



## **NHAM Heart House Opening Speech**

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Dr David Quek, Chair of Heart House  
Council Members,  
Fellow Medical Colleagues from cardiac and none cardiac fraternity  
Our industries partners & members of the press

A very good morning. On behalf of the National Heart Association of Malaysia (NHAM), I would like to extend the warmest welcome to all of you to our home.

First of all, my sincerest appreciation to our YB Menteri Kesihatan Dato Seri Liow Tiong Lai, for agreeing to grace the opening of our NHAM Heart House on a "Sunday Morning". In view of YB Dato Seri recent hectic schedules, I was very worry of getting a "broken heart".

On this Sunday morning, this is not only a major historical milestone for NHA M but also a very proud day for me and my fellow cardiologists in Malaysia as the Heart House is not just a "house" but a "home" for all the cardiologists who are represented here and throughout the country.

NHAM was started in 1979 by a handful of physicians and cardiologists to allow for a more structured development of the cardiology services and facilities in Malaysia. Over the years, the NHAM had adapted the vision of reducing the burden of heart disease in our country. I am very grateful to the early pioneers and the past presidents and councils for their vision, wisdom and prudent financial management, laying the strong foundation and bearing the fruits of our professional association success today.

Over the last 10 years, in line with the exponential development in the field of cardiology worldwide, has resulted in the need for increasing subspecialization within cardiology, 4 sub-societies were formed to serve our fellow Malaysians better. The 4 sub-societies are

1. ICSM – Interventional Cardiovascular Society of Malaysia
2. SOPACE – Society of Pacing and Cardiac Electrophysiology Malaysia
3. SCIM – Society of Cardiac Imaging Malaysia
4. MPCS – Malaysian Paediatric Cardiac Society

5 years ago, when Dato Sri Dr Robaayah Zambahari was elected as Chairman of the Asian Pacific Society of Cardiology, she opened up doors for our greater international involvement. We are very proud to be the first international chapter of the American

College of Cardiology in the world in April this year. Our Annual Scientific Meeting has not only seen the participation of the Presidents from the ASEAN cardiac fraternity but for the last 3 years, also the participation of the President of ESC and the President of ACC (we are the only country in Asia with both the ACC and ESC presidents involved). For next year, we will also have the participation of the President of Saudi Heart. This is truly recognition of our fellow Malaysian cardiologists' professional standing in the world.

With the significant increase in our professional association activities both domestically and internationally as well as the extended growth in the family size, the opening of this Heart House is indeed timely.

With this "home", NHAM will be able to step up and step forwards to take up our share in helping to tackle our number one disease burden, the cardiovascular disease.

We will have activities based in the following 3 areas:

1. Professional Development
2. Community Programs
3. Partner of Health to the Government.

Professional Development is very important not only in ensuring that we keep up with the latest in science (not just practicing the art) but also ensuring the highest standard of practice to our rakyat. It is also our responsibility for the human capital development for our country by ensuring that our young cardiologists are not just highly competent in technical skills but also have the necessary soft skills in order to compete internationally. In this respect, the fellowship and accreditation of the cardiologists is a very important exercise and would need to have the necessary legal stature in order to ensure effective implementation.

As for the community programs, I must take this opportunity to congratulate the Ministry of Health in Malaysia for providing readily available and accessible cardiac care not just to our Prime Ministers – Tun Hussien Onn, Tun Mahathir, Tun Badawi but to our rakyat no matter if you are rich or poor, famous or just an ordinary citizen in the deep jungle of Sarawak over the last 15 years. However, in order to be more effective in tackling the cardiovascular disease epidemic, we will need the involvement of the community and the public taking responsibility for themselves. This is the reason why World Heart Day is important and the theme for this year is "Heart at Work – wellness at the work place". NHAM is fortunate to have Philips Medical as our partner this year. Perhaps YB Menteri would like to lead by example, starting with the Ministry of Health itself. We can evaluate the staff for their CV risk, look at the physical activity of the MOH staff at work, look at the food served in the MOH canteen, etc.

Down the pipeline, we will be getting a famous singer who had a heart attack this year to be our ambassador and compiling a song as part of the promotional activities. We will also undertake to develop and print an activity book targeting the primary school children. Hopefully through their assignment, they can be "educated" on healthy life style while still young but also be the "champion of CV risk factors" to their parents and grandparents.

Apart from providing information, we also would like to teach the public CPR – cardiopulmonary resuscitation so that they will not just be a helpless bystander during a cardiac arrest.

As for the trusted partnership with the government, we would like to continue research collaboration with MOH. One of this is the National CV Database. On the Registry – the Acute Coronary Syndrome Registry had showed that our patients getting heart attacks are 10 years younger than the western patients, for the males - the Indian men start younger, while for the ladies - the Malay women start younger. Also from the registry, we have found that East Malaysia and East Coast are under served. Remembered One Malaysia (By the way, I Am the first President of NHAM from outside KL). We would like to contribute our expertise in the government task force such as planning in human manpower, research, task force in chronic disease prevention, etc so that we can help with an implementable, objective and good legislation to ensure the healthy heart and hearty nation. YB Menteri can trust us as we "touch the heart" of people everyday.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you here to witness this proud moment of NHAM. My sincerest thanks to Dr David Quek for chairing the Heart House committee, the Council who is with me in this project, Philips Medical as our world heart day partner for 2009-2010, Servier for serving as the NHAM secretariat over the years, Event Solution for coordinating this opening, D&BB for the design and renovation and last but not least our YB Menteri Kesihatan being here for the opening.

Thank you very very much for coming to our Heart House opening.