

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

SUBANG JAYA, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 - Cancer Research Malaysia (CRM) today announces the retirement of Professor Datin Paduka Dr Teo Soo Hwang, the founding Chief Executive Officer and Chief Scientific Officer (CSO), effective April 30, 2024.

Serving as the Founding Chief Executive from January 2001 to March 2003 and again from July 2006 to February 2020, she has been a driving force behind numerous groundbreaking initiatives.

CRM has emerged as a leading force in cancer research, making significant breakthroughs in genetic studies and personalised risk assessment tools. Under her leadership, CRM initiated the Malaysian Breast Cancer Genetic Study, leading to significant advancements in understanding cancer risk factors and the development of the Asian Genetic Risk Calculator (ARiCa).

In recognition of her contributions, Professor Teo was honored with the title of Honorary Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) by HM Queen Elizabeth II in 2018, a testament to her dedication to advancing medical research.

Reflecting on her retirement, Professor Teo said, “The best time for a founder to move on is when the organisation is strong. I realized that CRM is much bigger than any one individual, and that to grow, it must evolve. Having a leader stay for too long can inhibit this evolution.”

Stepping into the role of Chief Scientific Officer is Professor Dr Cheong Sok Ching, an esteemed scientist and leader in translational cancer biology and digital health. Her research focuses on refining cancer treatment and patient outcomes by investigating cancer development at a molecular level.

Having been a part of CRM’s family since 2002, Professor Cheong initially joined as a Postdoctoral Fellow and has steadily progressed to the role of Senior Group Leader in 2016. Throughout her tenure, she has consistently demonstrated a strong dedication to advancing cancer research and innovation, making significant contributions to the organization's mission.

One of Professor Cheong's notable achievements is the development of MeMoSA (Mobile Mouth Screening Anywhere) app, an artificial intelligence (AI)-driven digital health platform for early detection of oral cancer. Her groundbreaking work on MeMoSA earned her the Senior Scientist Category award in the 8th Underwriters Laboratories-Asean-US Science Prize for Women in 2022.

“I want science in our country to work well, with everyone involved, like ministries and businesses, working together for good changes that last. By fostering strong partnerships and alignment across sectors, we can ensure that advancements in science benefit everyone, driving progress and prosperity for generations to come,” said Professor Cheong.

Andy Khoo, CEO of Cancer Research Malaysia, welcomed Professor Cheong as the new Chief Scientific Officer, expressing excitement about her leadership in advancing the organisation's research efforts.

Andy Khoo, CEO of Cancer Research Malaysia and on behalf of the Board of Trustees, warmly welcomed Professor Cheong Sok Ching into her new role as the organization's Chief Scientific Officer. He emphasized her pivotal role in driving forward the organization's research initiatives, anticipating her contributions to further advance CRMY's mission in combating cancer.

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### **About Cancer Research Malaysia**

Established in 2000, Cancer Research Malaysia (CRMY) is the country's first and only independent and non-profit cancer research organisation. Funded entirely by donations and research grants, it conducts cancer research to find better ways to improve survival, focusing on Asians. In the breast cancer research programme, CRMY has led the first and most comprehensive study building a risk-stratified approach for screening in Asian women, which allows more efficient and equitable screening and prevention to Asian women at higher risk of breast cancer. In addition, CRMY has led the largest study of genomic profiles of Asian breast cancers, which provides critical insights into treatment and survival in Asian women. This has led directly to the development of the first investigator-led clinical trial to test new therapies in Asian breast cancer patients. Since 2014, CRMY has established a nurse and community-led programme which has transformed the survival of underserved Malaysian breast cancer patients.

For more information, please visit website at [www.cancerresearch.my](http://www.cancerresearch.my)

Cancer Research Malaysia's work is entirely supported by grants and donations. For those interested to support the work of Cancer Research Malaysia, donations can be made to CRMY at [www.cancerresearch.my/donate](http://www.cancerresearch.my/donate)

For Media inquiries, you may reach out to:

**Izyan Bahirah**

016-386 6043

Marketing Communication Manager

**Liyana Jamaludin**

011-56525072

Communications Sr Executive