centres requires around RM200,000 per month. This covers rental of premises, utility expenses and staff salaries. Currently we have a rehab team of about 30 professional therapists in our eight centres and an admin staff force of 15 employees spread over nine offices. To provide good rehab therapy we also focus on training our therapists every year to raise standards and maintain professionalism. This not only helps ensure continuity in the delivery of good service but is also effective in retaining staff and attracting quality therapists to our organisation.

**Resources are limited...
need more donors and
sponsors.**

Every year costs continue to escalate and it gets even more worrisome as the social and economic issues around us remain chaotic. We do recognise that it will get harder and harder to drive donations and fundraising initiatives. With this challenge lurking in the background, we would need generous donors and sponsors, be they corporations or individuals, to continue to support NASAM and help keep it going.

We are deeply appreciative of all support received over the past 25 years. We could not have come this far without this vital support. We continue to appeal to more new sponsors and donors to come onboard to help sustain and financially strengthen

SHEN CHAN

Former Assistant Manager

Having worked in the private sector for about 30 years, I had no inkling of the world of NGOs where volunteers generously gave their time, energy and even personal money. That is until I became a NASAM employee!

In my interaction with volunteers during the five years I was working there, I discovered some AWESOME people.

They were:

- Always ready to give their all
- Willing to answer to NASAM's call
- Eager to assist in any way
- Showing they care every day
- Offering their services FOC
- Magnanimous in nature
- Empathetic as can be

My utmost respect to these volunteers and to NASAM for serving the stroke community. Simply put, volunteers and NGOs like NASAM are akin to 'Angels Sent From Heaven'.

RUCHIRA GUPTA
NASAM's Senior Adviser



You NASAM have taught us that there is LIFE after stroke.

As you celebrate 25 years you should be very proud because you touched so many lives. Lives of strokees, lives of caregivers, lives of people in the community.

You taught those who lost hope to reclaim life. You created a loving and caring environment at your centres where caregivers were heard, understood and cared for. You educated the public to get healthy and to detect early the signs of stroke and get their loved ones to hospitals fast.

You also taught the public to reach out and help their loved ones to dream again and live a meaningful life, and not fear nor consider stroke a taboo in the community.

Today NASAM and stroke champions can be the HOPE for the hopeless, especially in these times of COVID. You can continue to show that just as there is life after stroke... there is life after COVID and we should continue to live in gratitude for what we have. Live a life to the best of our abilities and capabilities.

NASAM you have come a long way... the road is longer so keep on track and continue your journey. Best wishes now and always.

DR NORHAYATI HUSSEIN
Consultant Rehabilitation Physician - Hospital Rehabilitasi Cheras (HRC).
Lead, Special Interest Group (SIG): Stroke & NeuroRehabilitation of the
Malaysian Association of Rehabilitation Physicians (MARP)



For the past 25 years NASAM has etched its name and evolved to become an organisation that demonstrates excellence in raising awareness on stroke, organising services and support in the community, and providing valuable information to stroke survivors and their caregivers.

Back in 2004, one of the questions posed during my postgraduate intake interview was how much I know about NASAM. Fast forward to today and I am proud and honoured to say I know more and am involved in the myriad of activities organised by NASAM. The Colour Walk, Stroke Games and other poignant events act as powerful proof of a stroke survivor's resilience and exemplifies the dynamic aspects of stroke recovery.

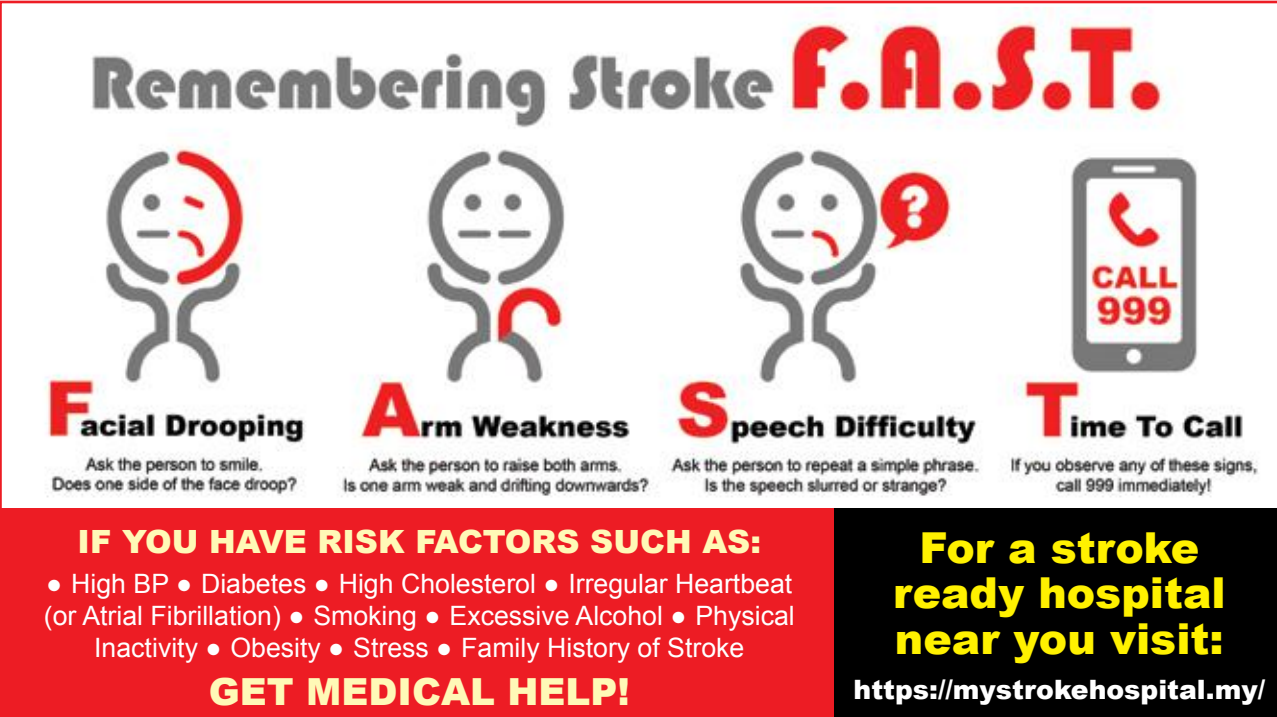
Throughout the past 25 years NASAM has stood the test of time. Backed by a strong track record and evident success, I envisage NASAM will continue to be the strong voice it is in raising stroke awareness and act as an advocate for stroke survivors in the country.

NASAM so that we can focus on serving the stroke community of Malaysia in years and years to come.

NASAM is concerned that stroke statistics not just in Malaysia but worldwide is grim. As of 2019, it is said that one-in-four people will suffer a stroke in their lifetime and more of the younger generation is being affected. Stroke is said to be the third largest cause of death in our country.

airports and bus stops and messaging on outdoor billboards or on the sides or back of buses and other vehicles.

On its part NASAM continues to conduct stroke awareness forums. We do this at corporations, colleges and private organisations. Acting FAST during a stroke emergency can save a life and reduce disability. However, there is a limit to how far NASAM can reach out, due to limited funding



Remembering Stroke F.A.S.T.

F **Facial Drooping**
Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

A **Arm Weakness**
Ask the person to raise both arms. Is one arm weak and drifting downwards?

S **Speech Difficulty**
Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is the speech slurred or strange?

T **Time To Call**
If you observe any of these signs, call 999 immediately!

IF YOU HAVE RISK FACTORS SUCH AS:

- High BP • Diabetes • High Cholesterol • Irregular Heartbeat (or Atrial Fibrillation) • Smoking • Excessive Alcohol • Physical Inactivity • Obesity • Stress • Family History of Stroke

GET MEDICAL HELP!

For a stroke ready hospital near you visit:

<https://mystrokehospital.my/>

We need an impactful nationwide campaign in awareness and education. Stroke is preventable. If every Malaysian knows what stroke is and how to prevent it, the rising cases will be stemmed and so too the devastating permanent disabilities. On-going campaigns could include stroke educational messages in public places such as train stations,

(organising public stroke forums comes at a cost) and other logistical reasons. In view of this we fervently hope that a governmental department and/or the medical and pharmaceutical companies will take the initiative to do more to educate Malaysians about stroke and how to recognise the symptoms by recalling the F.A.S.T approach.

NASAM on its own cannot continue to serve the stroke community. Become a beacon of hope to millions of survivors and their families.

Call us today at 018-2221878!

DATIN SHARIFAH KHAIRIYAH SYED MOHAMAD
Former Chief Physiotherapist



In late 1997, when I was living in Singapore, I got a call asking me to join a newly formed voluntary organisation in Malaysia, to provide support for stroke patients. Unfortunately, as I would be working in Singapore for some time, I could not participate. However, it stuck in my mind, as neurological cases and strokes were my interests, and when I got back to Kuala Lumpur, in 1999, I looked the group up. That was the beginning of my many years with NASAM.

At that time NASAM was providing rehab individually. As the numbers grew, I introduced group sessions and exercising to music, as well as dance and functional activities, balance and endurance via games. Group therapy assured them that they were not alone and that other individuals share similar problems and struggles. It is now very much a central part of NASAM's rehab activities.

One of the highlights during my tenure was a fashion show to celebrate NASAM's 10th anniversary. Strokees were dressed in clothes that depicted that there is life after stroke – casual, dinner wear and sportswear. They took to the catwalk with so much pizzaz and style that they received a thunderous applause. The show was a hit!

NASAM has grown exponentially, and I will always be proud to have been a part of the growth of a wonderful voluntary organisation that has provided support to so many stroke survivors.

JEFFERY LEE
Admin Assistant – NASAM Malacca



My journey with NASAM began in September 2008 when my wife and I were going to the Malacca centre once a month, as counsellors from Befrienders. The AA at that time was resigning and if there was no replacement, the centre would have to close.

I was in semi-retirement then and the strokees asked if I could take over. I agreed, thinking it was something I would do for four or five years...it has been 13 years now. Today I am the oldest admin staff in NASAM.

Perhaps one of the main reasons why I have stayed on is because of how much I have personally gained over the years. I have learned to become more tolerant, more accommodating and to value my own health and do whatever it takes to prevent illnesses.

I am also proud of how far we have come over the past 25 years and the thousands of lives we have empowered. I believe NASAM's strong management, good team and the well-founded vision of our founder Janet, will continue to help it flourish and be the beacon for those inflicted by a stroke.

ONE STROKE & NASAM IS BORN



Janet Yeo
Founder Chairman, NASAM

In mid-1988, six months before my stroke, I experienced many short giddy spells. Just split-second disorientations. At that time, I thought it was due to tiredness and lack of sleep. Now I know they were Transient Ischaemic Attacks (TIA) or mini strokes caused by temporary interruption of blood supply to the brain, usually preceding a major stroke.

Sure enough, in April 1989, I suffered a stroke. On the morning of April 5, I tried to make a pot of tea at home, but my right hand wasn't cooperating and I couldn't complete the task. Once again, I ignored the signs and proceeded to dress up and drove to the hairdressers before going to my office.

While I was at work my head kept pounding. When the phone rang, I was not able to pick it up with my right hand. It was then that I decided I was really sick and needed to go to a hospital. By the time I reached the hospital, I was totally paralysed on my right side, and my speech was slurred.

At the hospital I was told I had a stroke. I had no clue what it was but told the doctor to treat me, as I had a full week ahead and did not wish to stay in the hospital too long. I ended up staying for a whole month.

The stroke had taken place during my sleep. It had evolved into a full-blown stroke while I was at the office. Had I gone to the hospital in the morning, when my hand wasn't taking instructions while I was trying to make tea, I would probably have suffered less damage. I lost four precious hours! I was 44-years old! I was confused, frustrated, scared, and kept asking God "Why Me?" For the first time in my adult life, I had to depend on



someone to bathe, feed, dress and turn me over in bed. It was very humbling and humiliating as well. The longer I was in self-denial, the more frustrated and angry I became. In fact, I was so terrified I asked everyone to pray for me.

One night, I turned to God and told him that I accepted his decision to allow the stroke to happen in my life. I was ready to trust God to walk me through the valley of death and had no fear. Once I finished my prayer, I was at total

QAMER IQBAL KHAN

Former Rehab Training and Development Head of NASAM



I still remember how nervous I felt when I arrived from India in 2007 to take up my posting with NASAM. One of my first challenges was to head a newly opened centre in Johor, which turned out to be one of the top NASAM centres, rehabilitating a large number of strokees within its first year.

Working with NASAM was always a challenge because the position was multifaceted and didn't only include being a clinician.

The most challenging part of my entire career as a physiotherapist was planning, organising and implementing the Stroke Games, the first of its kind, specifically created for stroke survivors to test their physical and mental boundaries. Once the strategy was finalised, it was regularly tweaked, until we were convinced that it was both safe and rigorous.

I can clearly recall the last day of the tournament, the feelings the stroke survivors were experiencing as a result of their own triumphs, as well as the accomplishments of their particular teams. It was as if they had burst through the perceptual barriers that had limited their function and engagement in the community. I must admit it was really rewarding for us all, especially for me, since I had made some contributions towards their recovery process.

If you ask me what I've learned through my 10 years of involvement with NASAM in various capacities, I'd say I've honed my ability to be sensitive and empathetic. You can't heal others if you don't comprehend what they're going through, no matter how brilliant a clinician you are. It was an honour to work with NASAM, as it not only provided a learning environment for my professional development, but it also helped me become a better clinician.

Congratulations NASAM on reaching this 25th milestone!

TONY LIM

Stroke Survivor and Volunteer



I had a stroke in 1996. With faith in myself and persistence I recovered fully in three years. In 2006, I joined NASAM PJ as a speech therapy volunteer. My heartfelt thanks to NASAM for supporting me with essential training and continued guidance. Over the years, I worked with many stroke survivors with communication issues, for that I am grateful as I gained much from each one. The patience and wisdom that is required has made me a better person and my life has become more meaningful.

Serving at NASAM is a joy. People are friendly and helpful. We all celebrate every step of progress made by our champions. I am 81 this year. I intend to serve the stroke community for at least another five years.

peace. I no longer struggled or was fearful. I felt a deep sense of hope and excitement.

The next day, I asked the nurses to wheel me to the bathroom as I wanted to shower and not be sponged. I made it a point to be dressed in a clean hospital gown each morning, have my breakfast sitting up in a chair, ready for my husband's visit before he went off to work. I felt great and chirpy, and the nurses were surprised with this change.



In the therapy room, I became very competitive, as I tried my best to excel in every exercise given to me, no matter how hard and challenging. I was so positive and motivated that the nurses would wheel me around to cheer up stroke patients in other wards.

My husband challenged me at every angle, never allowing me to feel sick or incapable. I had to attend dinner functions, children's outings, go for therapy on my own with the driver. In Singapore, where I went for further treatment, he would take me out to dinner once or twice a week, against the hospital's advice. He insisted that I dress up for dinner and we would walk to the restaurant.

It may sound cruel, but it was very good for me. I learned faster and with time I channelled my anger and frustration towards recovering. I started using my brain and other faculties again,

which was so important for my recovery.

Seven months later, I was able to travel alone to the Los Gatos rehab hospital in California, in the US. There I stayed in an apartment with another stroke survivor for a month, and each day we walked to the bus stop to catch a bus to the rehab hospital. It was here that I learned to be totally independent, as we had to cook, do our laundry, go to the hospital, do our exercises and stay focused and not break down.

Stroke brought me to my knees. It humbled me and made me realise that money, fame and glory is of no use when you don't have good health or family and friends. Today I am going for treatments, therapy, exercises, and living a full life. I believe in keeping busy, doing positive things, persevering, staying focused and being thankful and happy. I have real friends and an extremely supportive family who stayed with me throughout my journey of recovery. And, I found God!

After I accepted that I had suffered a stroke, I believed that there must be a purpose for it. I listened to the little voice inside me that said to go out there and help other survivors. The initial idea was to start a stroke support group. Over time this turned into NASAM. I came to realise that when you are made to give up something, you land up embracing something else. Life can still be fun and purposeful!



Janet's recovery led to the formation of NASAM and growth of rehab centres. She's seen here being congratulated by Dato' Chua Jui Meng, the first patron of NASAM, after the opening of the PJ Club.

LESLEY HOH
Former Senior Manager



My first encounter with NASAM was when I attended its Food and Fun Fair at what is now the PJ Centre. To me this event was a good representation of the growth of NASAM – from a start-up to the SME that it is now.

Over the years the profile of NASAM became more public and the size of the fair drew it to its new 'home' at Taman Jaya, a public park in Petaling Jaya.

The Food and Fun Fair was also the vehicle that took us to the doors of corporate Malaysia. It is encouraging that these entities recognised the community service carried out and many joined NASAM's mission as project partners.

Individuals and organisations across the spectrum of society continue to walk with NASAM on the road of selfless service. Kudos to everyone.

Congratulations NASAM on 25 years of sterling service and exemplary citizenship.

NOR AZIAN LAN
Physiotherapist – NASAM Malacca



I joined NASAM Malacca in 2010. It was my first job, soon after graduating as a physiotherapist. As a newbie I felt the pressure of coordinating with a head office that was miles away in PJ. I had to learn fast and quickly become independent. Some of my challenges involved making decisions to ensure that the centre ran smoothly, or to manage people with different emotional and age levels. But the saving factor was I could always depend on my senior and the team at HQ to provide support and guidance.

With time, I was able to grow, become more confident and manage my challenges. Today, I owe my maturity and confidence to NASAM. My work experiences thus far have made me a better person.

My initial plan was to serve NASAM for a few years and then move on to other opportunities. But the fulfillment of empowering a strokee, the joy of seeing smiles on sad faces and the friendships with our stroke families has kept me here for 12 years now, making me the longest serving therapist in NASAM.

I am proud to be able to serve NASAM and will continue to give my best to achieve more SMILES.

MOVING FORWARD TO SERVE

Sylvia Chong
Chief Executive, NASAM



My time at NASAM has been both challenging and rewarding. It has helped me put things into perspective and constantly reminds me of what life, humanity and humility is all about.

Managing a non-profit organisation is far from easy. It requires perseverance, patience and resolve. Resources are scarce and finances a constant challenge. But NASAM is a great set-up.

When I joined eight years ago, I took over a strong organisation thanks to the good work of my predecessors and of course, Janet, the Board and all Club Sub-Committees.

Going forward, we would like to thank our stroke community for having faith and trust in us. We will continue to do our utmost to serve you and your families. Although NASAM is appreciated by those who know us, we do question if we are still wanted and if we can still go on?

Despite our challenges, the answer is: YES, we are relevant and YES, we will keep serving!



This is because the high point, for me and my team, is seeing a strokee recover from the devastating effects of a stroke and returning to some semblance of life. To see the stroke survivors improve and get on with their lives after rehab is indeed a poignant experience. Often, I am also touched by the opportunity NASAM has to help underprivileged stroke survivors, those who may have been forgotten by society and their families and so are often lost and desperate, not knowing what to do.

To all stroke survivors in Malaysia, please know that NASAM is here to help you. Let us continue to support you with your journey to recovery. Stroke rehabilitation should not be stopped nor should it take a backseat as your recovery is very important. Your determination to get well is also essential to achieving a second chance at life after stroke.

Stroke is the most preventable of all non-communicable diseases so, in order to reach out to stroke survivors and educate the public on stroke prevention, awareness campaigns are crucial and must continue as we move forward.

We also need funding to stay afloat and rebuild our financial reserves. I sincerely hope more and more corporations and individuals will get to know us, understand what we are really doing and give us a helping hand financially.

Last and certainly not least, HAPPY 25th ANNIVERSARY NASAM.

Congratulations also to all who have contributed to the success of NASAM over the years.

JACQUI CHIN
Volunteer



One of the most meaningful things that I have done with my spare time is to get involved with NASAM. I signed up to be a volunteer in 2000 and never regretted it.

I learnt a lot about stroke while assisting stroke survivors at the centre and while helping at events. I also got to know a wide range of people. There were stroke survivors who came in desperate to find their old selves, who had gone through stages of denial, disbelief, hopelessness and then, after time at NASAM, found hope because they met people who did care that they had survived a stroke. There were many committed volunteers too.

We used to organise little forays into the real world for the strokees. There were trips to cinemas, the zoo, bread factory, farm and even the LRT. These outings helped rehabilitate strokees into the real world. It really cheered them up to be away from the confines of four walls. It made us happy too, to see them trying hard to conquer their disabilities. Some survivors actually came back to volunteer their services.

Pre-Covid I had the privilege to run occupational therapy classes via cooking sessions. Through cutting, peeling, stirring, kneading, rolling and whisking, strokees struggled to learn to re-use their fingers, hands, arms and bodies.

For me the annual highlight used to be the Food and Fun fair, a fundraiser. I would run a stall selling donated sundries and other goods and my whole family would get involved.

So yes, I would say again that I am blessed I came upon NASAM.

TEOH CHING HWA
Stroke Survivor



I had a stroke at the age of 27 and it was like a life sentence, one that robbed me of a normal life. At NASAM, I was able to recover sufficiently with the help and collective support of therapists, staff, volunteers and fellow strokees. Your messages of get-well-soon, inspiration and motivation encourage strokees to push ahead and have lives after a stroke.

Thanks to NASAM I now have a new kind of normal life. Congratulations on your milestone and may you continue to give HOPE to all strokees.

ENHANCE CARE & REHAB

Tracy Chan
Head of Rehab, NASAM



Having been a part of NASAM for more than 10 years, it's been interesting to watch how things have evolved over time. I'm grateful for the guidance of senior therapists during my formative years in 2003 and for the encouragement that NASAM has given me to develop and grow professionally.

Here are some issues that NASAM hopes to pursue in the future.

1. Provide evidence-based client centred care and rehabilitation:
 - a. Ensure that therapy provided is based on the current evidence available. This can be done through regular updates and training of our therapists
 - b. Teach/train others to help stroke survivors in Malaysia
 - c. Promote research into better care that is more related to our local community
2. Network and build better care options for stroke survivors:
 - a. Facilitate the setting up of clinical practice guidelines for monitoring rehabilitation in the community
- b. Advocate for more government funded rehab centres or stroke care facilities such as Hospital Rehabilitasi Cheras (HRC)
3. Advocate for greater prevention of stroke in Malaysia:
 - a. Continue to partner with Government agencies and other NGOs with similar goals in the prevention of NCDs (Non Communicable Diseases)
 - b. Via sponsored educational drives in schools and work environments
4. Empower NASAM's stroke champions to be advocates for better therapy and care. Make them a part of the recovery of new stroke survivors through mentoring and support groups that can then support the community via hospital and nursing home visits or calls.

NASAM on its part will continue to support stroke recovery by providing affordable and accessible rehabilitation. It will uphold greater and continuous improvement in rehabilitation practices. The Association will also continue to support long-term recovery and optimal quality of life for stroke survivors.



FUNG POH CHAN
Caregiver



Life for the past 25 years of my married life was pretty much the same. Like many others, I wore the hat of a wife, a mum, a daughter, a daughter-in-law, a friend...

Caregiver was a hat that landed on me and caught me totally unprepared. In January 2016 my beloved husband Leong Yee Khiam suddenly collapsed at work and suffered a massive stroke due to a ruptured aneurysm. At that point my life took a complete turn, one that seemed dark and full of challenges. Yet looking back now, it was a path filled with God's amazing grace along the way.

The stroke brought us to NASAM in February 2016. Stepping into NASAM was the beginning of many new experiences for me. There were wonderful discoveries and surprise encounters. It was a journey full of blessings. We met many other strokees, caregivers, helpful therapists, friendly NASAM staff, cheerful volunteers...a whole new community we would not have met otherwise.

At NASAM, there was such a strong communal spirit, togetherness and sense of belonging. Among the strokees, there were some unable to speak or had severe impaired mobilities, but there was no shortage of love and care poured into their lives by their loved ones. I saw families coming together to support an affected member. I was touched to see even friends, non-family members, reaching out to care for someone who had suffered a stroke. It was so humbling and uplifting.

NASAM is truly a place of hope.

We no longer attend therapy sessions at NASAM as my husband has recovered and is back to his normal life, but NASAM remains forever cherished. It is a place where caregiving is not a lonely, scary journey.

YONG AH WAH & TAN HUI CHOR
Stroke Survivors



This is a great milestone and we wish NASAM a long life so that it can continue serving for the good of all stroke champions in Malaysia. You have been amazing and so encouraging.

May your good deeds be rewarded with strong support always. NASAM, you light up our lives and souls.

WE LOVE YOU!

GROWING OUR CLUBS – AROUND MALAYSIA

Petaling Jaya – 1st Rehab Club

In 1995 a support group was formed in PJ. As more strokees sought its services, the National Stroke Association of Malaysia (NASAM) was registered in November 1996. Three years later it shifted to its current premises and it became the blueprint for all other Clubs.

Strokee Susan Khong became NASAM's first Administrative Assistant (AA) cum receptionist. Zuraidah Abdul Rahman was the first manager.

Doreen Tan was rehab therapist on a part-time basis.

The lean staff force was supported by committed volunteers who brought their own knowledge and skills to enhance the services provided – from therapy to outings, handicraft and cooking. It was officially opened in August 2000, by the then Minister of Health, Dato' Chua Jui Meng.



Staff (from left): Nancy Yap - Admin & Event Executive; Lim Yi-Le, Sobah Sabli, Derrick Yap - Physiotherapists.



HQ team (front left): Leong Chui Fund, Sylvia Chong - Chief Executive, Alice Lee.
Back left: Frankie Goh, Teoh Ching Hwa, Tracy Chan, Vanaja Dhanan, Ivan Tan.

GOODBYE & TQ

Suna – a long serving and faithful friend of NASAM left for Indonesia earlier this year.

Always cheerful and smiling, she could be counted on to lend a hand and support a stroke survivor or carer. She was based in the PJ club for more than 20 years and her bottled sambal was a hot-seller at our Food & Fun Fairs.



PENANG – 1st Branch

Janet travelled to Penang after she received a call seeking help for stroke recovery. It turned out to be a false alarm. Undeterred, she explored the possibilities of a club with neurologists Dr Ng Wai Keong and Dr Haniffah Abd Gafoor.

A talk was organised and it attracted many strokees and their families, who supported the setting up of NASAM Penang. This led to a support group being set up and, in 1997, the Penang Stroke Club was launched.

Staff (from right): Fong Jenn Meng - AA;
Lim Shu Min - Physiotherapist.



SABAH – 1st in East Malaysia

An initiative by two doctors – Dr Selva and Dr Choo Khim Wei from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) in Kota Kinabalu – led to this Club’s beginnings. They formed a support group, and by November 2001 NASAM Sabah became a reality. It began operating from QEH and later moved to the Girl Guides Complex, its current home in Jalan Tuaran.

A founding member, Jasminah Ali, recalls: “I began as a volunteer doing group exercises twice a month, in the hospital. From a small group of six strokees, we had as many as 20. At this point, we knew we needed a space for NASAM Sabah and the strokees also expressed their interest for more rehab.

“We moved from group sessions three times a week by volunteer physiotherapists, to daily rehab, both group and one-on-one. Tailoring rehabilitation according to the strokee’s needs was rewarding and many could return safely to the community.”

Today two full-time physiotherapists, an administrator and a cleaner are all part of the Club’s backbone. “Without them we cannot continue,” adds Jasminah.

Highlights over the years include Colour Run in 2014, attending two Stroke Games and returning with a trophy for 2nd place, in the first Games.

“It was a high achievement for Sabah strokees,” she reflects. “They believed in themselves, were pushed beyond their limits and enjoyed themselves immensely.”



Current Committee (front left): Lee Yen Mei - Committee Member; Jasminah Ali - Chairman; Thien Ming Fui - Treasurer.
Staff (back left): Mary Lim - AA; Norashida Rosli, Christie Suanam - Physiotherapists.

AMPANG

The passing of Janet's mother in 2002 led to the setting up of this Club. Her unused house was converted and opened its doors as a rehab centre in early 2003. The Rotary Club of Ampang was among the first to step forward to offer assistance. Funds were raised for equipment and the centre continues to benefit from a regular support from Rotarians.

Early volunteers included Ruth Paterson, Ruchira Gupta, Marie Antao and Sheela Kalavanan. These invaluable volunteers planned therapy programmes and activities to get the Club started on a firm footing.

Nineteen years on, the Club is still being led by its first chairman Datin Tunku Rafidah who has this to say: "With the help of a dedicated team, we have made NASAM Ampang into a safe haven, not only for stroke survivors but also for their carers who can enjoy a short respite and have the opportunity to mingle and get support.

"Going forward, I would like to see it evolve

into a cost-effective centre, not only for stroke survivors but also as a community hub where carers can be taught by inhouse physiotherapists and speech therapists on how to practise rehab exercises daily at home. With the use of today's technology, we can also reach more families who may not be able to come to Ampang."



Current Committee (front left):
Clare Harraghy - Secretary; Datin Tunku Rafidah Binti Tunku Mustapha - Chairman; Norida Binti Zainol - Treasurer;
Staff (back right): Nuraini Bakar - AA; Nor Amira Abiden - Physiotherapist.

MALACCA

This Club is yet another brainchild of pioneer stalwart Kamsiah Bostock. When her parents' home in Bukit Baru became vacant, she generously offered it, rent-free for five years. The nucleus of the Club, when it started in July 2003, were Pang Siew Fian, Jenny Ng and T.S. Nathan.



Since then the club has moved to another bungalow and today it takes pride in having the longest serving admin staff and physiotherapist in NASAM. Jeffery Lee began in 2008 as a volunteer through his work with the Befrienders and later became fulltime Admin Assistant. Physiotherapist Azian Lan joined as a rookie in 2010 and continues to serve.

As with many other NASAM facilities the Rotarians rallied to support the Club, for which we are grateful.

Staff (from right): Jeffery Lee - AA; Nagasundari Sivan, Nor Azian Lan - Physiotherapists.

PERAK

Initiated by two strokees Ann Cheam and Leong Ah Kee who attended a workshop on how to set up and run a NASAM rehab centre. Together with other volunteers they set up operations in 2003 and expanded from exercise sessions to include gardening and social outings. After four years Ann handed the baton to Surine Ho who played a significant part in fundraising activities, helping the Club to be self-supporting from the start.

After serving for about three years, Surine passed the reins to Dr Barry Tan who led the Perak Club to even greater heights.



Staff (from back left): Hoo Foong Chee - AA; P. Prasantha Rao, Ananthi Ramasamy, Kathiravan Tangaraju - Physiotherapists.

JOHOR

The formation of this Club came at the urging of Rotarians, who were then operating a rehab centre for those with various types of neuro disorders. A group, led by the late Phoon Chee Yap, decided to take up the challenge. They met Janet and her team in PJ and on their return set up a rehab centre for stroke survivors.



Current Committee (front left): Jane Chong - Chairman; Jessica Chai - Secretary. Back left: Chan Choon Khai - Vice Chairman; Khoo Lea Hua - Treasurer.

The Club became a reality in June 2007 with a handover from the Rotarians. It was officially opened on February 18, 2009 by YAM Raja Zarith Sofiah (the Queen of Johor).

Phoon became the first chairman and during a chat with **Stroke**news some years ago he urged his members to help each other: "We are all equal. Do your part to ensure that the Club survives. Be willing to help raise funds so that we can reach out and help more stroke survivors."



Staff (from right): Shanti Subramanian - AA; Najwa Mohamed Zubir, Arlene Arputham - Physiotherapists.

KUANTAN – 1st on the East Coast

Yet another initiation by Rotarians who sought NASAM's help in 2007 to organise a stroke awareness talk. The need for a rehab centre became apparent when a family member of a Rotarian had a stroke and there was no place for them to seek help.

This prompted a visit to PJ to see first-hand operations of a stroke specific Club. Armed with sufficient info, an enthusiastic group embarked on making Kuantan Club a reality in 2009 and

Dato' Ng Koong Sinn was elected chairman. The seed fund of RM10,000 was raised with the help of the Inner Wheel Ladies through a Bake N' Buy. The Ramon Magsaysay Foundations in the Philippines also extended some support.

After operating successfully for a year, the Club was officially opened on August 21, 2010 by a state assemblyman YB Chang Hong Seong. The Club continues to be helmed by its founder and thrives with the support of Rotarians.



Current Committee (front left):
Yau Hun Ling - Vice Chairman;
Dato' Ng Koong Sinn - Chairman;
Ho Chin Leong - Treasurer.
Back left: Dr S. Selvakumar - Secretary;
Rizal Hashim, Chia Kar Keong - Ordinary Members.
Staff (from right): Chan Mak Wan,
Nor Hafizzatul Zulkefli - Physiotherapists.

KEDAH

The excitement of having a presence way up north was somehow short lived. Due to the pandemic and various other reasons Kedah became the first NASAM Club to be shut. It ceased operations in September 2021, after serving for almost five years.

VOLUNTEERS PAST & PRESENT

TRIBUTES

In its formative years NASAM relied heavily on volunteers – people from various walks of life who pitched in wholeheartedly with their time and skills. This spirit of volunteerism was the backbone of NASAM's survival until a time when staff could be hired.

Lesley Hoh, a former senior manager at NASAM sums it up: "In the early years, the operations were run by a committee, a few staff members and several volunteers. It would be remiss of any narrative if a shout was not given to the volunteers – past and present – who give themselves and their time to support the amazing and often challenging journey of the strokes."



NASAM'S PILLARS – PIONEERS TO THE PRESENT

Kamsiah Bostock

- Gave Janet courage to register NASAM as a national body.
- Drafted the constitution and formulated NASAM's Vision and Mission.
- Member of 1st Board, served several terms.
- Recruited Christine Harvey, a UK qualified nurse, to train early batches of volunteers.
- Wrote "How to Start a Stroke Club" booklet as a guide for starting a stroke club.
- Started a regular newsletter – Berita Stroke.



- Organised first Walk for Health event in all Clubs to commemorate World Stroke Day.
- This became an annual event and evolved into a Colour Walk.



- Got Rotary Club of Ampang to adopt NASAM Ampang and undertake all start-up costs.
- Raised funds from BP Petroleum to improve PJ Club.
- Together with her team organised a 10th Anniversary Dinner, raising over RM400,000.
- Also organised a nationwide 10th Anniversary Roadshow.

- Organised the first Food Fair that evolved into an annual fundraiser.

Margaret Chang

- Initiated the Biggest Breakfast, a highly successful fundraiser.
- Organised two successful Stroke Awareness weeks. Achieved high visibility and awareness for NASAM and stroke through articles in major newspapers and magazines.



Mageswari Suppiah

- Vice Chairman of 1st Board.
- Developed outings, re-integration into community and social events for stroke survivors to promote self-confidence.

Sheila Joachim

- Board member and the first Training Coordinator for volunteers.
- Helped to get The Befrienders to counsel strokes.
- Longest serving trainer for volunteers.

Stella Ooi

- Member of 1st Board and longest serving volunteer (still serving unconditionally).
- Archive-keeper of NASAM's events and people.
- Assists in the Founder Chairman's work.

Eng Lian Geok

- Member of 1st Board and still serving.
- Responsible for setting up and managing NASAM's financial system.

Betty Chew

- Legal Adviser and serving as a Board member for the past 15 years.
- Holds an unbeaten record for the highest coupon sales during the Food & Fun Fair.



Chan Hong Ee

- Chairman in Penang in 2005. Focused on fundraising to keep the Club on a sound footing. Also served as a Board member.



Chan Hong Lip

- Succeeded Chan Hong Ee as Chairman.
- The sister-brother team and their committee managed the Penang Club for 15 years.
- They were responsible for finding proper premises and building financial stability.
- During their tenure the Club generated greater stroke awareness, education and increased membership.

Doreen Tan

- First physio. Started group therapy in the porch of Janet's house. Later developed group sessions. Introduced the idea of a stroke-friendly kitchen in the PJ Club for use during OT.

Datin Tunku Rafidah Binti Tunku Mustapha

- First Chairman of Ampang. Still serving, making her the longest serving Club Chairman.
- Served on the Board for two terms.

Jasminah Ali

- Started as a volunteer physio in NASAM Sabah. Helped to set up the Club, becoming its secretary in 2003. Became Chairman in 2008. Still serving.

Dato' Ng Koong Sinn

- First Chairman in Kuantan and still serving.
- Also a Board member. Started the Club from scratch together with his group of Rotarians. Organises successful fundraisers and guides the Club's growth.

Dr Heather Yong

- Chairman in Sabah for 2 terms.
- She resigned when migrating to the US.

Datin Sharifah Khairiyah Syed Mohamad

- Board member and first Chief Physio.

- Fine-tuned group therapy sessions. Trained strokees for the first fashion show at NASAM's 10th Anniversary Dinner. The event received a standing ovation and went on a roadshow.



Phoon Chee Yap (Late)

- First Chairman in Johor, a position he held for 10 years.
- Under his chairmanship the Club grew to become the second largest club after PJ.

Dr Ng Wai Keong

- Member of 1st Board and NASAM's medical adviser.
- He successfully got pharmaceutical companies to support and sponsor activities.
- He was a regular speaker at NASAM's public forums.

Pat & Peter Khong

- Pat was a member of 1st Board.
- The couple supported and also helped at all events.

Kuek Hong Chew

- Member of 1st Board and a champion fundraiser in the early start-up days.
- Managed to secure the first grant from the Ministry of Health and also a donation from the Pudu Rotary Club.

Chris Low

- As a Chairman of the PJ Club she re-organised and implemented some good measures which ensured the Club's financial viability.
- Also served on the Board for two terms.

Mr & Mrs Oh Kim Sun

- A generous and dedicated couple, regularly raising funds. Always ready to write a cheque for NASAM and successfully persuading their friends and associates to do the same.

Patrick Teoh & David Chew

- Friends of NASAM, supportive with fund raising as well as volunteering as emcees at major events.

Sylvia Chong

- As Chief Executive her leadership skills guided NASAM steadfastly through the Covid 19 pandemic and helped to keep staff morale high, at the same time ensuring that stroke rehab remained efficient and goal driven.
- She worked hard to secure valuable sponsorships and donations to enable NASAM to continue serving.
- She implemented the first Stroke Games in 2017 and followed with the second in 2019. Both Games were a roaring success.

Vanaja Dhanan

- Our first PR and Communications executive, constantly keeping NASAM in the spotlight through social and mainstream media. These efforts have helped NASAM achieve a high level of awareness in the community. Her team's quarterly **Stroke**news has garnered many great reviews for being informative and inspirational.
- She also promotes holistic care and support through activities and groups for caregivers as well as stroke champions.

Qamer Iqbal Khan

- Former Head of Rehab who painstakingly created the structure for first Stroke Games.



- His ingenious understanding of stroke recovery led to the successful implementation of this first-of-its-kind event in the world. He also spent many years in JB, nurturing the Club to its present success.

Ruchira Gupta

- A trained physiotherapist who volunteered in Ampang for five years.
- Together with resident physio Tracy Chan, they made Ampang one of the more successful Clubs. Now based in Singapore, she volunteers as Senior Adviser.

Ngeow Wu Han

- Has offered his house in Ampang as a rehab centre, rent free for the past 15 years.



FREE REHAB

- B40 STROKE SURVIVORS REGISTER NOW!

Yayasan Hasanah is sponsoring stroke survivors from the B40 community to receive free rehab sessions at NASAM. Following an assessment, each participant is entitled to a stroke specific rehab programme for one year. Participation is on a first-come, first-served basis. Register now if you are interested. To register call our Helpline: 018-222 1878 or the nearest NASAM centre. Please check www.nasam.org for more details.



SERVICE OVER THE YEARS

TRIBUTES

NASAM Staff

The success of NASAM is largely due to our staff. They help to make our Vision possible by doing their best on the ground serving our stroke survivors or Stroke Champions to face a new world after a stroke.

In this issue marking NASAM's 25th Anniversary, we commend and thank our staff for their passion and love in helping all our members to live a functional life again while, at the same time, supporting family members to cope.

Special thanks to Sylvia Chong, our Chief Executive for leading a dedicated team and building a strong relationship with our Corporate donors.

Special thanks to Vanaja Dhanan, our Communications Coordinator, for building NASAM's brand image and creating greater awareness, and also for being actively involved in our many holistic therapies with our Stroke Champions and their families.

NASAM Board – Past and Present

Special thanks to all our past and present Board Members for their commitment and service over the past 25 years. You took on the challenges and helped lead NASAM to achieve its Vision of providing affordable stroke rehabilitation to all Malaysians. Your dedication guides our growth and strengthens us every step of the way.

Special and grateful thanks to Eng Lian Geok and Stella Ooi, the longest serving Board members, since the setting up of NASAM.

Sincerest gratitude to Margaret Low, Edmond Lim, Yap Yoke Fui, Kiang So Peng, Dato' Ng and Betty Chew.

CLUB CHAIRMEN & TEAMS

NASAM Ampang

Datin Tunku Rafidah Binti Tunku Mustapha has served NASAM Ampang as Chairman since it was founded in March 2003. Some members from her first committee are still serving alongside her.

NASAM Penang

Chan Hong Ee served as Chairman and later joined the NASAM Board. Her brother Hong Lip took over and together with Hong Ee and three other committee members served in Penang for more than 15 years. The entire committee decided to retire in 2020, to make way for a younger generation.

NASAM Sabah

Jasminah Ali volunteered her services as a part time physiotherapist in 2001, when NASAM Sabah was newly founded by Dr Choo Khim Wei. She subsequently served as a committee member and took over in 2007, when Chairman Dr Heather Yong left for the US. She remains the current Chairman.

NASAM Johor

Jane Chong, a founding member began with NASAM Johor in 2007, as a volunteer under the late Chairman – Phoon Chee Yap. Later, she became a committee member and took over upon the Chairman's demise. She remains the current Chairman with several committee members from the founding group.

NASAM Kuantan

NASAM Kuantan was founded by Dato' Ng Koong Sinn and his fellow group of Rotarians. They have served NASAM Kuantan for 13 years now.



WE ARE HERE FOR YOU –

THE NATIONAL STROKE ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIA (NASAM)

We give HOPE and a Second Chance at LIFE!

For the past 25 years we have been serving the community with affordable, stroke specific rehab and continue to do so, despite the financial challenges we are facing due to the pandemic. We firmly believe that early rehabilitation is critical to preventing long-term disability.

Our Services For Stroke Recovery

ONSITE

Physiotherapy

Groups (Fun exercise sessions. Include aerobics, strength and balance training, Qigong)

One-on-One (Customised for the individual's needs)

Occupational Therapy

Groups and One-on-One (Improve performance of daily tasks such as eating, bathing and dressing safely)

(Above services are only for those fully vaccinated.)

TELEREHAB – VIA ZOOM

Physiotherapy

Groups (Include aerobics, strength and balance training, Qigong)

One-on-One (Customised for the individual's needs)

Speech Therapy

Groups and One-on-One (helps with swallowing issues and re-learning communication skills)

Occupational Therapy

One-on-One (Improve performance of daily tasks such as eating, bathing and dressing safely)

To help stroke survivors accept and deal with emotional and behavioural issues there's counselling. This is also available to caregivers who have trouble coping or adapting. (Available onsite and online.)

At NASAM we look beyond a weak arm or leg; we empower stroke survivors emotionally and physically, enabling them to return to the community with new found self-esteem and confidence.

CALL OUR HELPLINE: 018-222 1878

SAVE NASAM CAMPAIGN HELP US RAISE A MILLION RINGGIT!

After 25 years of giving HOPE to the stroke community NASAM needs a lifeline urgently.

Friends, the goal is to raise one million ringgit (and more) so that we can empower stroke survivors on a daily basis.



Can we count on YOU? Please donate – One-off or Monthly Contributions.

Please indicate if you require tax exempt receipt. Yes No
Provide full details below as required by LHDN.

DONATION FORM (Complete in capital letters)

June 2022

Name: _____ I.C. / Passport No: _____

Company: _____ Company Reg No: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

HP: _____ Office: _____ Home: _____ Email: _____

ONLINE DONATIONS

- Donate via **Maybank 5122-3152-0534**. Email bank-in slip: nasamdonations@gmail.com
- Donate via website: <https://www.nasam.org/donation/>
- Please provide your name as per your My Kad so that tax exempt receipts can be issued.

Our Clubs

NASAM Petaling Jaya

Since August 1996

No. 12
Jalan Bukit Menteri Selatan (7/2)
46050 Petaling Jaya
Selangor Darul Ehsan
Malaysia
Tel : +603 7956 4840
Email: nasampj@nasam.org

NASAM Penang

Since June 1997

No. 6, Lorong Midlands
10250 Pulau Pinang
Malaysia
Tel : +604 229 8050
Email: nasampenang@nasam.org

NASAM Sabah

Since November 2001

Kompleks Badan-Badan Sukarela
Wisma Pandu Puteri
KM4, Jalan Tuaran
88400 Kota Kinabalu
Sabah
Malaysia
Tel : +6088 261 568
Email: nasamsabah@nasam.org

NASAM Ampang

Since March 2003

No. 9, Lorong Awan 1
68000 Ampang
Selangor Darul Ehsan
Malaysia
Tel : +603 4256 1234
Email: nasamampang@nasam.org

NASAM Malacca

Since July 2003

No. 5132-C, Jalan Datuk Palembang
Bukit Baru
75150 Melaka
Melaka Darul Azim
Malaysia
Tel : +606 231 0177
Email: nasammalacca@nasam.org

NASAM Perak

Since September 2004

No. 9, Lorong Pinji
Off Jalan Pasir Puteh
31650 Ipoh
Perak Darul Ridzuan
Malaysia
Tel : +605 321 1089
Email: nasamperak@nasam.org

NASAM Johor

Since June 2007

No. 59, Jalan Chendera
Serene Park
80300 Johor Bahru
Johor Darul Takzim
Malaysia
Tel : +607 207 0120
Email: nasamjohor@nasam.org

NASAM Kuantan

Since May 2009

No. A2134, Lorong Kubang Buaya 2
25250 Kuantan
Pahang Darul Makmur
Malaysia
Tel : +609 566 8195
Email: nasamkuantan@nasam.org



NASAM is a member of the
World Stroke Organisation
(WSO).

1-in-4 of us will have a stroke.

**DON'T BE
THE ONE**

Today stroke is the leading cause of disability worldwide and the second leading cause of death.

In Malaysia, more than 50,000 people are affected by a stroke every year. About 40% are below the age of 60. Stroke is the third leading cause of death.

Common risk factors are: High BP, diabetes, high cholesterol, irregular heartbeats (or Atrial Fibrillation), smoking, excessive alcohol, physical inactivity, obesity, stress and family history of stroke. Know your risk factor, seek medical help and manage your lifestyle better.

STROKE IS PREVENTABLE! Get A Medical Check Now!