ASPIRE

Disability Awareness: Improving Equal Opportunities in the Society

#38

RISE UP!
Social Campaign

Raising Awareness for Self-Harming and Suicide Prevention

Transforming Societies for People with Disabilities:
The Importance of Accessibility and Inclusion

Why Does Inclusivity Matter?

"Disability has never been and will never be inability"

How's the Advancement of Health Tech could Help the Disability?

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FOREWORD

Greetings, People of Tomorrow!

It's been a long time since the last AMSA International eNewsletter. We know that all the readers have been missing us and believe us, we do as well! Well, on behalf of eNewsletter editorial board, we are thrilled to finally publish ASPIRE #38 as the first issue of the 2022/2023 tenure!

We see that the misconceptions and prejudices about people with disabilities might be made more prominent by raising awareness of them. As these are gone, attitudes and behaviours improve and have a greater influence. A strong strategy for raising awareness is to delve deeper to get a deeper understanding. Therefore, **"Disability Awareness: Improving Equal Opportunities in Society"** is the topic we brought up for this issue.

In this edition, we introduce you to a fresh section coming up from this tenure called "SDGs Corner." Besides, you can find a lot of articles to increase your awareness about disability, beautiful and inspiring artwork, an article to show you an amazing place from a country, some letters from our members, and also recaps of events held by AMSA International. Thanks aren't enough to express our feeling to have received many submissions from AMSA members that could make ASPIRE keep alive and inspire!
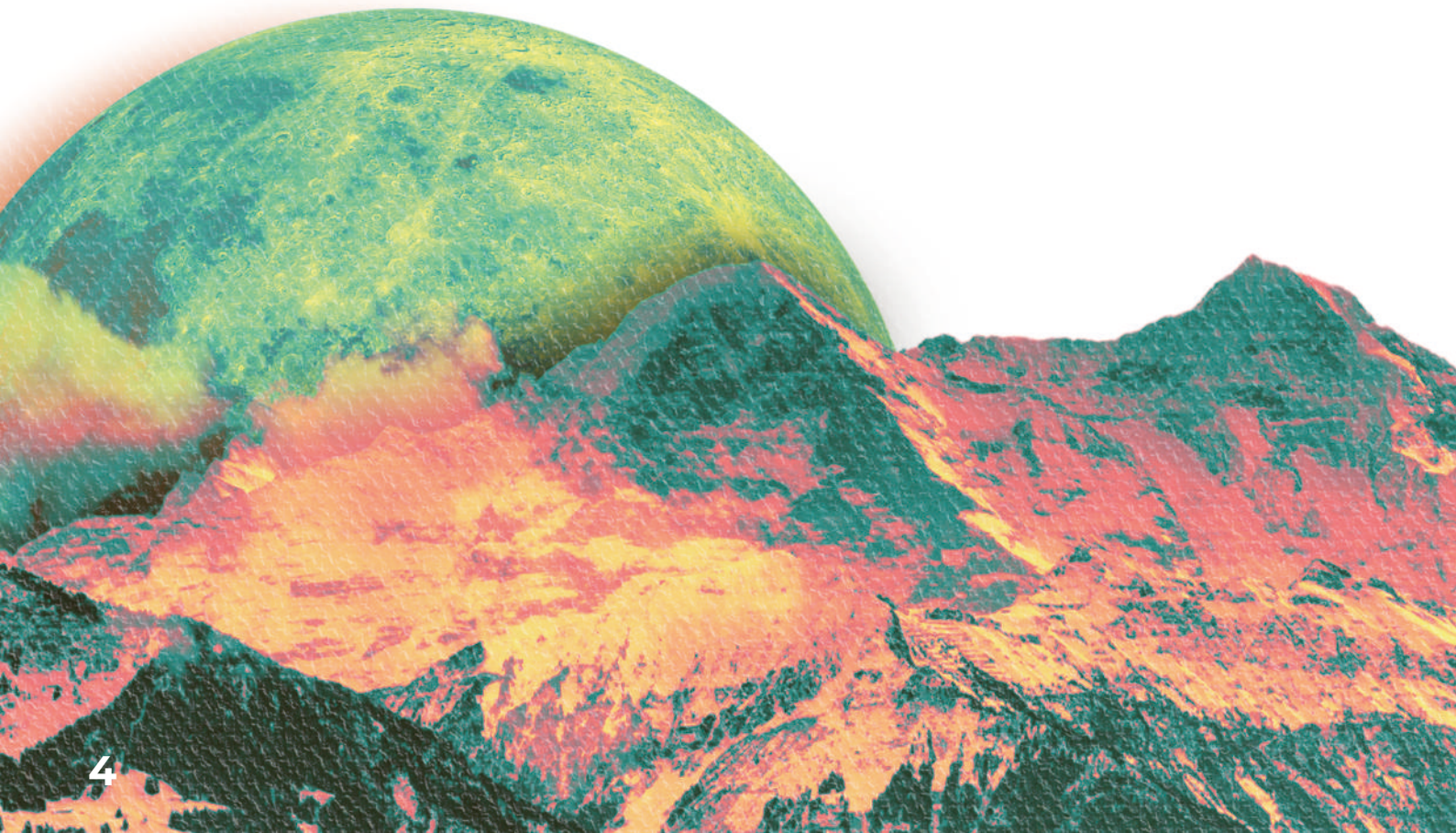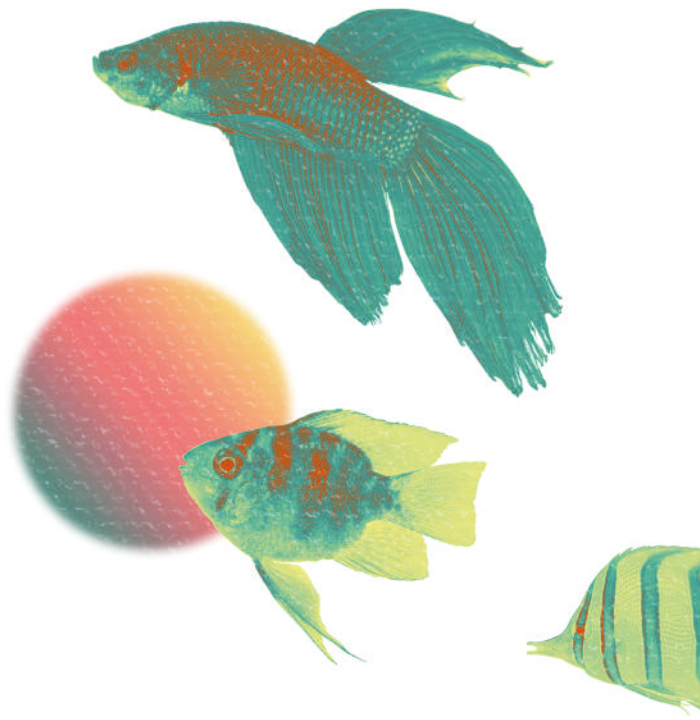
We have a good time while preparing for this edition until it is published and comes to your zone. Please give us feedback and encourage your friend to read ASPIRE as well to keep supporting us in elevating the quality of eNewsletter. Last but not least, we sincerely hope you will enjoy the eNewsletter for this edition!

Virtus et Doctrina, Viva AMSA!

Best Regards,
Florentia Amanda
Chief editor of eNewsletter
AMSA International

CHAPTER REPI

CHINA
Liu Yutong

ENGLAND
Jisoo Park

HONG KONG
Yung Chun Hin (Alvin)

INDO
Trania D

MONGOLIA
Munkhzaya Ayurgyana

NEPAL
Susmita Khatiwada

SCOTLAND
Hannah Saw

PROOF READERS TEAM

INDONESIA
Tommy Alfie Fibisono

INDONESIA
Felicia Tandiono

INDONESIA
Thalita Bratandari L H P

INDONESIA
Andrea Valerie M

INDIA
Sneha Dabadi

RESENTATIVES

NESIA
wiputri S

JAPAN
Miyuka Kushibe

KYRGYSTAN
Ausaany Abdhulla

MALAYSIA
Low Yu Sen

SINGAPORE
Suan Enhui

TAIWAN
Chao-Chen Kao

THAILAND
Jemmy

INDONESIA
Nadhira Tsurayya R

INDONESIA
Tania Rafli

INDONESIA
Aurel Tesalonika A

INDONESIA
Shofia Nurul Latifah

INDIA
Khanij Arya

LAYOUT DESIGNERS

Abelard Valerian
AMSA Indonesia

Agung Cendekia
AMSA Indonesia

Benyapa Wongsaravit
AMSA Thailand

Caesar Ramadhan S
AMSA Indonesia

Derya Değerli
EMSA

Egshiglen Batbold
AMSA Mongolia

Imke Maria Del Rosario Puling
AMSA Indonesia

Jaime
AMSA Si

Attha Ghaly Ridho A
AMSA Indonesia

Avilia Ramadhani Avidar
AMSA Indonesia

Charlotte Lintang Kinasih
AMSA Indonesia

Darin Tangsittitum
AMSA Thailand

Enhui
AMSA Singapore

Fatoumata Sarjo
FAMSA

Pang
ngapore

Jargaltulga Ulziijargal
AMSA Mongolia

CONTRIBUTORS

Kayshev Varman Surendren
AMSA Malaysia

Lam Hin Lai (Ivan)
AMSA Hong Kong

Ng Sung Him (Isaac)
AMSA England

Orr Wai Ching (Ryan)
AMSA Hong Kong

Sabrina Brigitta Valerie S
AMSA Indonesia

Stela Salsabilla Fambudi
AMSA Indonesia

Umar Agusta Wijaya
AMSA Indonesia

Umay Gül Çimen
EMSA

Lam Ngo Fung (Justin)
AMSA Hong Kong

M. Royyan Pranowo
AMSA Indonesia

Peeradon Dutsadeevettakul
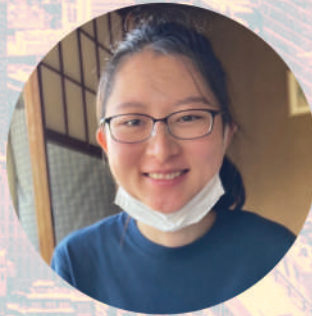AMSA Thailand

Prayash Paudel
AMSA Nepal

Sonoha Mori
AMSA JAPAN

Tyara Alifa Kasih Respati
AMSA Indonesia

Yudai Kaneda
AMSA JAPAN

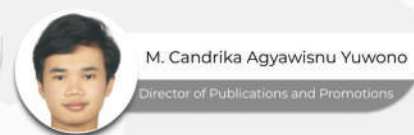**Momoka Yasuda**
AMSA JAPAN

CONTRIBUTORS

ORGANI

Organisational
Structure

M. Mikail A
Overall Chair

Kevin Christian Tjandra
Vice Overall Chairperson Internal

Gunteshwar Singh Brar
General Secretary

INTERNAL DEPARTMENT

INTERMEDIARY

Revina Maharani
Director of Information and Technology

Emir Gibraltar Faisal
Director of Academics

Charens
Director of Membership and Development
(Conference)

Pratyush Kumar
Chief Editor of JAMSA

Florentia Amanda
Chief Editor of eNewsletter

M. Candrika Agyawisnu Yuwono
Director of Publications and Promotions

2022

OGRAM
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Weng Tong Wu (Rainbow)
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Y DEPARTMENT

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Liaison Officer for GO and NGO

Sheng Yew Tan
Director of AMSEP

Maria Nathania Lomento
Liaison Officer for Medical Students
Organisastions

Teresa Wynne Deanita
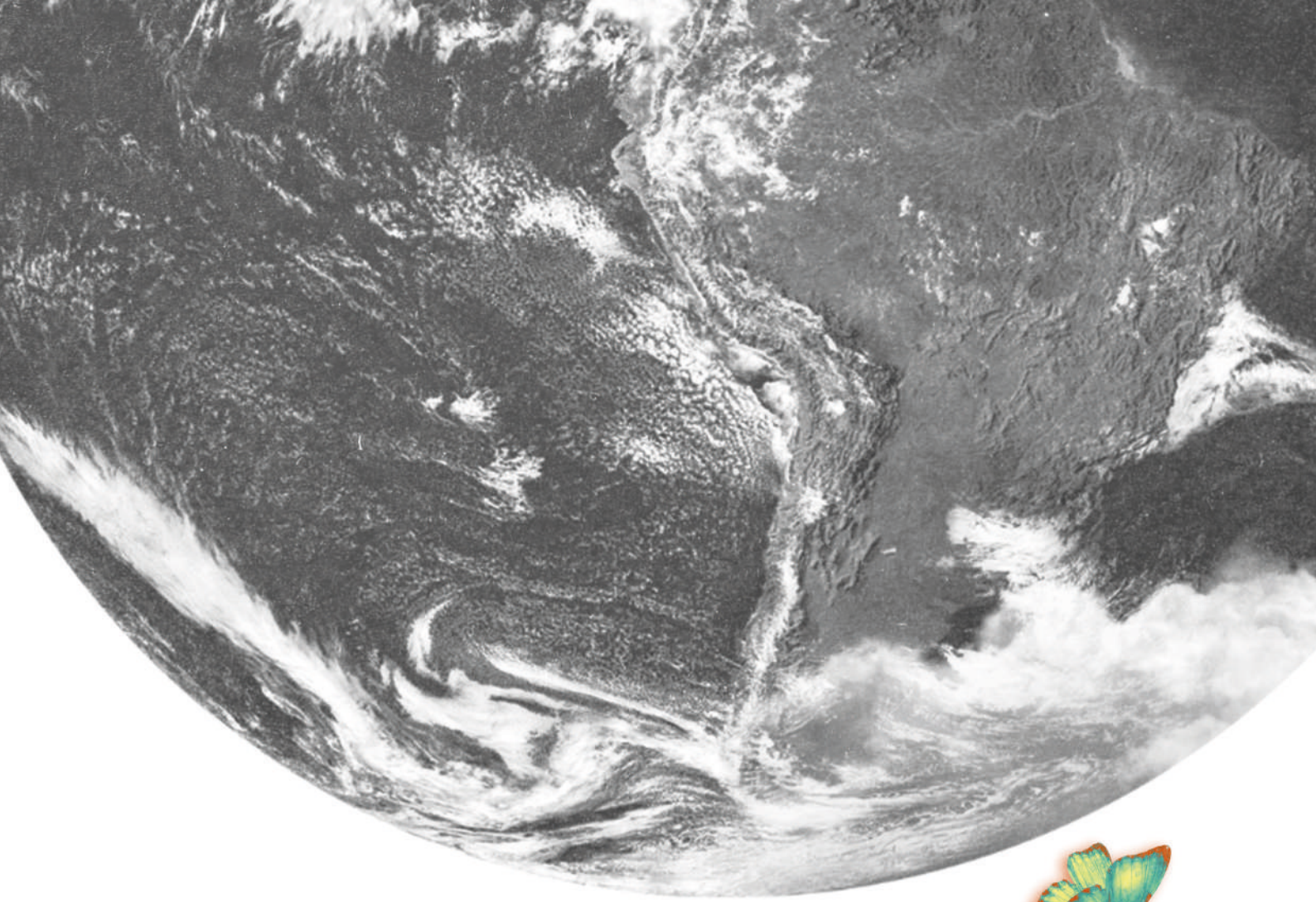Director of Global Health

Febrina Adeline
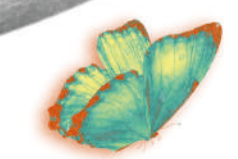Liaison Officer for Non-Medical Students
Organisastions

ternational   @AMSA_Intl

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ACTIVITIES

RISE UP! SOCIAL CAMPAIGN

POST-ACTIVITY REPORT

Written by:
Charlotte Lintang Kinasih
Liaison Officer to Governmental Organisations and
Non-Governmental Organisations (LOGONGO)
AMSA International 2022/2023

AMSA International is thrilled to have the privilege of sending delegates to WHO RC (World Health Organization Regional Committee) Meetings annually. The most recent one, the 75th WHO RC Meeting for SEARO (South-East Asia Region), was held from 5-9 September 2022 in Paro, Bhutan. The delegates representing AMSA International were keen to organize a parallel event in conjunction with the aforementioned meeting, with the aim to showcase the insights they acquired.

This year's WHO RC Meeting for SEARO raises mental health awareness as a major topic of discussion, which drove our decision to adopt this topic as the theme for the event. During the course of this event, the topic of self-harming and suicide prevention is spotlighted, giving rise to the title of our parallel event: **RISE UP!** (Raising Awareness for Self-Harming and Suicide Prevention).

"Be a ***good listener*** for her, she needs a person who can ***listen*** to all her burdens and stories ***without any judgments***, while constantly showing ***empathy***. Give her the ***support*** she needs, reassure her that she is ***not alone***."

— @aliyyanabs

RISE UP! Social Campaign took place mainly on Instagram and spanned over the course of four days from 13 to 16 October 2022. This campaign successfully garnered 183 respondents coming from more than 29 different countries around the globe taking part as volunteers, with 64.5% coming from Indonesia, followed by more than 10% from India. The rest come from Australia, Bangladesh, China, Egypt, England, Hong Kong, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macau, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, and Nepal, among many others.

More than half of the participants were AMSA members, whereas up to one-third were non-AMSA medical students. About 5% were medical or healthcare workers, while more than 4% were non-medical students or workers within the healthcare sector.

To kick-start the campaign, the volunteers had the opportunity to be acquainted with fellow global volunteers as they introduced themselves and got to know each other via the WhatsApp group. On the first day of the campaign, the volunteers shared infographics via their Instagram Story to quiz and educate their viewers about the myths or facts regarding self-harming and suicide. The aim of this activity was to bring awareness and sensitivity as well as shatter the stigma towards the topic, as it is commonly deemed as 'taboo' in many different societal norms and cultures.

Following the first day, the volunteers had the chance to explore and express their thoughts as they are "put in the shoes" of responders and health workers working with people with suicide ideation through "What Would You Do?" case studies. Afterward, information on where and how to offer help when meeting people with self-harming and suicidal tendencies was shared. We witnessed beautiful thoughts that showed great empathy and kindness towards such situations. On the third day, the volunteers were prompted to share what they do to cope with stress and problems to prevent harmful thinking patterns.

To conclude the event, an Instagram Live under the theme "Creating Hope through Action: Your Part in Self-Harming and Suicide Prevention" was held on Saturday, 16 October 2022 as we chat with two esteemed speakers who are experts in their field, namely Prof. Dr. Saroj Prasad Ojha from the Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health at Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital Nepal and Ms. Mahima Gupta from Sisters Living Works, an NGO in India that provides advocation towards suicide prevention.

To complete the experience, the volunteers shared a personal summary of the insights they have acquired during the social campaign. AMSA International is deeply pleased to hear positive feedback from the volunteers, including one of which:

"A lot of new **knowledge** I learned through this campaign. I learned that anyone could be **suffering** from self-harm and dealing with suicidal thoughts. In the time you are reading this text, someone out there in this world is ending **their own life**. I learned how talking about self-harm and suicide is still a very **taboo** thing, ironically in reality, people who suffer from self-harm and suicide ideation mostly need people to **talk** with and someone to **reach for help**."

"Stigmas about how 'people who self-harm are just attention seekers' or people who are dealing with suicidal thoughts are just weak people' are some of many other **negative stigmas** about this. Due to that negative stigma people who are trying to reach out are **silenced**. By joining this campaign I became more aware that in order to end this stigma, we all **need** to **work together**."

❝ *Being more aware, identifying the signs, being more empathetic, and sharing positive insights are some ways we can do to help shatter the stigma!* ❞

— @c.rae.zy_rachel

As Nishant Seth, the moderator of RISE UP!'s Instagram Live said, "Even as individuals, the small efforts you make to take care of your mental health, look out for your friends and family, and make them feel seen and heard, come together to make a big difference. With your efforts, we spark open conversations and shatter the stigma around these pressing issues of suicide and self-harm."

We hope that this social campaign inspired and initiated the volunteers to be more aware of the surroundings, take action in denouncing the stigma against self-harming and suicide, take preventive actions against self-harming and suicide, and raise awareness around mental health topics.

Shatter all stigma, together we fight and win the battle to **RISE UP** towards a better future.
Viva AMSA!

75th WHO Regional Committee Meeting FOR South-East Asia Region

POST-ACTIVITY REPORT

The WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia (WHO RC SEARO) is an annual meeting held by the World Health Organization (WHO) within the purview of the South-East Asia Regional Office. Thanks to the improvement of the global COVID-19 situation, the **75th WHO RC SEARO** is the **first full-fledged** Regional Committee Meeting to be held in a hybrid mode, integrating physical and virtual delegates.

This year, the meeting took place in Paro, Bhutan, from 5 to 9 September 2022. Representatives from **11 of the Region's Member States**, including Bangladesh, Bhutan, North Korea, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Timor-Leste, participated in the Session.

Dasho Dechen Wangmo, the Minister for the Health of Bhutan, was elected as the **Chairperson of the 75th WHO RC SEARO**.

In this year's meeting, the SEARO discussed some notable topics, including South-East Asia's vision for addressing and stressing the importance of **mental health** through **primary care** and **community engagement** in the region.

Furthermore, acceleration plans were discussed within the realms of **non-communicable diseases** (NCDs), **emergency preparedness**, **tuberculosis**, and **cervical cancer**, as well as universal health care (UHC) and health security through more robust primary health care (PHC).

Inaugural Session

Seventy-fifth Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia

5-9 September 2022
Paro, Bhutan

Dr. Poonamh Khetaphral Singh, the WHO South-East Asia Regional Director, emphasised the implementation of eight (8) regional flagship programmes in her opening speech, which include:

(1) Acceleration of maternal, neonatal and under-five mortality reduction.

(2) Elimination of Measles and Rubella by 2023.

(3) Continuation of progression towards universal health care (UHC) with a focus on human resources for health and essential medicines.

(4) Eliminating NCDs and other diseases on the verge of elimination.

(5) Prevention and control of NCDs through multi-sectoral policies and plans, with a focus on "best buys".

(6) Further strengthening of national capacity building for preventing and combating antimicrobial Resistance.

(7) Increase of capacity development in emergency risk management in countries.

(8) Acceleration of efforts to End TB by 2030.

Within the five-days-long meeting, several note-worthy points of information were delivered by the representatives of the Member States, including:

- ✅ **Thailand has shown a great example as it is the only country within the South-East Asia WHO Region to implement an HPV DNA tests on a national level.**

- ✅ **Timor-Leste has launched a comprehensive cervical control programme as well as a screening and treatment centre in 2021.**

- ✅ **Nepal has successfully implemented the HPV vaccine programme with over 99% coverage.**

- ✅ **Maldives and Sri Lanka have successfully maintained the status of rubella eradication in 2021.**

- ✅ **Bhutan, DPR Korea, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste are five countries in Asia that have successfully eliminated measles in 2020.**

- ✅ **Myanmar successfully eradicated trachoma, a preventable disease that causes irreversible blindness, in 2020.**

It is a privilege for AMSA International to be able to send 11 delegates to the meeting, consisting of 10 (ten) virtual and 1 physical delegate representing the three AMSA Chapters: AMSA India, AMSA Indonesia, and AMSA Singapore.

Click **[HERE]** to be acquainted with these delegates! AMSA International is also pleased to announce that a handful of publications via social media have been published, many of which via our Instagram Story.

The recapitulation of the delegates' live reports can be seen on AMSA International's **Instagram** highlight entitled "75 WHO SEARO".

Furthermore, in regard to this opportunity, the delegates representing AMSA International are vigorous in organising a parallel event which addresses the importance of mental health and its awareness.

To learn more about RISE UP!, a social campaign organised to raise awareness of self-harming and suicide prevention among medical students in Asia-Pacific, read this eNewsletter!

AMSA International hopes this opportunity brings great impact, not only to the delegates as individuals but also to the community of AMSA International as it provides the chance to disseminate valuable insights and increase awareness regarding the current global health condition, especially within South-East Asia region.

Viva AMSA!

Written by:
Charlotte Lintang Kinasih
Liaison Officer to Governmental Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations (LOGONGO)
AMSA International 2022/2023

73rd WHO Regional Committee Meeting

FOR Western Pacific Region

POST-ACTIVITY REPORT

Each year, the Western Pacific Region of the World Health Organization holds its annual meeting, namely the **World Health Organization Regional Committee for the Western Pacific** (WHO RC WPRO). The 73rd Session of the WHO RC WPRO is the last WHO Regional Meeting for 2022 which took place from 24 to 28 October 2022 in Manila, Philippines. This meeting is held in a hybrid format where the sessions were convened in person and through the Zoom platform.

Several representatives from the **37 states** and **areas**, such as Cambodia, Japan, Singapore, China, Brunei Darussalam, New Zealand, and the Philippines, as well as the invited guests, attended this event, including AMSA International as the general public viewers.

This meeting was opened by a speech from the Honourable Isaia Vaipuna Taape, Minister of Health of Tuvalu and Vice-Chair of the 72nd Regional Committee outgoing chair. He emphasized the achievements of the agenda items from the last meeting and that achievements are a good sign for the new agenda items.

Subsequently, the Honourable Bounfeng Phoummalaysith, Minister of Health of the Lao People's Democratic Republic was selected as the new Chairperson followed by the selection of the Honourable Dr. Saia Mau Piukala, Minister for Health of Tonga as the Vice-Chairperson.

As the event began, the general director highlighted the five priorities for the next five years, named the **"five Ps"** which consist of:

(1) *Promoting* **health;**

(2) *Providing* **health;**

(3) *Protecting* **health;**

(4) *Powering* **health;**

(5) *Performing for* **health.**
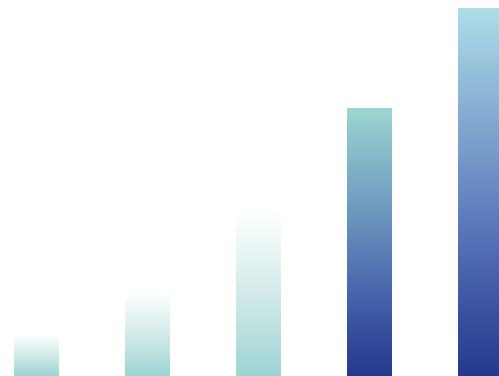
He stated that these priorities are part of the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) and are the targets that will be achieved together.

Furthermore, this meeting discussed a lot of remarkable topics, the **five main health topics** that are discussed are mental health, the prevention, and control of cervical cancer, future primary health care, NCD disease prevention, and control as well as reaching the unreached in the Western Pacific Region.
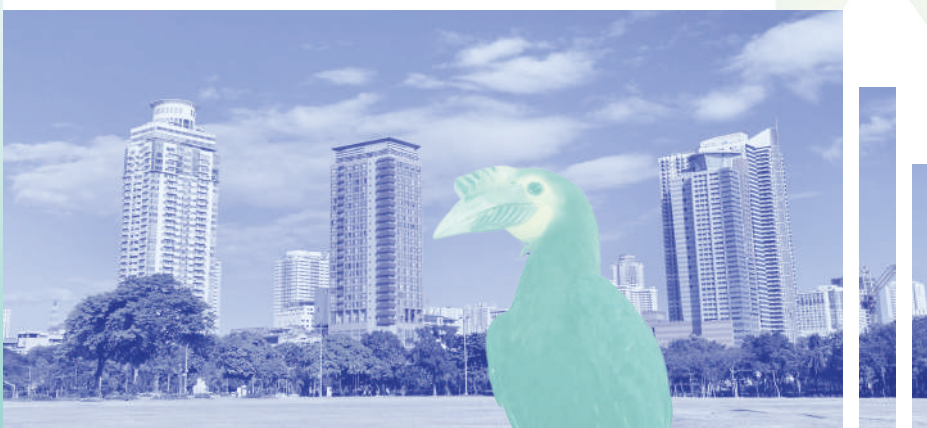
Throughout the five-days-long session, several notable points of information were given by the attendee, those are:

- ✓ **Vanuatu becomes the first country in the Western Pacific Region to eliminate trachoma, an eye bacterial infection that is the worldwide leading cause of blindness.**

- ✓ **Malaysia is leading in Behavioural Insights (BI) intervention as a sustainable response to COVID-19.**

- ✓ **Communication for Health (C4) was established by WHO in the Western Pacific region to improve health outcomes by utilizing strategic communications as a tool for health.**

- ✓ **Leading measures to tackle antimicrobial resistance in the Western Pacific regions are to enhance the capability and monitoring for the detection of AMR, reinforcing the political will and leadership, as well as maintaining funding support to combat AMR.**

In this event, AMSA International is very fortunate to send 12 delegates to attend the meeting virtually, representing AMSA-Indonesia, AMSA India, AMSA Macau, AMSA Australia, and AMSA Hong Kong. The complete list of delegates can be viewed **[HERE]**.
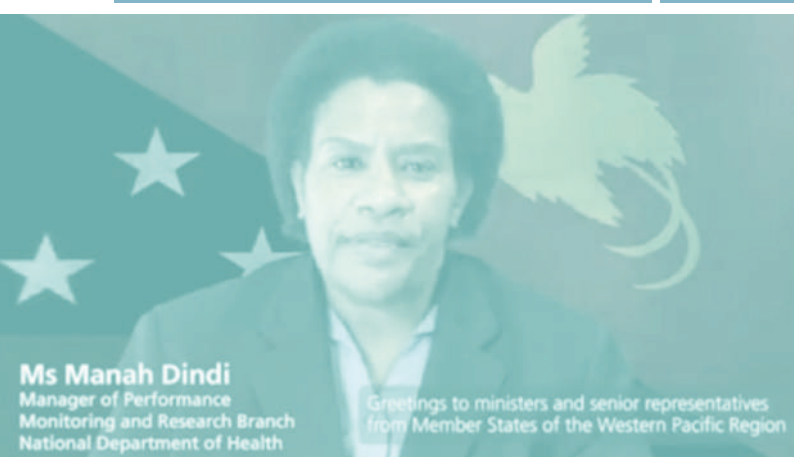
Ms Manah Dindi
Manager of Performance
Monitoring and Research Branch
National Department of Health

Greetings to ministers and senior representatives
from Member States of the Western Pacific Region

In addition, AMSA International is also delighted to announce that we have published several publications regarding this event, mainly through our Instagram Story. The information and recapitulation on this event can be seen on AMSA International's Instagram highlight entitled **"73 WPRO"**.

Moreover, corresponding to this event, the delegates of AMSA International enthusiastically held a parallel event which provided an opportunity for AMSA International members from all chapters to advocate their thoughts regarding **women's health**, **mental health**, and **NCDs**.

Health Advocacy Campaign Competition (HALCYON) also aims to share knowledge acquired from the WHO event. To know more about **HALCYON**, read along this eNewsletter.

We sincerely that this opportunity brings many positive changes for the delegates, as well as all AMSA International members, as this event delivered numerous knowledge that can be used to improve health awareness and outcomes, especially within the **Western Pacific Region**.

Viva AMSA!

Written by:
Tyara Alifa Kasih Respati
Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and Nursing, Universitas Gadjah Mada
Assistant for Publication & Promotion of LOGONGO Subcommittee
AMSA International 2022/2023

Chapter-University

PROFILE

EVENTS

EMSA on People with Disabilities Access to Healthcare

Written by:
Derya Değerli
Dokuz Eylul University Faculty of Medicine
EMSA

The European Medical Students´ Association – *Association Européenne des Étudiants en Médecine* (EMSA) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation, founded in 1990 in Brussels. With more than 130 faculty member organisations established in more than 30 countries, EMSA today represents more than 150.000 medical students all across geographical Europe.

Acting as a forum for high-level advocacy, projects, training, workshops and international meetings, EMSA envisions a united and solidary Europe in which medical students actively promote health and operates in line with its mission to empower medical students to **advocate health** in all policies, excellence in **medical research**, interprofessional **healthcare education**, and the protection of human rights across Europe.

As the only voice of students within the European Medical Organisations, EMSA is recognised by the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the United Nations.

EMSA, which set out to be the voice of European medical students, considers it its duty to advocate for the ideas of its members in line with the overarching vision of the organisation. During the advocacy activities, policy papers with the signature of EMSA serve as a guide to **vocalising** medical students' minds, representing what EMSA believes, thinks and stands for.

One of the issues that EMSA deemed necessary to write a policy report on was **"Persons With Disabilities Access to Healthcare"**. With respect to EMSA's objective of fostering medical students' compassion toward disadvantaged groups in society, the respective policy report stands for the rights of people with disabilities to access healthcare services on an equal basis with others: evaluates the current test given by the world and draws the roadmap for us to develop ourselves globally in this regard[1]. For more detailed information, please visit the EMSA Europe official site and take a look at our policy report.

According to the most recent data shared by WHO, an estimated 1.3 billion people, corresponding to 16% of the global population, experience a significant disability today.
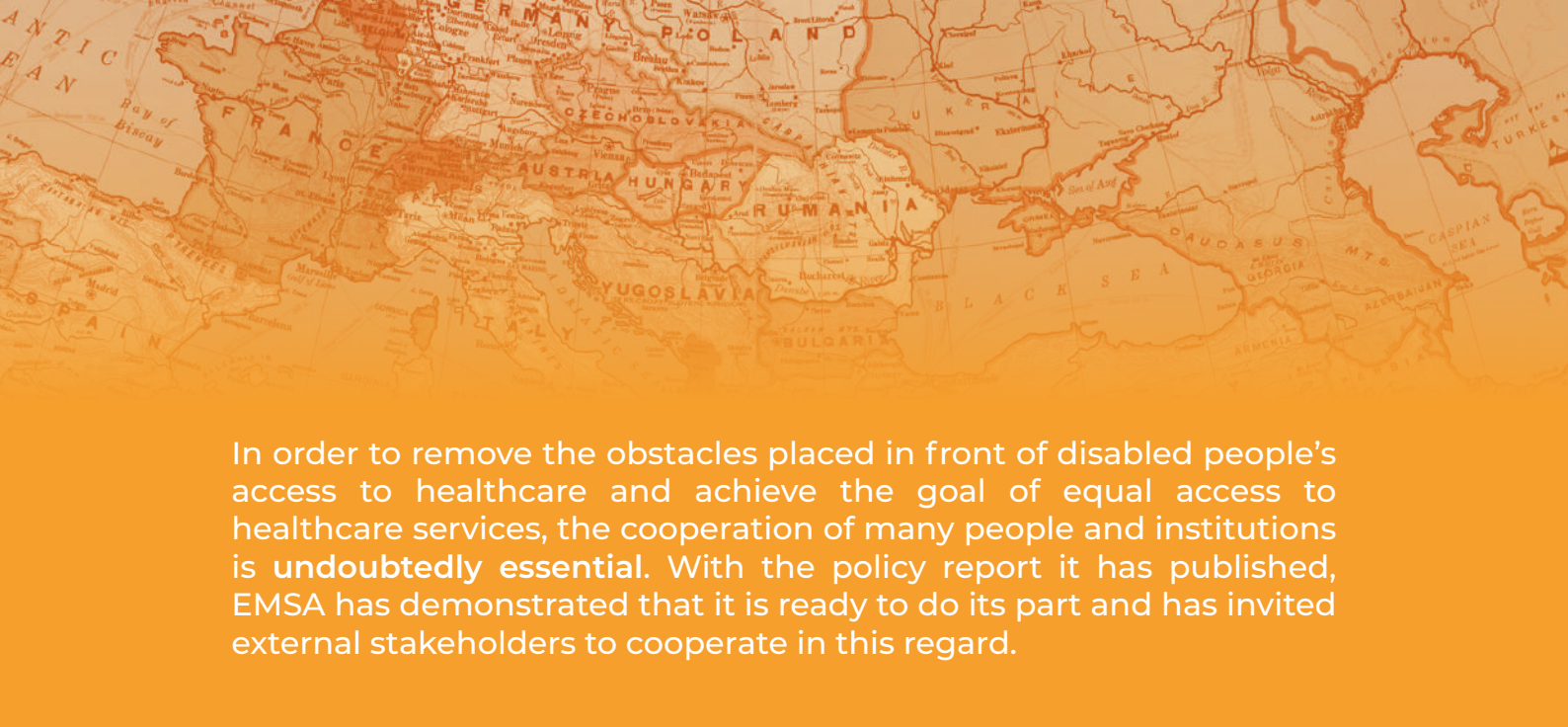
In addition to these high approximations, the number of people with disabilities is dramatically growing due to the increase in non-communicable diseases and extended life expectancy.

People with disabilities are usually **three times more** likely to be denied healthcare, **four times more** likely to be treated badly in the healthcare system, and 50% more likely to suffer catastrophic health expenditures than those without disabilities. Health inequities arise from unfair conditions faced by persons with disabilities, including stigma, discrimination, poverty, exclusion from education and employment, and barriers faced in the health system itself.
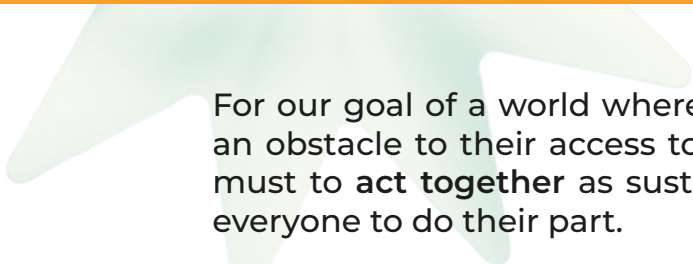
Nevertheless, people with disabilities have twice the risk of developing health conditions such as depression, asthma, diabetes, stroke, obesity or poor oral health. Although not every person with disabilities requires extensive health care, most patients with disabilities require adapted health care[1].

As EMSA, we are aware that the barriers faced by people with disabilities are not caused by their own health conditions, but by the **circumstances disabling them** by not being regulated according to their needs.

Therefore, we, as EMSA, are deeply committed to advocating for quality access to healthcare for everyone, as it is one of our core principles and a key focus of Sustainable Development Goal 3 **"Good Health and Well-Being"**.

In order to remove the obstacles placed in front of disabled people's access to healthcare and achieve the goal of equal access to healthcare services, the cooperation of many people and institutions is **undoubtedly essential**. With the policy report it has published, EMSA has demonstrated that it is ready to do its part and has invited external stakeholders to cooperate in this regard.

For our goal of a world where people's disabilities do not constitute an obstacle to their access to health, EMSA emphasises that it is a must to **act together** as sustainable development requires, inviting everyone to do their part.

With the World Health Organisation and the United Nations at the top of the list, help from many organisations and individuals is kindly requested, some of which are EU member states, national governments, health ministries and other relevant ministries, human rights organisations, NGOs, European Disability Forum and other civil society organisations, European medical faculties and university hospitals, healthcare workforce and healthcare facilities.

As the last but not the least associate, EMSA reminds medical students what they are capable of doing and exhorts them to engage with national and local stakeholders as representatives of youth and healthcare students and raise awareness about the situation regarding people with disabilities access to healthcare amongst medical students[2]. I hope these words can be the beginning of the steps you will take.

References:

[1]   EMSA. Persons with Disabilities Access to Healthcare. 2021. Available from: *https://emsa-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Persons-with-Disabilities-Access-to-Healthcare-Final.pdf*

[2]   WHO. Disability. 2022. Available from: *https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health*

AMSA Singapore
DESCRIPTION

Written by:
Suan Enhui
Lee Kong Chiang School of Medicine (NTU-Imperial)
AMSA-Singapore

Asian Medical Students' Association (AMSA) Singapore is an independent organization that is comprised of medical students from three medical schools in Singapore: NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, NTU Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, and Duke-NUS School of Medicine.

AMSA Singapore strives and hopes to:

(1) Create *meaningful* and *enriching* opportunities for medical students

(2) Provide a *holistic* and global perspective of health-related issues, in doing so inspiring the next generation of young doctors to make a *positive difference* in our society

Endorsed by:

Wang Jia Dong James,
RC AMSA Singapore

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What Does It Take a Better Future?

Jaime Pang

To the youths of today living in such an ever-changing climate, the future is rife with uncertainty and worries. And yet, "it is a time of great danger, but also a time of exhilarating opportunities," quotes Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore, at the opening address of the Nobel Prize Dialogue 2022, co-organized by the Asian Medical Students Association (AMSA) Singapore last September.

Titled "The Future We Want Together," the Nobel Prize Dialogue 2022 was held on 13th September 2022 at the Raffles City Convention Centre, Singapore. At the event, 72 youths passionate about society from the Asia-Pacific region—students, doctors, activists, and more—had the opportunity to take part in discussions with Nobel Prize laureates such as Professor May-Britt Moser (medicine laureate 2014), Professor Paul Romer (economic sciences laureate 2018), Kailash Satyarthi (peace laureate 2014), and Professor Serge Haroche (physics laureate 2012) on how we might face critical issues plaguing the world in the areas of education, climate change, health, and happiness, as well as economic and digital well-being.

The event was organized by the Nobel Prize Outreach and the National University of Singapore's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, in partnership with AMSA Singapore, to provide a platform for inter-generational dialogues between leading experts and the leaders of tomorrow.

to Build

Conversations at the Nobel Prize Dialogue Singapore 2022

"

What would climate justice look like? How can we reduce health and economic inequality? How will digital innovations change the way we learn? How might we aspire towards achieving happiness?

"

After an opening address from Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore, the dialogue kicked off with six panels where laureates, participants, and regional content experts went onstage to debate how we might overcome challenges brought by recent and upcoming developments, such as artificial intelligence implementation and if there is a way to "quantify happiness." Participants also had the chance to participate in virtual discussions on these topics with more Nobel Laureates in July and August.

Speaking to the youths in the audience, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and Indian children's rights activist, Kailash Satyarthi, said,

"*Speak.* No words can be louder and more compelling and honest than the words of young people."
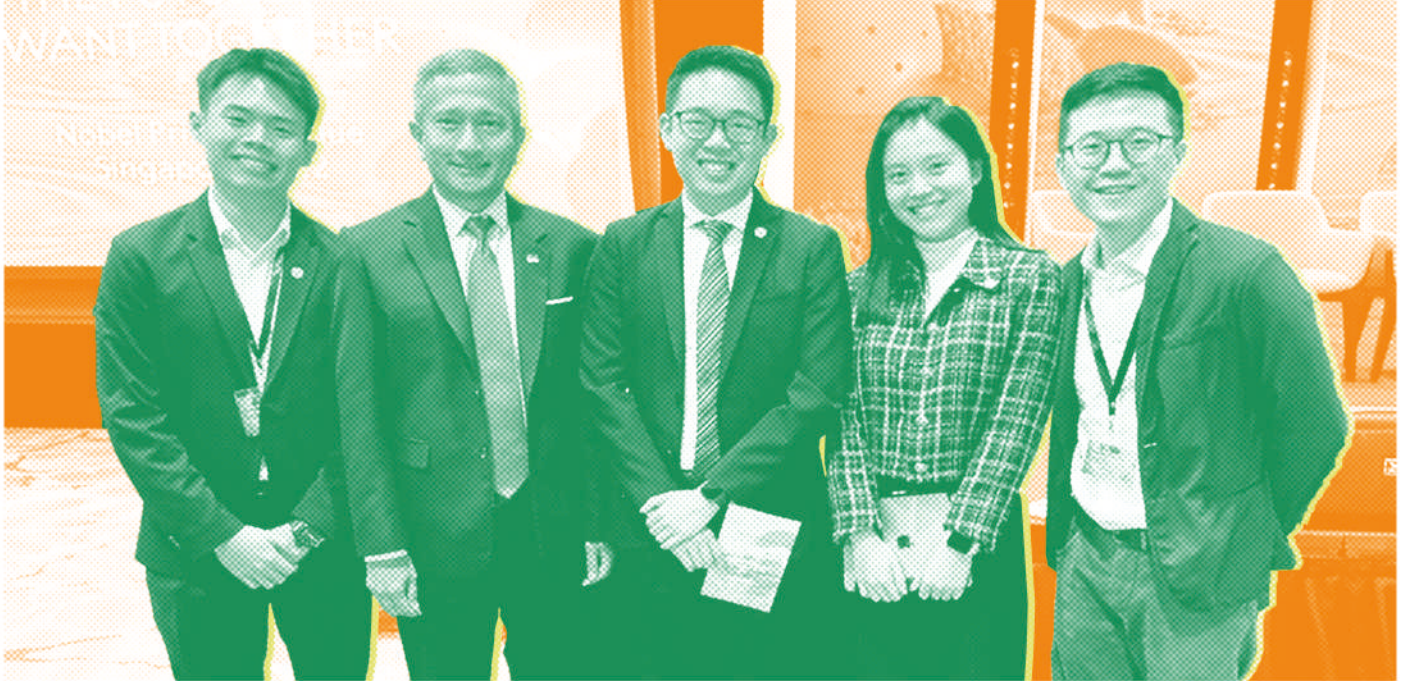
Many speakers took the opportunity to encourage youths to seize opportunities to take charge and represent their generation in helping to build a better future.

As summarized by guest of honour, Dr Balakrishnan, "Platforms like the Nobel Prize Dialogue are important.

"It is an opportunity to share ideas, learn from one another, discover our common humanity, look for global solutions to global problems, find new networks of collaboration. [...] Understand that through collaboration, we can create a better future for the next generation to come."

The day after the dialogue, AMSA Singapore organized a series of networking and bonding activities for international participants at the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine at the National University of Singapore, as well as tours to various attractions around Singapore, such as Gardens by the Bay.

"Being a part of the Nobel Prize Dialogue, I've been able to hear from so many inspiring peers about things that they're thinking about for the long-term future, and I find it really inspiring to be around other people who are so convicted in their morals and values,"
says Angelin, a second-year student at Yale University.

"I'm very happy to be here because I've made so many new friends and got to learn from them, too!"
laughs Cherie, a 17-year-old participant from Singapore.

Endorsed by:

Wang Jia Dong James

Wang Jia Dong James,
RC AMSA Singapore

Written by:
Jaime Pang
Lee Kong Chiang School of Medicine(NTU-Imperial)
AMSA-Singapore

Interested to know more? Find out more about the event and watch the event proceedings at the official Nobel Prize Dialogue website:

https://www.nobelprize.org/events/nobel-prize-dialogue/singapore-2022/

What is AMSA-HK?

Written by:
Lam Ngo Fung
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
AMSA-Hong Kong

What is AMSA-HK? Who are we? The Asian Medical Students' Association-Hong Kong is the first students' organisation jointly run by medical students from both medical schools in Hong Kong; The Chinese University of Hong Kong and The University of Hong Kong. AMSA-HK was founded on 20 February 2003. Since then, we have been promoting local and international medical awareness to a wide range of audiences.

This year, we are home to a stellar class of excos; Charlotte Ma (President), Doris Tai (Vice President, Internal), Yan Yin Yip (Vice President, Regional Chairperson), and Victor Wong (Vice President, NMO President) at the helm of three operational departments (PR, Sec, MAP) and six project departments (ACAD, SCOE, SCOME, SCOPH, SCORA, SCORP). We plan to continue our tradition of serving medical students, both locally and internationally.

Although officially founded and registered in our current form as a student-led organisation on 20 February 2003, our earliest roots stem back to when members attended AMSC 85 in the Philippines. It was as recent as 2001 when Dr Nicholas Fung (CUHK), Dr Samuel Ling (CUHK), Dr Jack Tsang (HKU), Dr Maggie Mok Ming Yee (HKU), and Dr Kelly Chan (HKU) officially made up our founding committee; they attended AMSC 2002.

After that, in hopes of sustaining the ability of others to do the same, the executive committee grew in both universities. Hence, they adopted a mentor-mentee-like structure with year-1 medical students as members and senior medical students as mentors, which was unlike most other student organisations in Hong Kong. Eventually, we were registered on 20 February 2003 as the first interschool medical society; it has opened a channel for communication between the schools.

Being one of the founding members of the Asian Medical Students' Association International, and an associate member of the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations, AMSAHK is the first local liaison to international medical students' associations. As the biggest medical students' association in Hong Kong, we aim not only to unify local medical students from both universities but also to connect medical students around the world through exchanges and conferences while also connecting with the local community through various workshops held.

We ultimately aim to serve all medical students of Hong Kong with professionalism, integrity, and dedication through organising activities and managing programmes to enrich medical knowledge by introducing extracurricular topics and providing a platform for them to contribute to the improvement of medical education.

We hope to see AMSA-HK beyond the university as a bridge between the academic and professional worlds, actively contributing towards public health promotion and policy making, building upon its roots as a platform for international exposure, equipping them with expertise and dedication to serve local and international communities in their career no matter academic research, global exchange, or public health advocacy.

AMSA-HK
Activity Recap!

Written by:
Lam Ngo Fung
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
AMSA-Hong Kong

1 AMSA Hong Kong Standing Committee on Exchange (SCOE)

The "AMSEP Hong Kong x Scotland" exchange was held successfully over the 7th, 8th, 14th, 15th, and 21st of January. This event welcomed fourteen medical students from Indonesia, Hong Kong, and Scotland via Zoom. Highlights of the event include an introduction to "The Importance of Sign Language as a Tool for Communication Between the Hearing and the Deaf" by Ms. Helen and Ms. Yuki from SLCO Community Resources, which included basic teachings on sign language gestures.

Aside from allowing medical students to approach an international health issue, this event fostered friendships between participants through interactive socio-cultural activities. Our participants enjoyed activities such as a virtual tour of Hong Kong and Quizzes revolving around local culture. Furthermore, our executive committee member, Ethan Hurip, contributed greatly to the cultural exchange through his "Cooking with Ethan" section, where he showed his way around the kitchen with local Hong Kong delicacies!
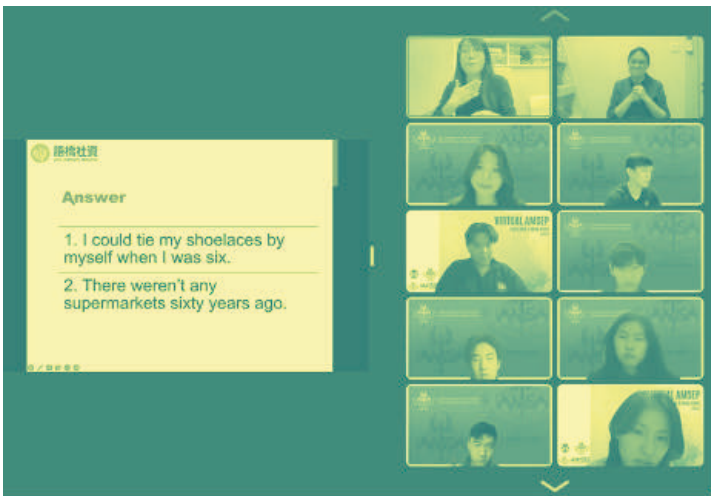
As organisers, it was undoubtedly a delight to see participants engaging in sessions and bonding with their counterparts from different regions. AMSEP is an invaluable opportunity for medical students to broaden their perspectives amid the pandemic. We hope that the friendships our participants have forged will blossom into lifelong bonds and that Ethan continues his new-found passion for lip-reading.

2 *AMSA Hong Kong Standing Committee on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights including HIV & AIDS (SCORA)*

The "AMSAHK SCORA x Sagami Workshop" was held on 9 November 2022. The event was popular and received attention from both The Chinese University of Hong Kong and the University of Hong Kong. However, due to a limit in resources, we could only host thirty-five participants across the two universities. AMSAHK SCORA x Sagami Workshop aimed to educate participants on safe sex and contraceptive usage. In particular, they were introduced to the way condoms are manufactured and assessed.

The highlight of the project was the opportunity to make one's own condom from scratch. However, this proved difficult as many had failed during the drying stage of the manufacturing, puncturing the condom via heat. The competitive nature of our participants took hold when they competed on who could produce the thinnest condom! Overall, this was a highly engaging workshop where participants were able to understand what constitutes a safe condom and the importance of safe sex.

"Breast Cancer Awareness Month" was a three-part campaign on Instagram that covered basic information about breast cancer, including what breast cancer is, its risk factors, symptoms, and resources available for support. As part of the campaign, a beach clean-up on the 23rd of October was designed to raise awareness; participants had to wear pink.

Aside from basic information about breast cancer, we decided to bring attention to less discussed topics, such as breast cancer in men. We also focused on statistics and resources relevant to the Hong Kong population; we felt it increased engagement to our local community, especially on our social media page.

Overall, we were satisfied with both our social media campaign and the beach clean-up, where participants also learnt about protecting the environment and local wildlife first-hand.

3 AMSA Hong Kong Standing Committee on Medical Education (SCOME)

"Breaking The Silence," one of SCOME's annual events in collaboration with Sign Bilingualism and Co-enrollment Community Resources, was successfully conducted over the 22nd, 29th, and 30th of October and 6th of November. A total of four weekly workshops were held for thirty-one pre-clinical year students in Hong Kong.

Breaking The Silence is an interactive event that teaches sign language for future clinical application. It also aims to raise awareness of the trials and tribulations faced by the deaf community, which has helped many generations of participants become more empathetic and compassionate towards their needs.

Aside from learning basic sign language communication, participants also had the opportunity to participate in "Touch My Heart," which was a series of mini-activities including listening to and understanding audio contents that simulated the hearing of auditorily impaired or mute people, a lip-reading challenge, understanding sign language syntax, and many more.

Last but not least, Dr. Wong Chi Tak, the parent of a deaf daughter, delivered a heartfelt sharing of his experience nurturing his deaf daughter and his subsequent journey advocating for the education of the deaf as a medical professional.

All in all, Breaking the Silence was undoubtedly an eye-opening experience that allowed all of us to learn more about the deaf community while providing us with useful skills for our future medical careers. Taking this opportunity, we would also like to express our sincere gratitude to our sign language tutors for giving us such a wonderful experience.

4 *AMSA Hong Kong Standing Committee on Human Rights and Peace (SCORP)*

Two SCORP x SCORA "Comprehensive Sexuality Education" workshops were held on the 17th of October and the 3rd of October. This event welcomed eighty year-11 students from Discovery College.

The "Comprehensive Sexuality Education" workshop aims to sensitise society about the LGBTQIA+ community to ensure that anyone who does not conform to the heteronormative nature of sexuality may live freely without discrimination.

It also aims to help young people gain a positive view of sexuality and provide them with knowledge so they can make healthy decisions about their sex lives.

Sessions were presented in the form of interactive quizzes; both students and teachers had many questions about the pressure in adhering to gender norms and how the daily language used in school can be changed to be more gender inclusive.

As organisers, we were delighted to see that students actively participated in interactive sessions. We realized that there were lots of myths around the topic of sexuality, such as how the LGBTQIA+ community is only increasing due to the rise of social media. It was an incredibly rewarding experience for us and the participants.

The SCORP x SCOPH "Contagion: Control or Compassion?" workshop was held on 19th November at the University of Hong Kong. The event was aimed at local medical students and received great attention. Due to space constraints we only accepted 15 participants. The workshop aimed to increase young people's understanding of policy considerations during disease outbreaks and enhance participants' knowledge of potential conflicts between individual rights and public health policies.

During the event, Dr. Ivan Hung Fan-ngai gave an insightful presentation, the ideas of which could be seen translated into the case study discussion which happened after. To keep the participants engaged, we even had them simulate a news report on a hypothetical outbreak.

The event was enjoyable from the organisers' side. A post event quiz showed that 52.2% of participants self-judged their competency at understanding social distancing measures at 3+/5.

5 AMSA Hong Kong Academic Department (ACAD)

ACAD will participate in the scientific poster and scientific paper competitions at the East Asian Medical Students' Conference (EAMSC) 2023. We are also brainstorming our research in collaboration with Dr. Kendrick Shih, an ophthalmologist from the HKU Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, for the upcoming Asian Medical Students' Conference (AMSC). Our team is excited to continue hosting a series of 4 workshops on empowering medical students through academic research!

Chromawesome: Introducing The Charm of Down Syndrome

Written by:
Muhammad Royyan Pranowo
Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Brawijaya
AMSA Indonesia

"Earth is just a planet without its people."

In this wonderful world where we live, people are born distinctive from each other. Some people came into this world carrying special characteristics. However, the term "special" provoked different responses and a negative stigma.

As simple as not understanding that 'they' exist and/or even bullying them for how they were born in this world shows that many people lack awareness regarding this issue.

Therefore, through the opportunity provided by AMSA-Indonesia in the selection of the Ambassador of Public Health (known as local DoPH), I saw this as a chance to provide a platform for people with special needs, especially Down syndrome, to show their talents.

Hence, my friends and I initiated a campaign called 'Chromawesome'. With this campaign, I hope that this can be a turning point and change the social stigma towards people with Down syndrome.

Here's how our story begins.

To start with, let's get acquainted for a moment with Down syndrome.

This is a genetic disorder due to trisomy on chromosome 21, which reduces the individual's physical and mental condition[1]. The syndrome is experienced by children, especially at birth.

Worldwide, about 1 in every 1000 babies is born with Down syndrome and it is estimated that this number will continue to increase in the future[1,2]. The high number of bullying cases against children with disabilities in various places, such as schools, public places, etc., is a significant problem that must be considered[3]. Here, we believe that behind their chromosome abnormalities that affect their physical and mental condition, they can do awesome things[1,3].

They have talents that can be shown to people, such as singing, fashion, music, and many other skills that maybe we, as ordinary people without any genetic abnormalities, cannot do. The 'Chromawesome' campaign was held on the 1st-13th October 2022 in Malang, Indonesia, coinciding with the location of my local AMSA-university, AMSA-Universitas Brawijaya.
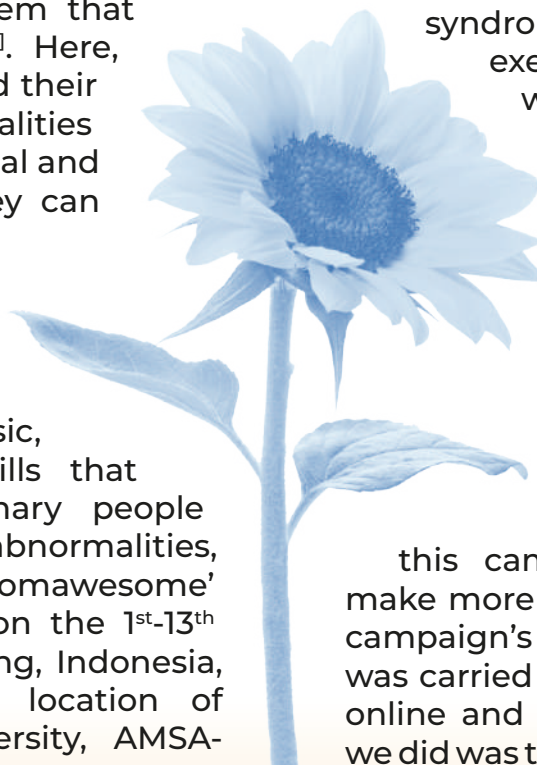
Through this campaign, we carried out various activities such as education through Instagram Live, online quizzes, volunteering class, home visit, and a fashion show of Down syndrome as our main event. In executing Chromawesome, we collaborated with several parties who carried the vision same as our campaign.

They have become part of the campaign process that we carried out by guiding and helping us with ideas and providing platforms to enhance this campaign's exposure and make more people know about the campaign's vision. Chromawesome was carried out with the concept of online and offline. The first project we did was the 'Chroma-Series' in the form of Instagram Live with a total of two episodes to provide education and share the experiences of the Down syndrome community with our audience.

#WithChromawesomeBeingAwesome

Here, we collaborated with ISDI (Ikatan Sindroma Down Indonesia) and POTADS (Persatuan Orang Tua Anak Dengan Down Syndrome) as Indonesia's largest Down syndrome communities. In the first episode, we brought the theme "Sharing with Down Syndrome's Community Founders and Families." There are many insights gained from stories about Down syndrome friends and how the mothers struggled to raise children in this case. In Chroma-Series episode 2, we held a talk show with the theme "Becoming A Good Friend for Down Syndrome".

Mrs. Arie, as the guest speaker for this episode, told us about her journey in accepting and raising Razzan (her child) that was indeed full of twists and turns. The execution of the offline campaign was held with our two main projects, Chroma-Visit and Chroma-Show. Chroma-Visit, which was an opportunity for our team and volunteers to interact with Down syndrome friends, was carried out by visiting directly to the House of Fatima Child Center Malang (a center that helps children with special needs). During our visit, we had fun with Down syndrome friends by doing coloring activities together, then we also had a sharing session with their parents.

Our volunteers also gave our Down syndrome friends gifts and healthy snacks. In Chroma-Show, Down syndrome friends showed their talent in a fashion show by wearing their special outfits. The fashion show was held in a public park on Sunday, so that we can represent the potential of Down syndrome to a broader community and break the negative stigma. Chroma-Show also provided free medical checkups for local people who watched the fashion show to check vital signs and blood sugar. The volunteers were also there to educate people about the importance of Down syndrome awareness.

At last, we saw our Down syndrome friends show their talent, whilst watching the surrounding community gradually come and show some support. It gives great hope for the future of Down syndrome, which was initially underestimated. According to its campaign title, we hope that with 'Chromawesome', we can inspire more people to 'Creating Hope and Harmony for Down Syndrome.'

#WithChromawesomeBeingAwesome

*Find out more about the campaign and watch the event proceedings at the Chromawesome social media (Instagram): @chromawesome_*

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ALTH SSUE

The Importance of Understanding the Challenges Facing the Hearing-Impaired People during the COVID-19

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has drastically changed the healthcare system and people's lifestyles. Many countries have implemented regulations to reduce the spread of the virus, such as wearing masks, social distancing in public spaces, and remote working. However, **people's social isolation and loneliness caused by these countermeasures have been pointed out [1], and hearing-impaired people, an estimated 350,000 people in Japan, have been significantly negatively affected by these countermeasures.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, home medical care for those who need sign language was halted in Japan and wearing face masks made it difficult to read lips and facial expressions, thus preventing adequate guaranteed communication, which has become a problem, especially in the medical field. However, Souza et al. have indicated that the **main obstacles that the hearing-impaired face in accessing health care result from the healthcare providers - lack of training, financial difficulties, and inadequate attention to hearing-impaired patients.**[2]

Given this background, **AMSA-Japan held a workshop on December 11, 2022, to promote a better understanding of hearing-impaired people.** This workshop consisted of two parts: first, a session on experiencing hearing impairment, and second, a presentation by Dr. Ryuji Imagawa, a physician who is also a hearing-impaired person.

In the first session, the participants understood the difficulties of communication for hearing-impaired people by using ZOOM to have conversations in settings such as restaurants and train stations with the volume at 0. After experiencing the

After experiencing the session firsthand, participants commented that they strongly felt the inconvenience and isolation of being hearing-impaired. In the second session, Dr. Imagawa shared from his experience working at a hospital the inconveniences that hearing-impaired people have which they are usually unaware of, such as not being able to hear the pitch of the phone or not being able to notice when a package arrives. He stated that **hearing impairment creates information disparities, creating many inequities in society, including health and medical disparities.** Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, when new information was updated daily on the variant strains or the government's policy changes for countermeasures, hearing-impaired people did not receive enough of such information, making them anxious. **Therefore, Dr. Imagawa says that when he examines patients, he requires them to remove their masks after avoiding direct contact with them by using transparent separation to ensure adequate communication.**

"No one left behind" is one of the goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) expected to be achieved by 2030, but hearing-impaired people have been left behind in the ongoing pandemic. In Japan, although it is not mandatory, there is still societal pressure in public spaces or restaurants where people are urged to wear masks, and most people keep on wearing them. Therefore, considering that there is no telling when the ongoing pandemic will end, **it is crucial to spread activities** such as the one we have conducted this time and **continue to share the message to raise awareness that there are people who suffer from wearing masks, thereby establishing a sustainable society.**

Yudai Kaneda
AMSA-Japan
School of Medicine, Hokkaido University

Momoka Yasuda
AMSA-Japan
School of Medicine, Tsukuba University
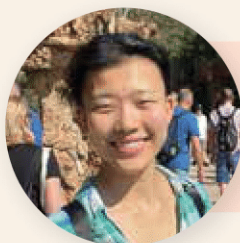
Sonoha Mori
AMSA-Japan
Faculty of Medicine, University of Debrecen

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The Newest Tech Advancement:

Video Modelling, Virtual Reality, and Robots in Supporting People with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Do you know that there's a disease called **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)? The complicated neurological illness known as (ASD) is frequently marked by issues with social interaction and communication**[1]. Some of the characteristics that define autism include repetitive and stereotyped behavior, visual interest, unfavorable response to certain sounds, excessive sniffing, and verbal and non-verbal communication[2]. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are 0.76% ASD cases worldwide, while only about 16% of children worldwide fall into this category[3]. Parent-reported ASD diagnoses in the US were slightly higher on average in 2016 at 2.5%[4]. The Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network (ADDM) reports that between 2000–2002 and 2010–2012, the prevalence of ASD more than doubled in the US[1,5].

Many do not know that these actions reveal their lack of independence in the modern environment, including in terms of personal hygiene, imitation, and cognitive abilities. They require more help from outside sources, such as caretakers[6,7]. **The difficulty that people with ASD experience in communicating, performing Daily Living Skills (DLS), and having poor levels of social and cognitive skills can be alleviated by technological advancements.** ASD is a neurobiological disease that is influenced by environmental and genetic factors that have an impact on the developing brain. Current research is expanding the understanding of probable etiologic factors in ASD, although no explanation has yet been identified due to the paucity of neuropathologic study[1].

Technology is now proposed to be used in assisting these individuals. It is possible to separate the **technologies used to support ASD into two categories: Assistive Technology (AT)**, which tries to assist and support ASD with the challenges individuals confront, and **technology used for learning interventions**[2]. **Robots, virtual worlds, and video modeling-based instructions are some additional helpful and valuable technologies for ASD**[2]. However, as technology advances, it's feasible that more inventions can be employed as ASD-supportive aids. These developments are anticipated to enhance the quality of life for people with ASD.

A. Video Modeling

Based on social learning theory, **most humans learn by watching other people so there are two fundamental processes, namely modeling and imitating.** Modeling becomes a demonstration of social behavior that will be imitated by people who see the demonstration[8]. Therefore, **Video Modeling is a great practice to train social communication, DLS, play skills, and academics for ASD**[2,8].

Video modeling is divided into 4 styles:
a. **Modeling with video** is done by an individual by watching videos from other people that show sub-steps of a certain skill and the individual watching will do what he has watched.
b. **Feedback with video**, carried out by an individual by watching their own recordings while carrying out an activity so that they can discuss their actions which are considered good and bad with a practitioner.
c. **Cue with video**, helps individuals to be able to immediately perform a skill by giving cues.
d. **Computer-aided video teaching**, displaying text, graphics, animation, sound, music, slides, films, and recorded movies in one system[8].

Since kids love watching videos, it has been shown that video modeling is a very effective way to help ASD patients with their social skills. To further motivate kids, gifts can also be offered to make them more eager to learn and apply what they have learned. display[8].

B. Virtual Reality (VR)

Aside from VR being a promising and enticing tool for practicing social skills that are safe for ASD[9], it is also a very useful tool in improving social skills and practicing DLS. It may offer countless social skill contexts that can be utilized to instruct ASD to become more acclimated to and comfortable with different social skill types.

One of the advantages of VR is that people with ASD can engage in a variety of social interactions without feeling excessive anxiety or fear of being rejected. They can also practice social scenarios that are frequently found in everyday events repeatedly. It is hoped that by continuously practicing, people with ASD can draw conclusions about social interactions.

The most crucial element of learning is enjoyment, and it has been demonstrated in a study that people with ASD who use VR to learn to interpret the experience as real life while engaging in enjoyable discussions with the facilitators assigned to them. Studies on VR's effects on people with ASD have shown that after utilising the technology to learn and practice, they get better at making social decisions[10].

It is evident that no tool can be created perfectly, and this is also true for VR. For example, VR cannot be used to assess performance and only can be used for experimental purposes because social behavior is extremely uncommon to be standardized[10].

C. Robots

Robotics-related technological advancements provide numerous prospects for advancement in the diagnosis and treatment of ASD patients. Robots can be employed to carry out interactive activities and support ASD patients' therapy[11,12]. **For people with ASD, robots are utilized as a tool for social engagement** since they can talk, express themselves, maintain social connections, and help people improve social skills[12].
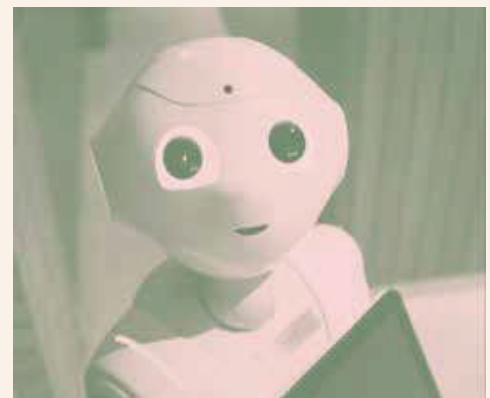
Robots provide several advantages for people with ASD in therapy, such as being **less complex than humans**, which makes it easier for people with ASD to communicate and speeds up contact between the two. Because the **robot can also provide gestures, speech, and touch, this makes the robot more engaging**[12]. Then, the interaction between the robot and ASD may be realized. Additionally, **robots are less frightening than people**, but they are essential for robots that closely resemble humans since they make it simpler for people with ASD to generalize social skills, which will increase the therapeutic advantages[13].

Additionally, robots are employed to assist kids with ASD. The majority of them use technical tools (such as avatars, computers, and robots) as social mediators and report benefits. Few treatments have been made to encourage the ability to recognize and express emotions, and of those that have, the majority have concentrated on emotion recognition. The extension of the skill gained during treatment to naturalistic encounters is also important[14].

Imke Maria Del Rosario Puling
AMSA-Indonesia
Faculty of Medicine, Brawijaya University

Caesar Ramadhan Susanto
AMSA-Indonesia
Faculty of Medicine, Brawijaya University

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Transforming Societies for People with Disabilities:

The Importance of Accessibility and Inclusion

Disability refers to any impairment that affects an individual's physical or mental ability to perform certain tasks or activities. This can include both congenital and acquired disabilities, and can affect people of all ages. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability.

As people age, the risk of developing a disability increases. In fact, elderly people are more likely to depend on others for assistance with activities of daily living due to physical or cognitive impairments. This dependency can be a significant burden on caregivers and can have negative consequences for the health and well-being of the elderly individual.

The **definition of disability has evolved over time** and continues to be a subject of ongoing debate. Traditional definitions of disability have focused on the medical model, which views disability as a result of an individual's impairments or medical conditions. However, It is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that goes beyond an individual's impairments. **The social model of disability acknowledges that societal barriers, such as lack of accessibility and lack of accommodation, play a major role in shaping the experiences of people with disabilities.** By recognizing and addressing these barriers, societies can create a more inclusive and equitable environment for people with disabilities and their families. This will not only benefit people with disabilities but also the society as a whole, by ensuring that people with disabilities can contribute to society and the economy in meaningful ways.

It's important to note that **disability is not only defined by physical or mental condition, it can also be linked to social and cultural factors,** such as poverty, lack of education, and discrimination, which have significant impact on the individual, family, society and country. People with disabilities often have lower incomes, fewer opportunities for education and employment, and less access to healthcare and other services. This leads to a higher risk of poverty, poor health outcomes, and social isolation.
Eliminating inequality is crucial. Societies that are inclusive of people with disabilities are more prosperous, more stable, and have a stronger economic and social fabric. Additionally, inclusive societies are more resilient and better able to adapt to the needs of an aging population and a changing workforce.

Access to healthcare systems for people with disabilities in Thailand is often hindered by physical barriers, lack of transportation, and financial constraints. Furthermore, the social model of disability is not widely adopted in Thailand, which can be seen in the lack of accessibility and inclusivity in many public spaces, such as buildings and transportation.

In order to address the barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing healthcare and other services, **it is important for governments and other stake-holders to develop and implement policies that promote accessibility and inclusivity.** This can include implementing accessibility laws and regulations, creating more inclusive education and employment opportunities, and increasing awareness about the rights of people with disabilities. Additionally, governments should invest in infrastructure and transportation to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in rural areas and provide accessible transportation options. Furthermore, **healthcare providers should be trained to understand the unique needs of people with disabilities and to communicate effectively with them.**

In terms of global health, the World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized the importance of addressing the health needs of people with disabilities and has developed the **"Global Disability Action Plan 2014-2021" which aims to improve health and well-being for people with disabilities and to ensure that they have access to the same opportunities as others.** The plan includes several key areas of action, such as:

• Collecting data and statistics on disability
• Building the capacity of health systems to provide accessible and inclusive services
• Advocating for the rights of people with disabilities
• Promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities in disaster risk reduction and emergency response

Furthermore, addressing the barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing healthcare and other services requires **the development and implementation of policies that promote accessibility and inclusivity which needs of people with disabilities is a global health issue**, and it's important for governments and other stakeholders to work together. **Involving medical students organizations and other youth leaders in leadership and decision-making roles is essential in promoting the rights of people with disabilities.** These groups bring fresh perspectives and new ideas to the table, and their engagement can help to ensure that policies and programs are responsive to the needs of the community.

In recent years, there have been a number of examples of people with disabilities achieving remarkable things, despite the barriers they face. For example, athletes with disabilities have competed in the Paralympic Games, artists with disabilities have created award-winning works of art, and people with disabilities have become successful business leaders and politicians. These examples demonstrate that **people with disabilities are not limited by their impairments but by the barriers that society places on them.**

In conclusion, the belief that people with disabilities are limited in their abilities and capabilities is a misguided one. The social model of disability emphasizes that people with disabilities are not limited by their impairments but by the barriers that society places on them. By recognizing and addressing these barriers, society can create a more inclusive and equitable environment for people with disabilities, where they are able to achieve their goals and aspirations, just like anyone else. However, to make this change we should adapt our way of thinking and start making changes by ourselves. Therefore, the youth can improve their society by their actions, not just by the government.

Peeradon Dutsadeevettakul
AMSA-Thailand
Faculty of Medicine Vajira Hospital
Navamindradhiraj University, Thailand
Wirot University, Thailand

Darin Tangsittitum
AMSA-Thailand
Faculty of Medicine,
Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand

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LeaveHomeSafe
Vaccine Pass System in Hong Kong

On November 16th, 2020, **the Hong Kong government launched the app 'Leave-HomeSafe'; A digital contact tracing app required to be scanned by citizens when entering restaurants, shopping centers, and public facilities.**[1] The policy was soon extended to cover all everyday premises, and on February 24th, 2022, Hong Kong residents were **required to link their Covid-19 vaccination record to the app** and to scan this proof of vaccination before entering almost all public and private venues, effectively turning it into a city-wide vaccine pass.[2]

The contemporary social, legal and ethical deliberations strongly favored the launch of the vaccine pass scheme. At the time of its launch in February 2022, Hong Kong was suffering from its fifth, and most catastrophic, Covid-19 wave.[3] Although the vaccination rate hovered at 78% for those aged above 12, less than a third of the elderly population aged above 80 were vaccinated, resulting in a large proportion of vulnerable individuals remaining highly-susceptible to the virus.[3] The **vaccine pass scheme encouraged citizens to get vaccinated, baring the non-vaccinated from entering public premises**, thereby reducing the risk of transmitting or catching Covid-19 from others.

As might be expected, **implementing a vaccine pass scheme is highly controversial, on both an ethical and practical aspect.** At the very core of the public discourse is the frequently alluded-to dilemma of individual rights versus communal beneficence. In most places, infringement on autonomous freedom by the state can be acceptable under dire circumstances for the safety of the wider population. Such a line of thinking is reflected in day-to-day laws, for instance, mandatory seatbelt laws violate an individual's right to make their own decisions, yet these laws are dubiously welcomed for the mere fact that seatbelt saves lives. Using the same logic, epidemiological control measures that are incongruent with basic rights such as freedom of movement can be justified by the state's overriding imperative to protect and preserve life

From a practical aspect, a particularly notorious controversy is that of data privacy. The government could theoretically track residents' movement around the city, and there were concerns regarding data mishandling and being used for non-medical related purposes. The Hong Kong government dismissed such concerns as unfounded since LeaveHomeSafe records are kept locally on the user's smartphone for 31 days before they are deleted.[4] Nevertheless, even with assurances, public fears were sparked by Singapore's similar TraceTogether app which made data available to the police.[5]

Furthermore, criticisms were leveled at the app's discriminatory handling of vulnerable minority groups. First and foremost, **the homeless, the elderly, or low-income residents may not own a mobile device, and would not be able to scan their vaccine pass** and prove they are vaccinated. The number of residents who belong to this category is not to be scoffed at, government figures estimate that 350,000 citizens over the age of 65 do not have a smartphone, merely illustrating the erroneous feasibility of a digital vaccine pass scheme.[6] The government has proposed alternatives such as allowing those affected to fill out their contact information on a paper form but not all venues provide these forms and many lack adequate staffing present to assist with scanning. With Hong Kong already having the unenviable title of having one of the unequal income distributions in the world, critics felt that the mandatory use of the LeaveHomeSafe app will unequivocally hurt the worst off in society.[7] Even if these minorities had mobile phones, many elderlies, for instance, face difficulties in using the app on their own. **Lastly, it was also discriminatory towards visually impaired individuals as they could not find the scanning code.**[8] The government did release tactile-braille scanning codes for their assistance, but the lack of general support and inclusion for these vulnerable minority groups remained a key issue during the app's commission.

On the 9th of January 2023, LeaveHomeSafe and the vaccine pass were decommissioned in light of the improving pandemic situation in Hong Kong.[9] The legacy of LeaveHomeSafe remains a controversial one, with proponents pointing to the encouragement of vaccination and digital contact tracing as effective pandemic control. However critics fear the temporary erosion of rights, loss of bodily autonomy, and the powers of surveillance, information, and control it gave the government set a dangerous precedent for future policies.

Ultimately, perhaps the jarring disjunction between individual rights and communal beneficence are not entirely antagonistic. For instance, drawing from the acclaimed theory of motivation, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs suggests humans yearn for basic needs such as safety, security, and health first, before pursuing recreation, esteem, and self-actualization.[10] After all, what good is freedom if one is dead? **Safety is an indispensable precondition for freedom, and freedom becomes a meaningless ideal without the necessary conditions for it to thrive.** Therefore, perhaps freedom and safety are two sides of the same coin - the very same coin which society trades in for prospering social existence. From this perspective, **vaccine pass schemes could be seen as an acceptable pandemic control measure.**

Lam Hin Lai (Ivan)
AMSA-Hong Kong
University of Hong Kong,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Orr Wai Ching (Ryan)
AMSA-Hong Kong
University of Hong Kong,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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Let's Tackle the Stigma, *Spread Love Around the World!*

Preambule

According to Goffman (1963), the process of stigmatisation begins with labeling, stereotyping, segregation, and discrimination. Among people with disabilities, these four procedures collectively produce the stigma of disability(7). Due to their relationship with a stigmatised individual, family members, friends, and acquaintances of people with disabilities may be perceived or treated differently by the public(8). Access to participation is sometimes restricted for those with disabilities. **Stigma is the main obstacle keeping persons with disabilities from participating**(3). This might become a concern that needs to be solved.

Do you know about the stigma?

The idea of stigma is essential for comprehending social exclusion. Still, it is insufficient to grasp the bigger picture or to determine what concrete efforts can be made to encourage social inclusion. Stigma is frequently defined as a signal of shame connected to a particular circumstance or quality(1).

People that are stigmatised receive different treatment than other community members. They are frequently ignored, abused, exploited, marginalised, and discriminated against, and constantly made to feel humiliated. It is unjust and blatantly infringes on the human rights of the stigmatised individual or persons. There are three related issues that makeup stigma: the problem of knowledge (ignorance), the problem of attitudes (prejudice), and the problem of behaviour (discrimination)(2). Stereotypes, prejudice, and stigmatisation play a role in the discrimination and exclusion that disabled persons and their families face everywhere they go. The issue of disability is more complex. Around 110–190 million of the 15% of the world's population who have disabilities find it difficult to carry out even basic daily tasks(3).

All people with disabilities could experience stigma, including children. When children with impairments are thought to be a family member's punishment for sinning or consuming forbidden food, the stigma of disability can affect the entire family. Children with disabilities are frequently not reported, which prevents them from being included in official statistics because having a child with a disability carries a stigma. Mothers who have disabled children may come under pressure to abandon them or even kill them (1). Worse than that, families can also stigmatise their relatives with disabilities. The factors that influence the depth of stigma experienced by people with disabilities include impairment type, severity of impairment, and gender. Intellectual impairments are more stigmatised than physical ones, and stigma affects girls and women the most(1).

What are the forms?

People with disabilities have been stigmatised throughout history. In many cultures, disability has been associated with curses, disease, dependence, and helplessness. Disability stigma can play out in several ways, including(4):

a. Social Avoidance - People with disabilities may be excluded from social events or discover that as their condition worsens, their friends may become more distant. Some people might be reluctant to initiate eye contact or strike up a discussion when a person has a visible impairment.

b. Stereotyping - People with disabilities can be considered weak, incapable of taking care of themselves, or incapable of making their own decisions. People with one disability, like a speech impediment, could be assumed to have additional disabilities, such as an intellectual disability, when they don't.

c. Discrimination - Because of erroneous beliefs or preconceived notions about disability, people with disabilities may be excluded from housing, employment, or other opportunities.

d. Condescension - Because of the stigma associated with their perceived helplessness, people with impairments may be indulged in or overprotected.

e. Blaming - People may be accused of manipulating their disabilities to obtain unfair benefits or held responsible for their illnesses.

f. Internalisation - People with disabilities may internalise unfavourable attitudes about their condition and experience embarrassment or humiliation.

g. Violence and Hate Crimes - Victims with disabilities may be the target of hate crimes. Compared to those without disabilities, they have a higher risk of becoming victims of sexual or physical abuse.

Your stigma has a significant effect!

Stigmatisation of people with disabilities has far-reaching effects. Stigma causes persons with disabilities to be treated differently. **It frequently results in their exclusion** from educational and training possibilities, work and livelihood options, health and other public services, and full participation in all parts of society, including decision-making.

Stigma-related discrimination and denial of fundamental rights have severe harmful social and economic effects on girls, boys, women, and men, as well as frequently on their families. As a result, many persons with disabilities—especially girls and women—live in poverty and on the periphery of society. People with disabilities are more susceptible to psychological and physical abuse, including neglect, domestic and sexual abuse, and exploitation, as a result of experiencing stigma and the accompanying emotions of worthlessness and ill health. ILEP (The International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations) investigated the effects of stigma on those with health issues like leprosy. **The four areas where stigma affects people's lives have been recognised include relationships, emotions, thoughts, and behaviour**(5). Each of these realms is connected to the others and exhibits diverse manifestations to varying degrees at various times and settings(6). People with disabilities may feel alone and unworthy due to being stigmatised by family, the community, or both. Even worse, they may self-stigmatise by adopting incorrect societal assumptions and views. Negative common language frequently serves to perpetuate the stigma they face.

Let's Tackle the Stigma!

To protect the human rights of those with disabilities, efforts must be made to lessen and eradicate stigma. A systematic review showed that education interventions have proven significantly successful in reducing the stigma by improving general population awareness and knowledge about people with mental disabilities. The same goes for developmental disabilities and physical disabilities as well (3). The following are examples of reducing the stigma of disabilities (1).

Self-help
By providing advice and assistance to those with disabilities and the parents of disabled children, self-help groups, peer support and training groups, and parent support and training groups combat stigma. They can help debunk misconceptions about disability, such as the notion that they prevent individuals from obtaining a living, and give people with disabilities and their families renewed optimism and self-assurance.

Wider awareness raising
Campaigns to raise awareness of impairments may alter how people view and understand them. Tools for communication and education, including training manuals, posters, documentaries, and T-shirts, were produced as part of the Plan's Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) initiative in Togo. Less abuse and prejudice towards children with disabilities resulted from parents who had previously denied having a child with special needs coming forward to acknowledge their child openly.

Skills training
Initiatives that provide training for those with impairments can combat stigma. In Uganda, young people with disabilities received training through Sightsavers' Connecting the Dots programme, which also worked to change young people's attitudes toward self-stigmatising behaviour. The project tackled harmful societal attitudes in the larger society by showcasing young people's abilities.

Staff training
Disability training for employees in development organisations can assist development practitioners in comprehending the social model of disability and ensuring inclusion becomes a common development practice (mainstreaming). World Vision India observed a definite correlation between the training and awareness-raising it organised for its staff and changes in its motivation to promote disability inclusion in its work.

Closing

Many instances of prejudice and exclusion that are all too common in their daily lives are rooted in stigma. Regardless of that, every people have their strength and weakness. This demonstrates that having a disability does not equate to being incapable and powerless; rather, it means being able to use and concentrate on other still functional senses. Furthermore, it demonstrates to the general public that individuals with and without impairments have various advantages and disadvantages, as well as varying aptitude levels. Fair policies and human rights must be obtained by individuals who are disabled.

Umar Agusta Wijaya
AMSA-Indonesia
University of Jember

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Enhancing Children's Awareness of the Limitations of Their Peers:

Improving Mindset, Attitudes, and Behavior Towards Disability with
Disability Simulation Programs in Elementary School

PRELIMINARY

Disability is a part of being human, almost every people around the world will temporarily or permanently experience disability at some point in their life (1), **and have a broad concept** depending on what conceptual issues will be heralded (2,3,4). If it referred to medical models, it would be the individual incapacities, limitations, and impairments when it is compared to 'normal' people (3,4). This means that the concerned person has a problem in body/mind function or structure that leads to activity limitations and incapability (4,5). Disability can also be interpreted as a limitation to take part in the society on an equal level due to physical and social barriers. **When it referred to social models, the concept of disability is in contrast to the medical models because disability can be seen as the result of society's failure to adapt to others who have limitations** (3,4).

"To be a disabled person does not mean to be discriminated"

Disability represents a system of social restriction in the form of discrimination that is imposed on disabled people. The stereotypes and blindness that the public has toward disabled people make them set aside from society, invisible, and powerless. Good to know that **usually, stereotypes in childhood persist through adulthood.** Children who lack knowledge and awareness about disability can impact their attitudes and behavior toward disabled people (6). This can be the reason why children with disability are less accepted and may experience the challenges of integration into peer relationships at school (7).

Children in elementary school are the right target for enhancing children's awareness towards disabled people because elementary school is a transitional period and a time when children are easily influenced (7), so it will be an effective way to improve children's positive mindset towards people with disabilities.

This is the time for us to translate a thousand words into action. Creating a more inclusive and supportive society can be started by raising children's awareness as the future generation forms a generation that has a changing mentality toward disabled people. **The smallest step we can take is to improve children's mindset and to increase acceptance towards their peers who have limitations through a disability simulation program.**

BODY

Disability simulation program, just like other attitude and behavior influencing programs that are implemented in schools, is a promising way for **children to learn and understand what is like to have a limitation** with the intention of promoting awareness and attitude towards their peers with disability (7,8). During this program, disability simulation stations are built and students will participate in disability activities. In these activities, a small group of students will be watching their peer who is pretending to be disabled while completing tasks without help. **The purpose is to make students experience what it feels like to struggle with tasks when no one is helping** (7).

Once children are aware of the challenges and barriers that their peers with disability face and understand their feelings, **children will be more likely to accept people with disabilities.** With this program, children will realize that some of their stereotypes, attitudes, and behavior toward their peers with disability were invalid based on their experience during the disability simulation programs (9).

CONCLUSION

Disability-simulation programs in elementary school children can bring a promising future for raising society's awareness towards people with disability. Therefore, the idea of enhancing children's awareness of the limitations of their peers by improving their mindset, attitudes, and behavior towards disability with disability simulation programs that have been proposed in this essay is expected to create a younger generation that accepts and supports people with disability.

Sabrina Brigitta Valerie Setiono
AMSA-Indonesia
Sam Ratulangi University

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Disability Awareness; Improving Equal Opportunities in the Society

How's the Advancement of Health Tech could help the disability?

Over the past few decades, we have seen the rapid development of technology in many fields allowing it to become a crucial aspect of everyone's lives. Technological companies are striving for better accessibility for everyone, including those with disabilities, and as a result, countless devices and applications are being developed in order to meet those needs. Accessibility is no longer exclusive to ramps or handlebars in the restroom but includes a broad range of devices such as hearing aids or glasses to cutting-edge software. **This new generation of "assistive" or "rehabilitative" technology has helped people with disabilities compensate for any type of impairment** hence, those with disabilities are able to improve their quality of life by using these types of devices.

A key aspect of assistive technology is to help improve or support people who have developed a disability due to injuries, old age, or diseases. One of the **main goals of this new technology is to assist people with disabilities and compensate for any limitations they have in their daily lives.** These limitations can be many things since the term "disability" includes a wide range of people. Some disabilities can be visible such as losing a limb or becoming paralyzed. However, **there are many types of disabilities that we are not aware of**, such as mental disabilities, learning disabilities, visual disabilities, and hearing disabilities. Thus, one of the challenges that assistive technology must overcome is the ability to compensate for any impairments in these groups of people.

Assistive technology has enabled individuals with disabilities to live a healthier and more independent lifestyle. Nowadays, **not only those with disabilities can work and learn in a typical school environment, but they can also participate in social and community activities.** A great example to illustrate how this technology is applied in a real-life situation is the use of mobile phones and their applications. Those with learning disabilities such as dyslexia who have difficulties with written words can now use voice control to dictate their speech into text or have the text be converted into voice messages instead. Not only is this helpful for those with learning disabilities, but those with visual impairment can also utilize this function to help navigate and socialize with the world.

Another well-known assistive technology is digital assistants such as Siri or Alexa. This allows people with physical disabilities to operate their phones without using any of their limbs. Furthermore, digital assistants can now be operated in any household, which allows users with physical disabilities to navigate their houses much easier and reduce their dependence on others.

Overall, assistive technology can improve the quality of life and promote independence in people with disabilities allowing them to have a healthier and more productive lifestyle. **While technological advancement has helped the disabled, there are still many people who can't access or have difficulties using these technologies, such as those with mental disabilities.** Nevertheless, companies are striving to develop more innovative technology in order to meet the needs of everyone. Ultimately, with faster technological advancements, we look forward to when assistive technology can be utilized every day in our daily lives and can be accessible to everyone, especially those people with various types of disabilities.

Benyapa Wongsaravit
AMSA-Thailand
College of Medicine, Rangsit University

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Breaking Barriers:

The Biopsychosocial Impact of Health Tech on People with Disabilities

Introduction

Persons with disabilities (PWDS) are someone with a physical or mental impairment that has substantial and long-term adverse effects on their ability to conduct daily activities.[1] Biological hurdles include difficulties related to mobility, sensory processing, or cognitive functioning, which is usually the cause of their incapability. The emotional and mental wellbeing of PWDS is lower than the general population, with adults having a 3.7-fold higher incidence of depression. Socially speaking, PWDS may suffer from discrimination, stigma, and social isolation, creating struggles in making friends, finding employment, or participating in community activities. **In other words, PWDS often face barriers to opportunities and are less accepted in society.**[2]

There are over 1 billion people in the world suffering from disabilities, making up 12% of the world's population.[3] In the UK, 1 in 5 working-age adults have at least one disability, and up to 9% of children have some kind of disability.[4] These numbers are growing each year, highlighting the stark challenges faced by current society and future generations.

The latest explosion in health technologies played a pivotal role in improving the Quality of Life of PWDS, from improving mobility to enhancing communication. This article provides **an overview of current health inventions for PWDS, and explores the biopsychosocial benefits of assistive mobility, health monitoring, and communication technologies in tackling normal problems.** Additionally, limitations will be highlighted to identify future research areas.

Assistive Mobility Technologies

The traditional focal point for Assistive Mobility Technologies was to **improve basic gross mobility – to move around independently within a household.** Companies started out with simple canes, ramps and walkers; nowadays, adjustable crutches, stairlifts, and smart canes are widely available on the market.[5] Conveniently integrated with smartphone navigation apps, ultrasound camera sensors work concurrently with vibrational cues, assisting PWDS in navigating and detecting obstacles.[6]
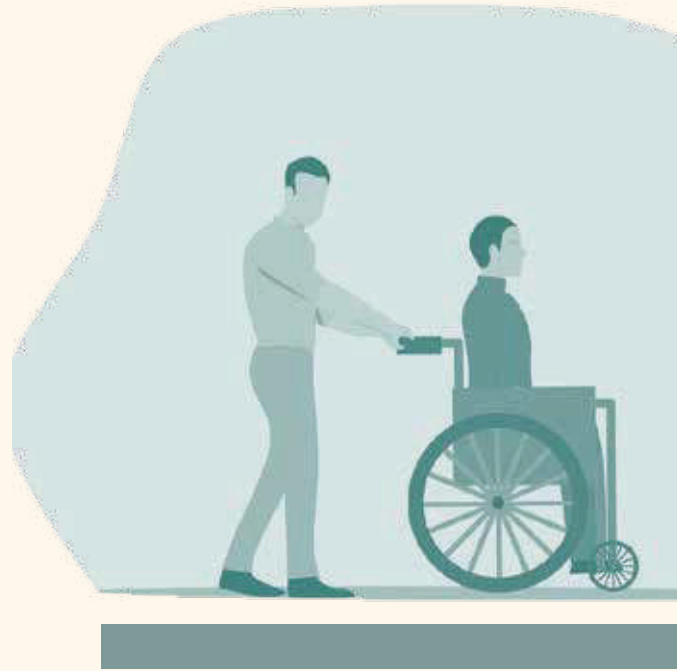
Latest efforts have shifted to improve advanced mobility – to move independently in all environments, including uneven surfaces and steep slopes. Voice-controlled wheelchairs equipped with Artificial Intelligence camera sensors can now navigate staircases.[7] Some even include Brain-Computer Interfaces (BCI) that enable control using brain signals.[8,9] But this is just the beginning of its full potential.

To further integrate PWDS into society, **the topical trend of stair-climbing wheelchairs and mechanical standing devices is slowly being replaced by robotic exoskeletons and powered bionic limbs,** assisting in daily tasks such as getting coffee; this is done mainly by providing additional strength and support using BCI, with meta-analysis showing promising results.[10] In cohesion with smart orthotic devices, which are equipped with sensors that provide feedback and adjustments to the user, PWDS can now conduct natural movements and even prevent falling.[11] In addition, some companies, such as **ReWalk**, even provide post-stroke gait training to facilitate dorsiflexion and plantarflexion, allowing complete flexibility of the human body.[12]

On the other hand, the visual and hearing-impaired can be benefited from wearable gadgets with haptic feedback. For example, Assisted Listening Devices such as **NeoSensory** now provide vibrations or flashing lights to alert the user of sounds in their environment, beneficial in risky and emergency settings.[13]

With respect to holistic care, some companies have taken a step further to improve the psychosocial health of children. For example, **Open Bionics** launched a campaign called 'Turning Disabilities into Superpowers', offering a range of Hero Arm covers for their prosthetic limbs, from Marvel's Iron Man to Disney's Elsa.[14] This encourages adolescents not to hide their disabilities, showcasing their uniqueness and improving self-esteem. Moreover, this breaks the social stigma on amputees and increases acceptability amongst peers.

PWDS usually depend on domestic carers to assist them with cleaning and cooking. **To increase independence, their fine motor skills must also be addressed.** Recently, smart gloves fitted with actuators can assist in grasping, releasing, and manipulating objects, boosting autonomy for people with severe conditions of cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, or spinal cord injuries. A Korean Company, **Neofect**, launched anti-slip gloves that are Bluetooth-enabled, powerful and customisable, perfect for rehabilitating stroke victims.[15]

Challenges and Limitations

Though the technology seems promising, there are still a few significant hurdles. **Firstly, the cost of purchase and maintenance are major deterrents for those living in middle-income households.** A full-body exoskeleton is accessible to the general public for a minimum price of £57000.[16] Consequently, traditional alternatives such as Sip-and-Puff systems are preferred over BCI due to their affordability, with some more than 160 times cheaper.[17]

The training required to master these tools is also defining. Even though device types are the most significant predictor of one's Functional Mobility Score, **an Assisted Technology Professional also plays a substantial role in the provision of devices.**[18] Research shows that difficulty controlling sophisticated myoelectric prostheses can lead to passive use or total rejection, resulting in detrimental effects due to overuse.[19] This undermines the original biological purpose of said technologies.

Lastly, **devices may not fit all body types or sizes.** The comfortness and adjustability are equally as crucial as the technology itself. On top of that, if body shapes cannot be accommodated over time, the repeated switching of machinery will bring unnecessary anxiety and stress, leading to frequent medical consultations, longer adapting periods and an overall decrease in Quality of Life.

Portable Health Monitoring Systems

When we talk about Health Monitoring Systems (HMS), most people instinctively think about **Apple Watch, FitBit** and other commercial watch brands. These wrist HMS are exceedingly helpful in maintaining our overall health, with no exception to PWDS.

Most HMS are passive, static, and confined to a home environment, such as the ones used by the NHS.[20] Though it serves its primary purpose – ensuring the safety of PWDS and facilitating two-way exchanges, **recent technological advancements have adopted an even more active approach.** For example, **Apple Watch** can measure push counts during wheelchair-specific workouts, on top of essential monitoring of ECG, VO2 and fall detection.[21] Not to mention the convenience of using their Siri voice assistant to set exercise reminders and call for emergencies.[22]

Surprisingly, **learning incapabilities can also be treated with portable HMS.** Teaching assistants who support children with disabilities were once described as 'hovering' due to their proximity to the child at all times.[23] Recently, medical researchers have attempted to provide **Just-In-Time Visual Support (JIT)** via a smartwatch to a student with Autism Spectrum Disorder, resulting in improved independence and reduced obstructiveness.[24] By maintaining the naturalness of ongoing social or academic interactions without guardian oversight, wearable technologies increase acceptability and reduce psychosocial stress. JIT communication on Portable HMS will hopefully be utilised for other mental disabilities shortly.

For those with mental health disorders, the newest blow-up on mental health platforms, such as **BetterHelp** and **Panic Relief**, provide **self-help resources that can be easily accessed during panic attacks.** Mood tracking, journaling, and relaxation exercises are also at hand, with regular reminders to ensure usage consistency.[25,26] If further intervention is required, Telepsychiatry is also available at a click.[27]

Challenges & Limitations

Despite its potential, some features still require further improvements. First, concerning the **Apple Watch**, the sensitivity of its wheelchair fall detection system is low.[28] Its push-count estimates are acceptable for personal, self-monitoring purposes but less adequate for accurate measures.[29] Unfortunately, since **Apple** is one of the only commercially available systems that support accessibility, **there are no alternatives for replacement.**

Secondly, **all monitoring technologies present challenges for sensing, perceiving, reasoning, and acting based on real-time monitored data.**[30] It is unclear what real-time data analysis techniques are best suited for each context, and how PWDS should interpret and use the information provided. Unless we have enough JIT support for everyone, further studies are required to perfect our current models to deliver the most accurate and valuable healthcare advice.

Communication Technologies

The issue persistent in all kinds of disabilities is the difficulty in facilitating natural conversations, both verbal and non-verbal. This section sheds light on the advancements in communication technology which allow, or improves interactions.

People with neuromuscular disorders, such as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), cerebral palsy and muscular dystrophy, can only conduct limited movements of their body, from slight head movements to eye gazes.[31] Using a camera to track eye movements, eye-gazing technology allows them to control speech-generating devices using gaze alone.[32] It is perhaps most well-known due to its use by Professor Steven Hawking, allowing him to express complete sentences without lifting a finger.[33]

Assuming that those with hearing and speaking impairments have acquired advanced mobility, **it is still demanding for them to interact normally with others. Hence, this led to the development of smart glasses**, smart hearing aids and translation technologies. Smart glasses have a built-in camera and sensors, helping PWDS to navigate and recognise objects and faces.[34] Smart hearing aids utilise artificial intelligence to adjust to different listening environments automatically, enhancing speech in noisy environments, akin to adaptive noise-cancelling headphones.[35] Sign language translation technology translates speech to sign language or vice versa, assisting people with hearing impairments to communicate more easily with others.[36] All these inventions enhance social inclusion and minimise awkwardness in face-to-face scenarios.

Challenges & Limitations

Despite eye-gazing technology being more affordable, **the expertise and maintenance of these machines are complicated if health deterioration continues.** Steven Hawking was required to switch from eye-gazing technology to those that track cheek muscle tension due to his progressing ALS.[37] So perhaps there is a limit to the assistance of communication technologies.

Conclusion

The list of health technologies is undoubtedly non-exhaustive. It is progressing exponentially, improving affordability, availability, and scalability for the benefit of the world. From breaking mobility barriers to improving psychosocial health, healthcare providers must be aware of its latest evolutions and assist PWDS in accessing them.

However, it is also important to note that **there is no one-size-fits-all solution.** Persons with multiple disabilities may not benefit hugely as most health technologies are targeted to single disabilities. Besides, social stigma cannot be solved merely by inventing new machinery. Currently, 1 in 3 UK citizens still see PWDS as less productive, and the employment gap remains at 29%.[38,39] **Increasing education and investment must both be at the top of our priorities to eradicate discrimination and create equal opportunities.**

Ng Sung Him (Isaac)
AMSA-England
King's College London,
University of London (KCL), MBBS

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INFO GRAP HICS

AUTISM
SPECTRUM
DISORDERS

Charlotte Lintang Kinasih
AMSA-Indonesia
Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and
Nursing, Universitas Gadjah Mada

Abelard Valerian Herryawan
AMSA-Indonesia
Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and
Nursing, Universitas Gadjah Mada

don't

PANIC be

ECSTATIC

for children with autism spectrum disorder.

Autism is a **lifelong developmental disability** which affects how people communicate and interact with the world.

1 in 160 children in South-East Asia is **diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.**

However, there is no recent data of autism prevalence in Indonesia, which shows the severity of neglect from the Government.

Symptoms of autism:

P lays alone.

A bnormal body movements.

N o eye contact.

I nattentive.

C ommunication and social difficulties.

These interventions are advised to treat and care for children with autism:

E arly detection and intervention.

C ontinuous care and support from family and friends.

S ocial skills training.

T reat with pyschopharmacology.

A pplied Behavior Analysis (ABA).

T herapy for speech, language, and cognitive behavior.

I nclusive educational environment.

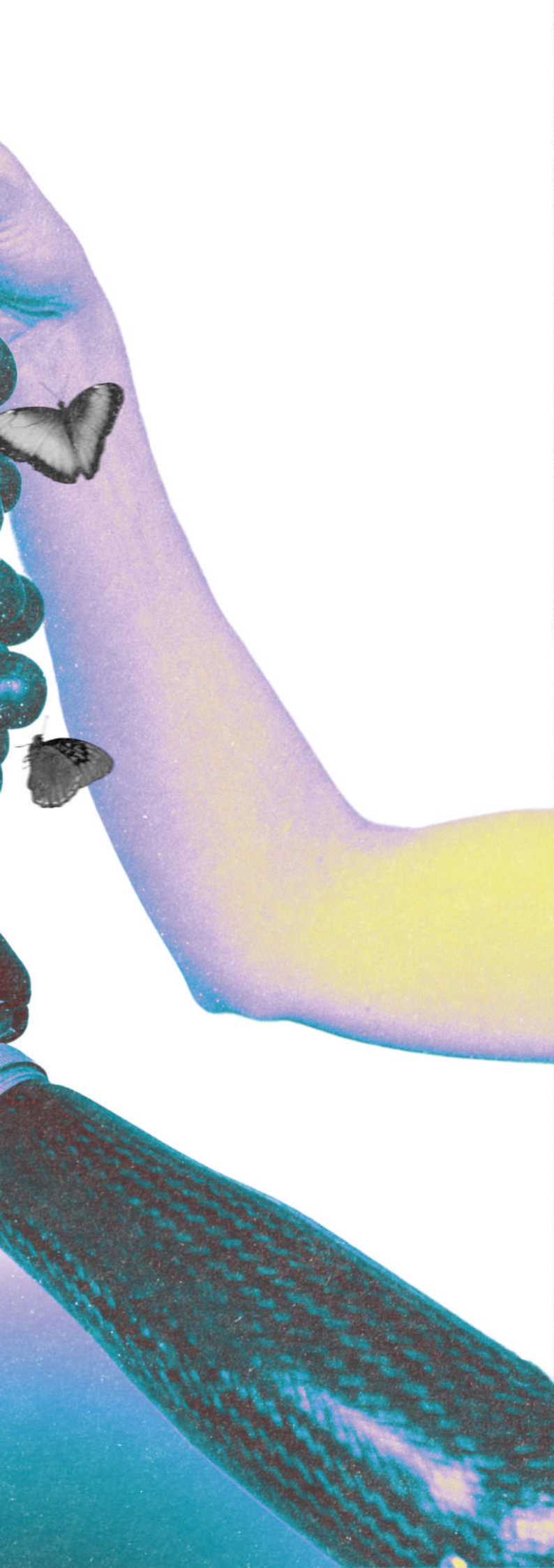**C** omplementary and alternative treatment.

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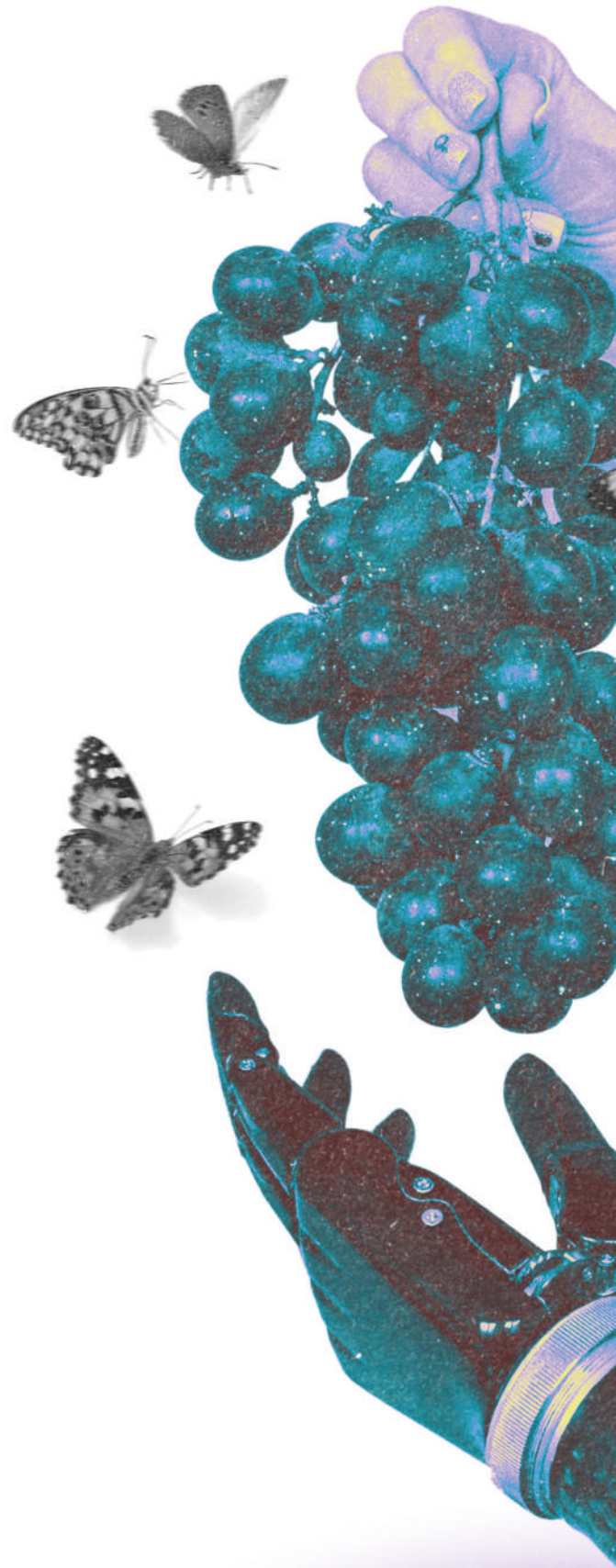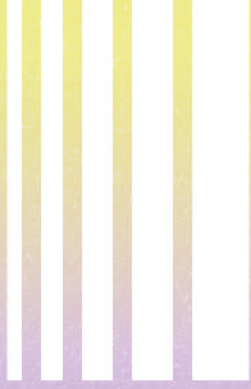
CORNER

Accessible Infrastructure:
Its Importance in Creating Inclusivity for Disabled People

Back in 2019 and 2021, I dislocated my knee and, therefore, needed a full-sized knee brace to protect its recovery. These two points in my life were disheartening, not merely because the mere act of walking itself had been very laborious and demanding, but also by the many amounts of times I was hindered from daily activities, such as moving to a higher floor, as the buildings were poorly facilitated with ramps or elevators. These points in my life hit me with the fact that, as it turns out, the environment I live in has not been very friendly to those who have difficulties in walking, and most importantly, to those who are disabled.

Defects In Our System

In today's modern society, **many of our public spaces are still yet designed without disability taken into account.** One travel blogger, Rob Crossan, wrote on CNN about the London underground where using a wheelchair was horrifyingly difficult. The underground had been constructed in 1863, but yet, more than 150 years later, **wheelchair access was still inadequate in 2017.**[1]

Another example is a common finding in Indonesia, where **sidewalks meant for pedestrians are congested** by electrical poles, flower pots, benches, even fully road-blocked by street food vendors and illegal parking.[2] Sidewalks unwalkable by pedestrians take even a more hazardous toll on blind and visually-impaired pedestrians.

Ensuring Accessible City Infrastructure

Accessible infrastructure should be designed with the needs of disabled people in mind, taking into account physical and sensory impairments. This means ensuring that disability access to public places like streets, sidewalks, and buildings is easy and safe for those with physical disabilities. This could mean having disability-friendly features such as wheelchair ramps and elevators [1], as well as accommodations through Braille or audio beacons [3] to make navigation simpler for people who are blind and visually impaired or deaf and hearing-impaired. Designing infrastructure with disability in mind isn't just a practical matter; it's a powerful statement of inclusion and respect.

One example is the use of **tactile pavings, also known as hazard warning surfaces.** These are yellow ground surfaces paved on sidewalks and are used to assist blind and visually-impaired pedestrians. These textured pavings can be found in road crossings, gradient changes, and curb edges. Although these surfaces may look the same in plain sight, actually, there are several different textures that signify different meanings. Mostly, a change or a stop is indicated by raised domes, while pathways are signified by truncated ridges. Blind and visually-impaired users use their canes or feet to differentiate and sense the types of tactile signals.[4]

Figure above: Universal access in Curitiba, Brazil.

Not only that accessible infrastructure can be beneficial for disabled users, but also for others in need. This is **the basis of a universal design, in which buildings or infrastructure are accessible to everyone, regardless of abilities, disabilities, age, or other characteristics.**[5] For instance, ramps can be utilised by wheelchair users, but also by parents pushing a stroller or seniors who need assistance getting in and out of a building. Investing in disability-friendly infrastructure is not only the right thing to do, but it presents an opportunity for almost everyone to benefit. However, this does not imply one has the right to abuse handicapped parking for their own benefit! This sort of act is not just against the law, but also a burden to those who need it the most.

Navigating through Digital Infrastructure

In this digitally-forward era, **digital infrastructure, such as websites and applications, should also be designed with accessibility in mind.** For instance, it is now possible for visually-impaired individuals to use smartphones thanks to their text-to-speech tools and screen readers. Moreover, it is brilliant that popular mobile apps such as TikTok[6] and Instagram[7] allow automatic closed-captioning on their videos, which is very crucial in providing inclusivity for our hard-to-hear and deaf friends.

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Conclusion

In conclusion, city infrastructure plays a critical role in the lives of disabled people, as it can be the gateway to greater inclusivity and accessibility. By taking into consideration disability when constructing new infrastructure and retrofitting existing infrastructure, we can ensure everyone has access to the world around them. While further research is needed to explore new ways that disability can be appropriately considered in both physical and digital infrastructure, this is a great starting point in creating an equitable and inclusive society for all.

Accessible cities should become the norm, not the exception. We must recognize that while disability isn't always visible, any one of us can suddenly find ourselves in need of assistance to access the world. Everyone deserves to have access to public places, and by making sure our cities are accommodating to people with disabilities we can create an environment where everyone has the same opportunities regardless of their abilities.

Charlotte Lintang Kinasih
AMSA-Indonesia
Faculty of Medicine, Public Health, and Nursing, Universitas Gadjah Mada

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Included, Inclusive:
A Bridge Upon an Inequality Gap

> *Deaf people can do anything hearing people can do except hear*
>
> *- King Jordan*

To me, someone not foreign to an ordinary ecosystem, the word "exclusive" does sound extravagant. Fancy, high, and special. Anyone who dares claim this word in their work must put in more effort than the majority would do, and it takes much effort to bring their work beyond the word "ordinary". We can find **the word "exclusive" referring to something special everywhere**, such as exclusive slots in an event, exclusive TV shows, and even exclusive limited smartphone editions with certain features that people can't find anywhere else.

Why do we rarely hear the word "inclusive"? Generally, we only hear this word as mere adjectives to prove that something is better for being it, just like how campuses brand themselves as inclusive. **Inclusivity means including all types of people, things, or ideas and treating them all fairly and equally.** We are equal. King Jordan, the first deaf president of Gallaudet University in 1988 said, "Deaf people can do anything hearing people can do except hear". As I grow up, I find that building something that is reachable for everyone is harder than building a piece that only certain people could reach.

Learning basic signlanguage can be a way for us to create change. It works like building a bridge upon an inequality gap, breaking a communication barrier. Together, we can contribute to one of the sustainable development goals, namely SDG 10: "Reduced Inequalities". It would be great if basic and medical sign language could be part of a medical education curriculum or as an optional additional course. As healthcare providers, governments, and our surroundings are on their way to repairing this gap by improving supporting services and facilities, **we can personally take action to be part of the change makers.** Together, we can take part to accelerate and support the realization of inclusive health services, making them accessible to everyone. Together, we are capable of creating a better and equal world to live in, not for just humans but also for humanity.

As a medical student, I spend a lot of time at the hospital. **From what I've seen around me, it is still rare to find healthcare providers that provide sign language interpreters.** Patients with hearing disabilities are mostly required to go with their own translator. Technologies do help us in this term, as we can use phones to type as a way to communicate, but we must know that it is an alternative and a direct effective way is still more than needed to surpass this barrier.

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Avilia Ramadhani Avidar
AMSA-Indonesia
Faculty of Medicine, Universitas Airlangga

A Person with *Disability* Should Get Proper Education

Clinical diagnosis and functional development utilize the phrase "special need" to describe people who need assistance to manage a disability. The particular requirements could be psychological, mental, or medical. According to Boer, Pijl, and Minnaert (2011), different countries use different definitions of the syndrome. **Children with special needs have restrictions in their physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. The growth of these kids differs from that of their peers because they face difficulties.** As a result, handling special-needs children requires special care. Most children with physical disabilities do not also have intellectual, emotional, or social disabilities. However, a teenager typically has physical restrictions in addition to academic, emotional, and social ones. It is difficult to determine whether a child has special needs. Thus, a level and frequency of divergence from the norm are required. A child with special needs differs from the model in any way that makes it difficult for them to succeed in social, personal, or academic endeavors.

The position, rights, and obligations of persons with disabilities are the same as those of people without impairments. It is appropriate for people with disabilities to get special treatment as Indonesian citizens to safeguard them from being vulnerable to any monitoring acts, mainly to various human rights violations. Aiming to maximize the respect, promotion, protection, and fulfilment of universal human rights is how this particular treatment is perceived. Social life in Indonesia is still remote to incapacity, and the view of people with disabilities is that they are not typical humans who ought to have the same rights. However, people with disabilities think that individuals with incapacities who depend on others cannot do everything alone.

Education nowadays may be a fundamental right within the esteem of human life. Education is crucial to human life since people carrying out their lives cannot be isolated from education. The usage and development of instructive considerations must adapt to the conditions and social circumstances that exist in society. These cause tests like education that are never wrapped up at any time, as long as there's human life in this world. It is said that education is a portion of human culture and civilization that proceeds to create. It is usually in line with the nature of people who have innovative and imaginative potential. Education does not play a part in making the more youthful era specialists of alter who bring change, but the more youthful era must be able to end up specialists of makers able to make genuine change. **Education must be able to be a supporter, not as it were in terms of formal education but implied education that's able to change the mentality of the nation's children and imaginative instruction that empowers the imagination and controls the nation's children.** The younger era is an agent who can make a critical and noteworthy commitment to implementing applicable sustainable advancement concepts.

Based on the text above, educational objectives will moreover end up the establishment of the government's endeavors to empower the accomplishment of economic advancement objectives and targets within the period of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) until 2030 based on headings from the United Nations Gathering, which was concurred on August 2, 2015. Progressing education for all individuals will provoke the accomplishment of other goals and targets within the 17 SDGs focuses, mainly to extend Indonesia's human improvement record and the quality of education following SDGs point number four.

In addition to the human rights of Indonesians, fulfilling educational rights is also an obligation for the government. The fulfilment of education cannot be underestimated because education is the main thing in today's society. Historical facts, since World War II, which tore apart human civilization, the main agenda that fills the pages of our history is a matter of human rights. This agenda has strengthened after the end of the Cold War. **Human rights, which include the right to education, are the current government's responsibility,** especially after the Reformation.

As we know, people deserve equalization and must be treated similarly, regardless of their physical appearance. Humanising people is an activity that must be carried out by all humans in this world and presently. Opposite to what we envision, numerous individuals put aside others they consider physically defective (impaired) people. Indeed, the government has yet to be able to appreciate people with disabilities or physical anomalies. Availability is the comfort given to people with disabilities to realise the opportunity in perspectives of life and business.

In the world of education, individuals with disabilities themselves are regularly excluded, as seen by the partition of existing schools. For illustration, schools for individuals with disabilities are uncommon. How can individuals with disabilities have equal education when government arrangements have continuously cornered them? **In truth, what individuals with disabilities require is an adjustment to the educational curriculum for themselves and not diverse schools** since this will make them even more isolated in their social life, where they cannot interact with the more extensive community.

The definition of **equal treatment is education suppliers giving accessible facilities and frameworks (comfort, accessibility, usability) for people with disabilities and carrying out learning forms that conform to the conditions and needs of people with disabilities.** Equal or proportionate treatment is related to quality, whereas the facilities, framework, and learning forms must adapt to the conditions and needs of people with disabilities. Equal treatment that ignores the needs of persons with disabilities could be a form of injustice.

The government should truly prepare educational teachers at all levels to completely actualize comprehensive education so that people with disabilities can enter all levels of education concurring with their choice. In addition, agreed policies about education are critically required for people with disabilities. Approach developments that give shares for students from low-income families to appreciate primary and secondary education should be expanded to people with disabilities.

Agung Cendekia Putra Nusantara
AMSA-Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang
Faculty of Medicine,
Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang

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Why Does *Inclusivity* Matter?

As I sat and listened to my instructor deliberate on "diversity and inclusion", curiosity forced me to take a look around the diversity embedded within the very room we all occupied at the point. There was an obvious difference in complexions, personalities, and languages, but we still found a common ground for everyone to interact and learn. Then **how have we convinced ourselves that a similar compromise cannot be rendered to those that need it the most? The "Disabled"!**

The longstanding saying of "disability is not inability" cannot be said any better. The deaf only struggles with his sense of hearing but his hands could be as blessed and talented as that of anyone else. The crippled might find it impossible to break track field records but have we tried involving them in matters of intellectual participation? See, **it is not enough to just fight against outright discrimination against the disabled; rather, we should fight even harder against the mental pictures that have been painted regarding the capabilities of these people.** We do not give them a sense of belonging by pretending they are not disabled; rather, we uplift their sense of belonging by realising their specific physical limitations and giving them room to display their abilities in other areas.

Have I forgotten about the roles that governments and policy makers need to play? Of course not. An educational system that fails to cater for the hard of hearing and the hard of seeing has failed in its duties to ensure inclusivity. We don't promote inclusivity by using the word numerous times in speeches; there is rather a need to make earnest efforts in ensuring its existence in our daily lives. And the African continent especially needs to have this reminder painted on walls and the front pages of newspapers. A policy that only considers the fully endowed human in terms of physicality has failed the very purpose of existence and infringed on the rights of many other humans.

We must be intentional and holistic about not side-lining our disabled fellows. To the dark-skinned boy who sees with all his senses except his eyes, refuses to be limited by the mentalities of those who cannot see the bigger picture. To the mother of five who struggles to bathe her children, let your intellectuality raise Africa's future legends for your brain hasn't come with a disability. And to the rest of us who seem to have it all, be intentional about easing life for the next person for indeed, it is a better world when we all become better humans ourselves. **Disability has never been and will never be inability.**

Fatoumata Sarjo
FAMSA
University of The Gambia
Medical Students' Association (UniGaMSA)

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CORNEI
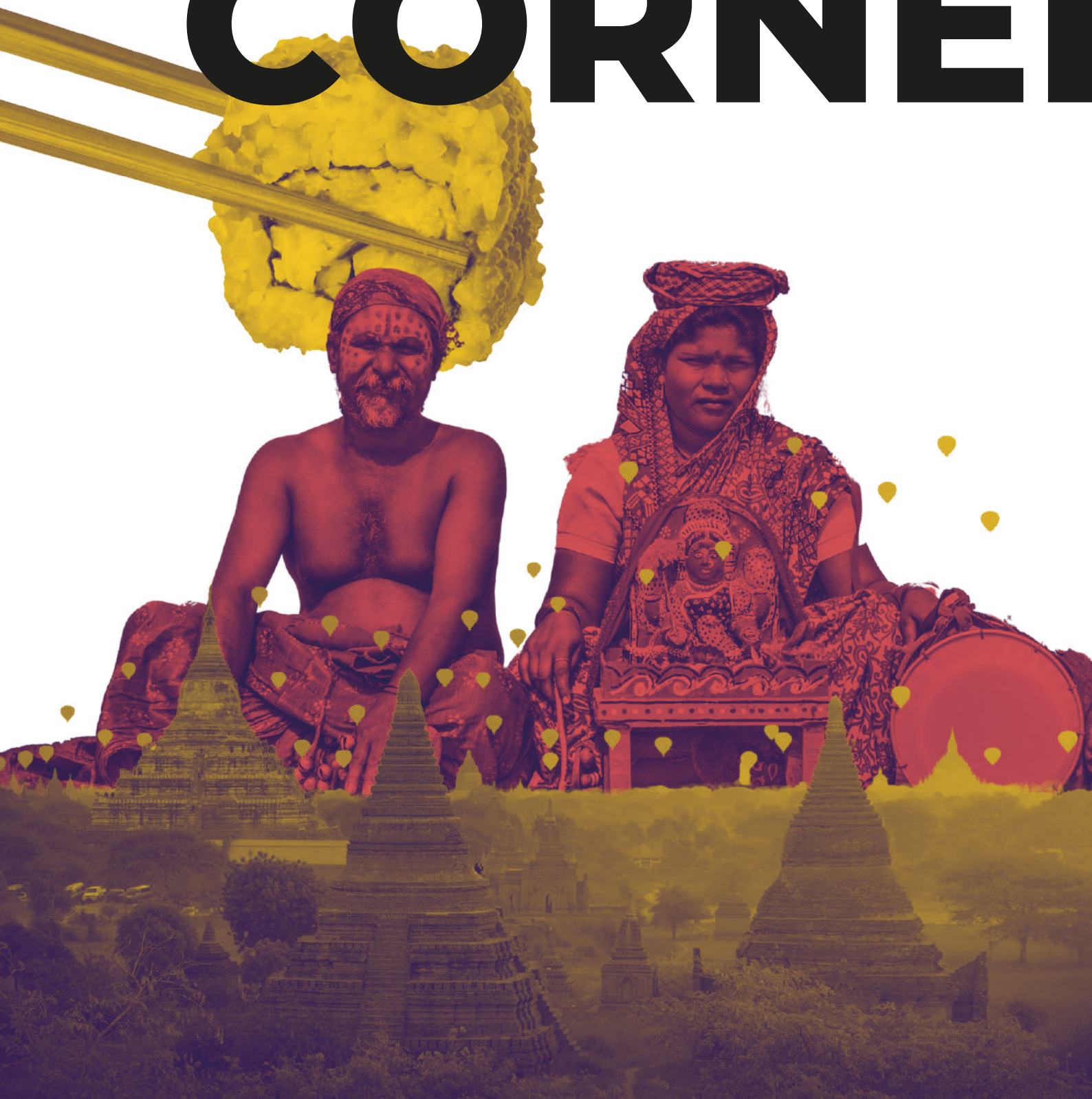
THE SUNRISE OF J

Thus the morning had come. The sun has once again roared through the sky. Delivering its warmth and beauty to this dry and cold barren land, where all the mysteries lie between its trees and stones. The chant from the morning bird standing on my window cut out my string into the dream world. I am awake, but at what cost? Just to see another dream that I'm going through. The dream that felt like reality. The dream that i have to live everyday for eternity. The dream that I enjoy with burden. The dream of reality. Cursed in this unholy wonderful land.

This land was claimed by the Blambangan Kingdom for a long time. The land was drenched with tears and blood from the fallen warrior. The screaming of war drums stuffing the air with the horrible wail of wounded people. The cry permeated deep into the land. Yet for

JAVA

"Sun rises from the horizon, strikes its beam through my window."

that long time, there was not only war and fight. The people here grew and bloomed with ostentatious, hundred years of artwork and culture that flourished. Extravagant colour of culture and tradition of the people make you reconsider yourself that you are standing in the land of the cursed, land of mistakes.

Banyuwangi. The easternmost part of Java, held so many beautiful yet sacred places that you'll never see before. From its driest land here in Savana Bekol of Baluran National Park, dive deep into the magic of the coral reef of Bangsring, the magnificent blue fire of Kawah Ijen, the glorious waves of Plengkung, and go to the mysterious forest of Alas Purwo.

Nature really is playing with the people inside it. The people of the land nourish their mainland with so much grandiose folklore that also lives inside the people itself.and the eccentric culture of Bali. The Gandrung

Dance with its enchanting work of movement that can make the other madly in love with the dancer just with a single blink of an eye. Just don't forget to bring all of your wishes for the Kebo-Keboan Culture which celebrates the harvest season. And yes, Seblang. The mystical tradition that only the chosen people can lead the ceremony. They are chosen by the dead, the spirits that live amongst the living, the spirit of the ancestor. The chosen one then dances in a trance state, leaving her body used by the ancestor.

Seblang lives within two people, Olehsari people and Bakungan people. These two traditions came in two different ways. The Olehsari one gave its crown to the virgin girl, but the Bakungan was danced by the old woman. Seblang Olehsari came with greenish ornament and looked more naturally dressed, but the Seblang Bakungan dressed with a more colourful splash of white, yellow, red, and orange. That so many cultures may make you dumbfounded, so just hold my hand, we have to see the precious nature here. Come. Let me bring you to the hottest place here first. Standing at a remarkable 2.769 metres above sea level, this is the most known volcano in Indonesia by its enchanting beauty. At night, this volcano spews stunning yet calamitous cerulean flame from its ground, dancing for some of the destructive dance in the world.

Our peak is so charismatic, but the mystery lies within the woods. At Alas Purwo which plainly means forest of the beginning, the forest is so magical, attracting the livings who look upon. But beware, this inviting call may come from the mysteries within.
Not far from here, but also here lies the famous beach of Plengkung Beach. This beach got the fame from its mighty wave that travels to the shore.

Meet the Great National Park of Baluran, that have so many biomes crushed into one place, the torrid land of the dry forest, the charm of the tropical evergreen, the vast land of savanna that you can see so many living creature roams to relax and ruminate, and the mangrove beaches with myriad of alluring seashells that will unwind all the stressful hustle from everyday life.

The calm wind may not be for your kin, then the joyful crisp of cold yet joyful sea may be the one for you to see. Bangsring underwater held so many enticing vibrant life of neritic sea creatures. Corals, algae, and unique friendly sharks are spying on you all with their warm welcoming embrace.

The audacity of those who came to this land is exchanged by the unholy curse of mother nature. The people may not be back to their own homeland. The people will always seek beauty here in the land. And the people will not see another beauty for the rest of their lives.Because the people who come here are just cursed by the iniquitous curse.

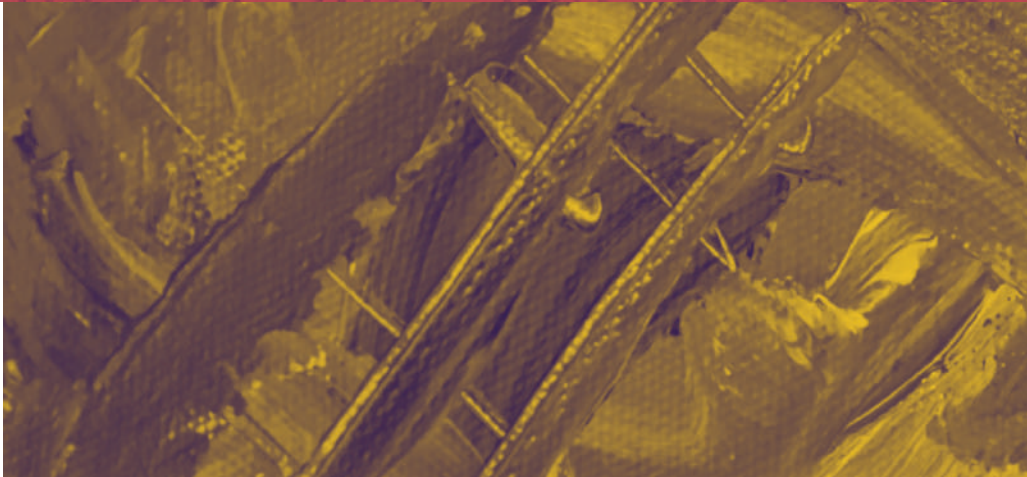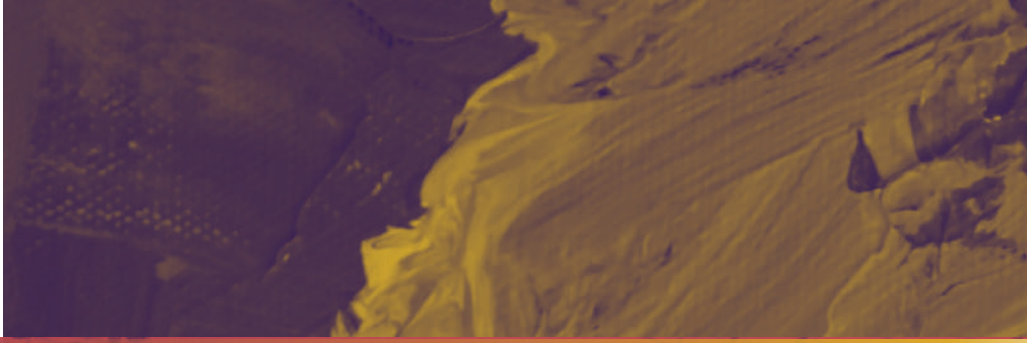## "The curse of falling in love with the land of Banyuwangi."

Attha Ghaly Ridho Ananda
AMSA-Indonesia
Faculty of Medicine, Jember University

" Sahaja Yoga " Meditation As A Hobby?

Did you know that one of the largest causes of disability worldwide is mental illness? According to 'The Lancet', almost 15 percent of years of life is lost to mental disorders based on the Global Burden of Disease study [1]. In addition to its impact on one's life, mental illness also has a significant economic cost. Based on Bloom and colleagues, the value of losses due to mental disorders was approximately 1.3 trillion United States dollars (USD) in 2010. However, the losses are projected to grow to almost 3 trillion USD by 2030. As doctors-in-training, we are also not free from the problem of mental illness. Based on a study, doctors are at a greater risk of suicide compared to the public and most other professional people. From this data, it is clear that mental illness is a matter which should be taken seriously and addressed with a proper coping mechanism instead of just being brushed aside without much concideration. Hence, hobbies which are usually done regularly for enjoyment during one's free time have a role to play in maintaining one's mental health at an optimal level. Therefore, this article will discuss about Sahaja Yoga meditation so that it can be considered as a potential hobby.

Sahaja Yoga meditation, an easy and simple form of meditation, was started in 1970. It was founded by Dr. Nirmala Srivastava also known as Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. 'Sahaja Yoga' means 'spontaneous union' in Sanskrit. This spontaneous union is described as the union of the individual consciousness with the all-pervading divine power through awakening of the inner spiritual energy known as 'Kundalini' which lies dormant within all human beings. Currently, it is practiced in many countries all over the world by people of different age, race, and background.

Since its inception, Sahaja Yoga is offered free-of-charge to anyone who is interested to learn about it. Furthermore, prior knowledge in the field (e.g., meditation, yoga, etc.) is not needed to learn Sahaja Yoga as it only requires one to desire to learn it. This is because although Sahaja Yoga is offered for free to the public, an individual must be interested to learn it as an individual's freedom is respected. Hence, Sahaja Yoga is never forced on anyone but the progress in Sahaja Yoga is driven by an individual's own desire to ascend.

Sahaja Yoga meditation has the potential to bring about many benefits and some benefits have scientific evidence to support them. The first benefit of Sahaja Yoga meditation is that one's physical health can improve. Through scientific studies, there was some exploration on its impact on asthma and blood pressure. Based on a study involving asthma patients who remained symptomatic even with treatment through moderate to high dose inhaled steroids for at least 6 weeks, Sahaja Yoga intervention improved some components of the Asthma Quality of Life Questionnaire (AQLQ).

On the other hand, compared to conventional treatment, another study also revealed that Sahaja Yoga meditation was linked with a larger decrease in diastolic blood pressure. This decline was more in patients with both hypertension and type 2 diabetes and the estimated reduction of diastolic blood pressure in this group was up to 12 mmHg.

Improvement in mental health is the second benefit of Sahaja Yoga meditation. This benefit was explored more in the article on Sahaja Yoga meditation in one of the previous versions of AMSA International's eNewsletter (ASPIRE #36 [page 68 to page 71]). The third benefit of Sahaja Yoga meditation is emotional balance . Through emotional balance, one can respond more appropriately to each situation faced in daily life. Improvement in emotional behaviour through Sahaja Yoga was also demonstrated in another study involving college students where increased pro-social behaviour was observed along with decreased hyperactivity, decreased emotional problem, decreased conduct problem, decreased peer relationship problem, and decreased total difficulty.
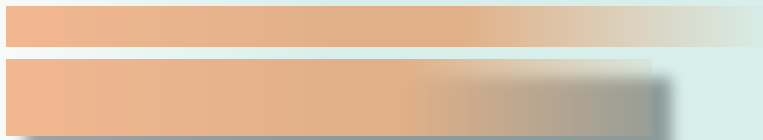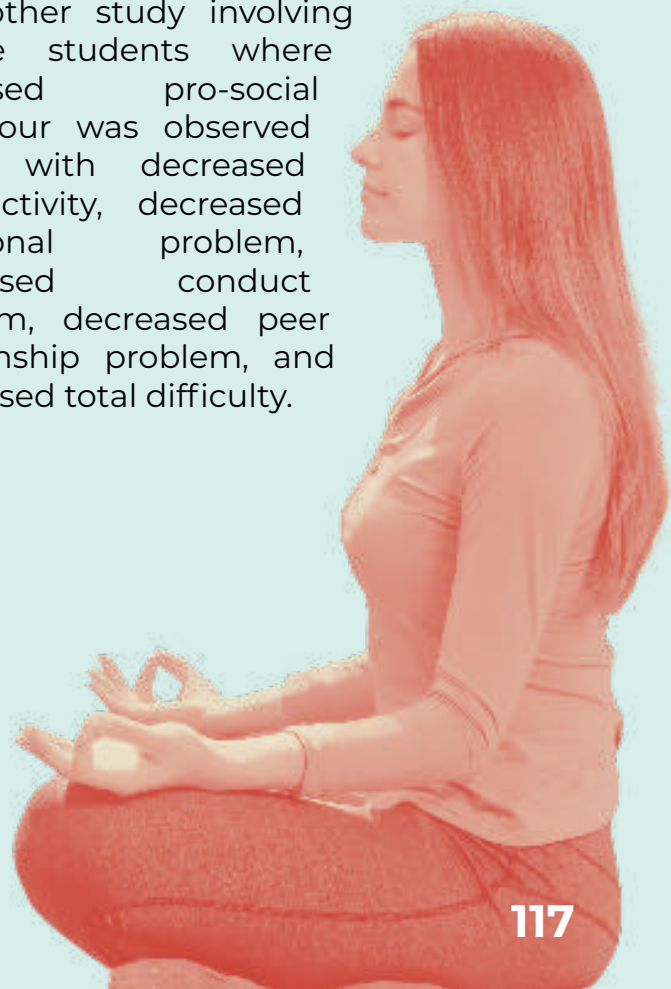
Other than health benefits, another study also demonstrated that Sahaja Yoga meditation is linked to positive character development through acquisition of character strengths such as gratitude, forgiveness, self-regulation and teamwork. Furthermore, the 'teamwork' strength is endorsed more among Sahaja Yoga practitioners. This could be due to Sahaja Yoga's emphasis on collective meditation (i.e. meditating and achieving one's spiritual evolution in the context of a collective of Sahaja Yoga practitioners).
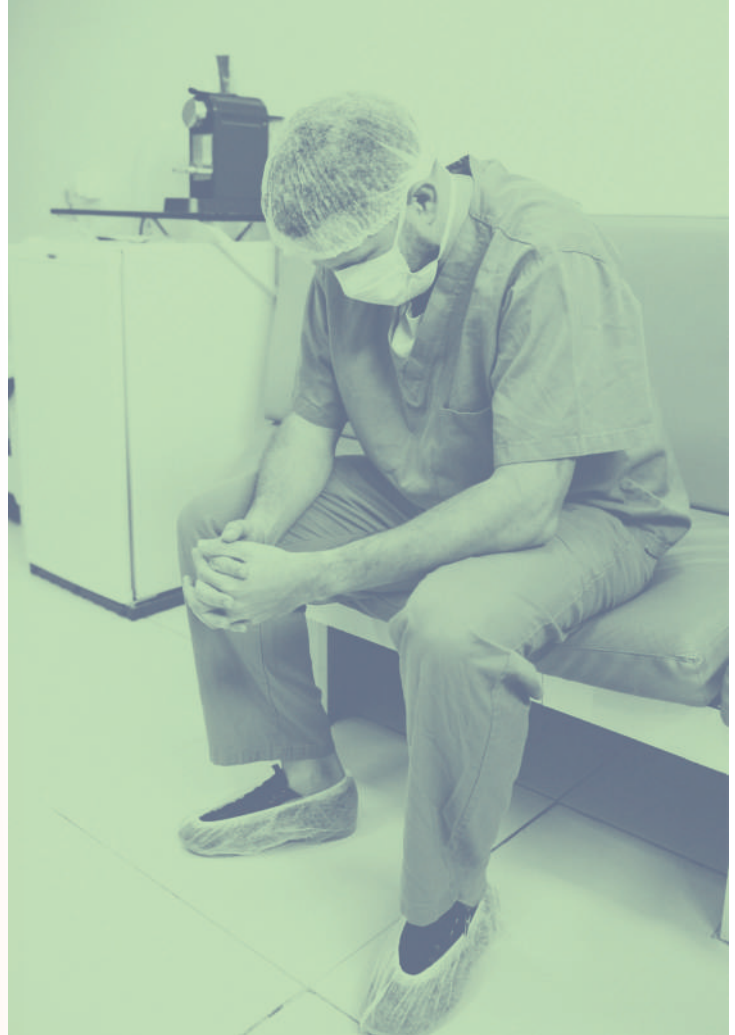
In conclusion, disability due to mental disorders is an issue that should not be taken lightly. Every person regardless of age, background and line of work should find a method that works best for them to maintain an optimal level of mental health. If one is interested to learn Sahaja Yoga meditation, one can also do so through suitable online platforms such as the 'Free Meditation Worldwide' Youtube channel (@FreeMeditationWorldwide).

WRITTEN BY:

Kayshev Varman Surendren

AMSA-Malaysia
School of Medicine, International Medical

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CRE
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ATIVE
RNER

DISABILITY

ILLUSTRATION

"People with disabilities can do anything without having to be excessively helped and pitied. Treat them like normal people. They can chase their dreams, they can achieve their dreams like us. With this artwork, I hope that in the future, we and the society can treat them like ordinary people."

Sabrina Setiono
AMSA-Indonesia
Faculty of Medicine, Sam Ratulangi University

AMOR

POETRY

I came inside thee
Through thy seclusion cells
I wandered,
and found forlornness inside thee.

I've already had my somber mood,
before coming into thee.
Just by discerning thy warmth,
the warmth that ceased to exist,
I became blue.

Thy evanescence runs through my bloodstream
Shalt I tell thee that thy moon is going to halt?
Shalt I tell thee that thy stars tonight have been trimmed?

I mourned my solecism
and confessed my faux pas to thee.
Thou are not going to twine me through thy twinge of regret,
right?
'cause thee have been settled as my inamorato.

After I came inside thee,
i was about to rack and ruin.
But,
In these words,
Thou shalt be glorified.
For I,
longing through thy despair.

Stela Salsabilla Fambudi
AMSA-Indonesia
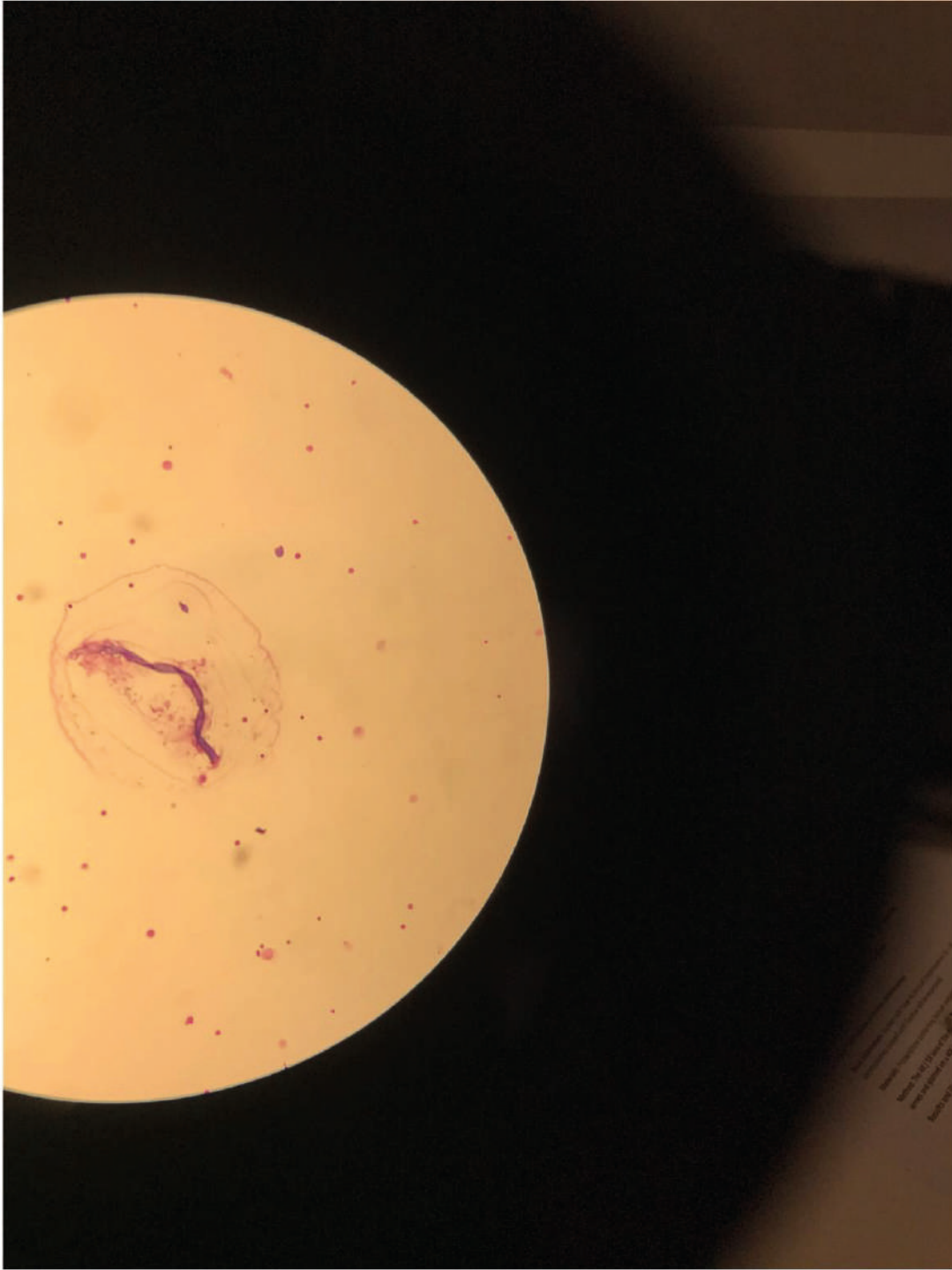Faculty of Medicine, Jember University

MEDICINE

POETRY

Mornings are jaunt
Everyday go out
Dream is to make
It better for people
Chemistry and its bio
Is aware that
Nitrites will turn into nitrates
Ever and ever thanks to nitrifying bacteria

Microorganisms exist
Endoscopy too
Don't worry scientists are
In here too
Cold places have bacteria
Intestines have too
Nausea is bad
Eating onion is good for you

Mammalia is the class
Every human's in
Dentin knows what
Is up with teeth
Carbon dioxide
Is carried as Bicarbonate mostly
Nonetheless we have
Erythrocytes to be here

Umay Gül Çimen
EMSA
İstinye University Medical Faculty

Sniff: The Spidey Dog

WRITTEN BY:

Prayash Paudel

AMSA-Nepal
MBBS, Maharajgunj
Medical Campus, Institute
of Medicine, TU

I frequently visited Unisha back when we were in high school. Sniff would greet me by wiggling his hips while curled up in a cozy position in the apartment's corner. He started to sort of bark and gesture neediness while we were watching this television show on the couch on a Saturday morning. We checked on him around the house because we knew it was out of the ordinary, but we didn't realize it until the earthquake hit. My mind literally started to wander within a minute, from "Why is Sniff behaving in such an unusual way?" to "How did sniff sense the impending earthquake?" to "Why can dogs and not people sense these dangers and instincts?" My understanding of how dogs have signaled impending dangers throughout history was aided by my observations of Sniff and my research. Dogs have excellent senses of vision and hearing, which is why they are able to detect impending dangers and alert people to them.

Dogs are capable of responding to various threats. Dogs pick up on the subtle signs and behave differently, whether it be robbery, upcoming natural disasters, stronger people with ill intentions, or us encountering difficulties. How does Sniff determine whether a person is safe, afraid, or violent? Sniff is friendly and playful to children, but when undesirables pass by the apartment, he typically growls. He always seems happy to me, in my opinion. Sniff can accurately judge events and places in addition to people. The gestures and barking before the earthquake will always be in my memory. However, this was not the first time Sniff had hinted at a catastrophic event; in fact, Unisha had noticed that Sniff reacted strangely when he tried to take a different route during morning walks. Although Unisha never actually came into contact with a burglar, she was always impressed by how often Sniff was able to correctly identify people and their intentions.

Social media is overflowing with stories of dogs leading people to safety. Still, the one that most surprised me involved a couple whose obedient dog jumped into their beds in the middle of the night, prompting them to check on their 9-week-old baby and realize she wasn't breathing normally. Paramedics later performed a baby revival.

Numerous heroic dog tales that are reported daily are solid evidence that dogs, like our Sniff, can recognize and alert us to potential dangers. Dogs can still detect dangers and attack or defend themselves due to their biological make-up and genetic makeup. The need for such keen senses in dogs is justified by their need to survive in the wild. According to the author of the peer-reviewed article, "DNA evidence suggests domestic dogs most likely diverged from wolves in different periods beginning as long as 135,000 years ago" (Vila et al., 1997)." Given that wolves have historically been associated with the strongest sense of smell, which aids them in spotting and avoiding dangers, dogs are genetically descended from wolves.

Dogs have protected their masters' lives from danger in the wild throughout time. In the video "Dogs' Super Senses," the presenter describes how her dog responds to nine different sounds in a variety of ways and helps her with daily tasks. People have relied on dogs' senses, whether they were living in the city today or in the wild in the past. This means that dogs have a remarkable biological ability to sense dangers, which helps them adapt to their environment and has benefited humans throughout history.

Dogs have hearing, eyes with a wider field of vision, a superb sense of smell, and a sensitive touch. In the book " What the Dog Knows", author Cat Warren has explained how Dogs can detect bombs, drugs, dead bodies, suspects, and in some cases, human disease, using their highly developed sense of smell. The dog in the child's story most likely noticed the child wasn't breathing because of the sound and sight. Dogs have superior sensory receptors, but they also have the unique ability to analyze information in the brain and respond quickly. Dogs, like our Sniff, therefore, have better senses, better analysis, and thus a sense of danger. In addition to guarding almost always and running away when disturbed, Sniff frequently scratches, starts licking, barks, runs around, and even growls. Sniff uses these gestures to warn Unisha of potential threats and uncomfortable circumstances nearby.

Unisha then inspects the area to ensure that everything is safe before sitting with Sniff. Sniff barks nonstop to attract attention and warn her of any strangers in the area whenever they sneak out of the apartment. Sniff, however, becomes friendlier with wagging tails and an aphoristic aura when it is us. Sniff has been known to make odd noises with his paws to signal discomfort and potential dangers. Sniff will occasionally grab Unisha and carry her to both safe locations and locations where something is wrong. With all these cues, sniff alerts Unisha to her surroundings. This is true for all dog owners who have benefited greatly from their pets' keen senses, not just Unisha. Some dog owners quote, "I have never met a dog whose instincts weren't right." Dogs taking a defensive stance are a good indicator that the person is not someone you want to be around, especially with all these people who are simply not "good people" out there. Humans have in fact benefited from dogs' sense of danger in similar situations with locations and events.
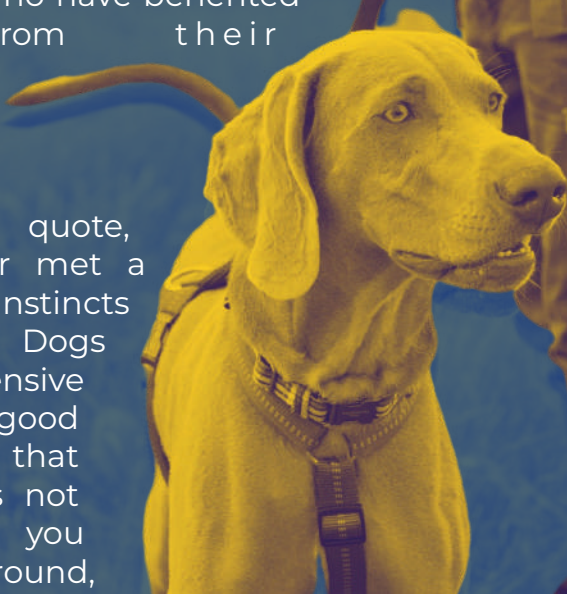
In short, dogs have the ability to detect dangers through keen hearing, strong smell, better vision, and unusual gestures like grinning, barking, moving around, and taking a defensive position. This ability is biologically and scientifically proven, and it has benefited mankind from the dawn of time in wild environments to the present. Unisha and Sniff helped me better understand the bond between dogs and people, and my frequent interactions with Sniff in various settings made me realize that dogs have what is essentially a sixth sense—a sense of danger. Numerous books have been written to explain this behavior, and personal experience with owning a dog can also provide insight. Dogs are a wonderful thing because they can help us avoid loneliness, reduce stress and anxiety, foster healthy social interactions, and keep us awake while occasionally saving our lives. Dogs are short and adorable, so is that why, or not?

Experiences that **improve awareness** about **people with disabilities** and citizen participation: Mongolia

WRITTEN BY:
Jargaltulga Ulziijargal
AMSA-Mongolia
School of Medicine, Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences

WRITTEN BY:
Egshiglen Batbold
AMSA-Mongolia
School of Medicine, Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences

World Health Organization (WHO) World Report on Disability (WRD): There are approximately 785 million people with disability (15.6%), and according to the Global Burden of Disease survey, 975 million people (19.4%) live in the world.[1] However, according to a survey conducted in Mongolia in 2015, the disability-prevalence rate is 3.9% (108'071). Of these, the majority have a physical disability (29%), followed by mental/intellectual, visual, hearing, and speech disabilities. disabilities. Recent reports show that 80% of disabled people over the age of 15 are unemployed and 4 times more likely to be working in a job outside of their profession. Also, the level of education of persons with disabilities (PwD) in our country is lower than that of ordinary citizens, and almost 22% of PwDs over the age of 10 are uneducated. According to WHO's WRD, common problems faced by PWDs include negative attitudes, lack of access to transportation and public facilities, and limited social support. Of these, negative social attitudes towards PWDs pose the largest challenges, including beliefs, superstitions, assumptions, barriers to education, employment, health care, and social inclusion. The 7th recommendation of this report issued by WHO is to "increase public awareness about disability." Governments, voluntary organizations, non-government organizations, and professional associations have been organizing social campaigns to change public attitudes towards the issues facing these social groups.

From Government organizations:

One of the major tasks aimed at PWDs within the framework of the Mongolian government was to improve the legal environment aimed at these people. In 2016, the Law of the rights of PwD was newly approved, and Article 7 of it provides for "Increasing awareness and understanding of disabilities among society." Aim of this law was regularly organising the training and advertising on the importance of disability, conducting articles and programs to create the right understanding, expressing it in the textbooks of all levels of educational institutions, implementing it through training and subjects' contents, delivering news and information to people with disabilities and their families, and promoting social development. A complete set of measures for organising events with the goal of developing a positive attitude towards children with disabilities was fully reflected in this law

There are 50 (48) NGOs in Mongolia aimed at supporting the rights of people with disabilities, improving working conditions, and protecting health. The organization has done a lot of outreach work to raise awareness of PWDs in the community, including educating general education students from an early age. It is important to provide children with understanding and knowledge about disabilities from an early age. As citizens who sincerely understand people with disabilities and accept their differences, we will lay the foundation of building a society with mature and healthy attitudes in the future. According to a study conducted in 2019, broadcasting and commercial television programs for disabled people were rare. When 88 television stations were monitored, only 20 of them prepared and broadcast such programs.

Among them, there were 5 works marked specifically for children, which did not even reach 0.5% of the total time spent on sign language programs. However, it has been noticed recently that television and programs have begun to pay attention to this direction. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, a wide range of channels have started presenting current affairs on television with sign language interpreters, which has been a driving force in shaping people's attitudes and perceptions, and most popular channels have sign language interpreters and subtitles.

NGOs have also implemented many projects to increase citizen participation and improve awareness and attitudes towards disability. Let's mention them briefly.

Untrammelled Trave (Saadgui Ayalal)

The "Untrammeled Travel" project is a social campaign to prepare and deliver content in an interesting way about how PWD, including people in wheelchairs, participate in city traffic, what problems they face, and whatw solutions there are.

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/saadgui.ayalal/

Facebook: (1) Саадгүй Аялал | Ulaanbaatar | Facebook

As One Autism

This project was implemented with the aim of learning to positively accept the actions and attitudes of autistic people living and working in Mongolian society, to help and support them, not to discriminate, to make the public understand correctly, to cultivate a humane attitude towards each other, and to create a humane society. In the process, a website was designed. www.autism.mn

In conclusion, it was noted that it is beneficial for the Government Organization to ensure the law and for the Non-Governmental Organization to improve the citizens' understanding of disability, especially for the young. Mass media has also been a vital driver in the success of these campaigns and in spreading positive information about disabled people and their family members.

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Төрийн бус байгууллагууд – Хөгжлийн бэрхшээлтэй иргэдийн оролцоог хангах үйлчилгээг сайжруулах төсөл (pwdp.mn)

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Хэвлэл мэдээллийн байгууллагууд хүртээмжээ сайжруулахад анхаарч эхлэв (unuudur.mn)

As One Төсөл - Монголын Аутизмын холбоо (autism.mn)

From : Attha Ghaly, AMSA-Indonesia, Jember University

To : My dad in Japan

I love you dad. So much that I would literally cry remembering you. I always wanted to tell you this but I guess I don't have enough courage to do so. So I write this letter for you if you reading this. I really wish that you're in good shape and less tired because I don't want my Pa sick. I don't know what to write but I hope that you know how big my love for you. Love you Pa.

From : Stela Salsabilla Fambudi, AMSA-Indonesia, Jember University

To : Hanani Azmi, Fukui University, Electrical Engineering

Indonesia, 12 January 2023
Dear Hanani, my dearest friend from far far away.
How are you? I hope you are doing okay in Japan. Just want to let you know that i am doing great here in Indonesia :D ! I'm grateful for today, for another cold morning, for another life that God has given to me, for another blessing of foods that my loved ones making, for another smile from my joyful heart, for a good dream and a bad dream, for another strength that He has given to me to face this day, for good health and protection, for my loud laughs hahaha! For those people I have met here or anywhere else just like a person like you, for my Buddy! Basically, for everything that God has given!
It's been so long since we sent letters to each other. I miss the times when we used to send letters during pandemic:" i mean, i don't want pandemic happens again, but i truly miss those times when we were waiting for the letters:"
Anyway, i want to show you something. I want to show you the letter that i actually wanted to send to you for the first time hahahah. I still have the draft btw hehe :D

> **I don't mind to share a piece or even some pieces of me to you. May one of those pieces will eventually light up your empty room which you called it "lonely".**
> **You know, one of the greatest blessings in this universe is "human". Yes, we are the blessings actually. But, one of the greatest disaster in this world has been done by "human". Do we really arrogant enough to say that we are the blessings? Or perhaps we are too sorry to say that we are the cause of disaster in this wrapped mass of gases? Our so-called "home"?**
> **I've already made my time to wrote this for you. It doesn't mean that i wrote this to just killing my time. I wrote this because i was happy to find someone out there that has the same frequency with mine. What if we've already seen each other but didn't realize it? Or maybe there's another world out there where we become friends or maybe we hate each other? Too many mystery wrapped by our universe that needs to be solved. But,**

I really hope you are doing great there. It's snowing now, right? Please take care of yourself, Nan. I can't wait the day we meet each other in person hehe. I will take you to some wonderful places in Indonesia, drive you around the town, and of course, culinary trip hehehe :D So, please wait until that day comes. Also, please wait until i become a doctor hahahah :D

Until then,
Stela.

FEEDBACK

Your opinion is important for us, feel free to give us feedback!

Scan the QR code below to give us your feedback!
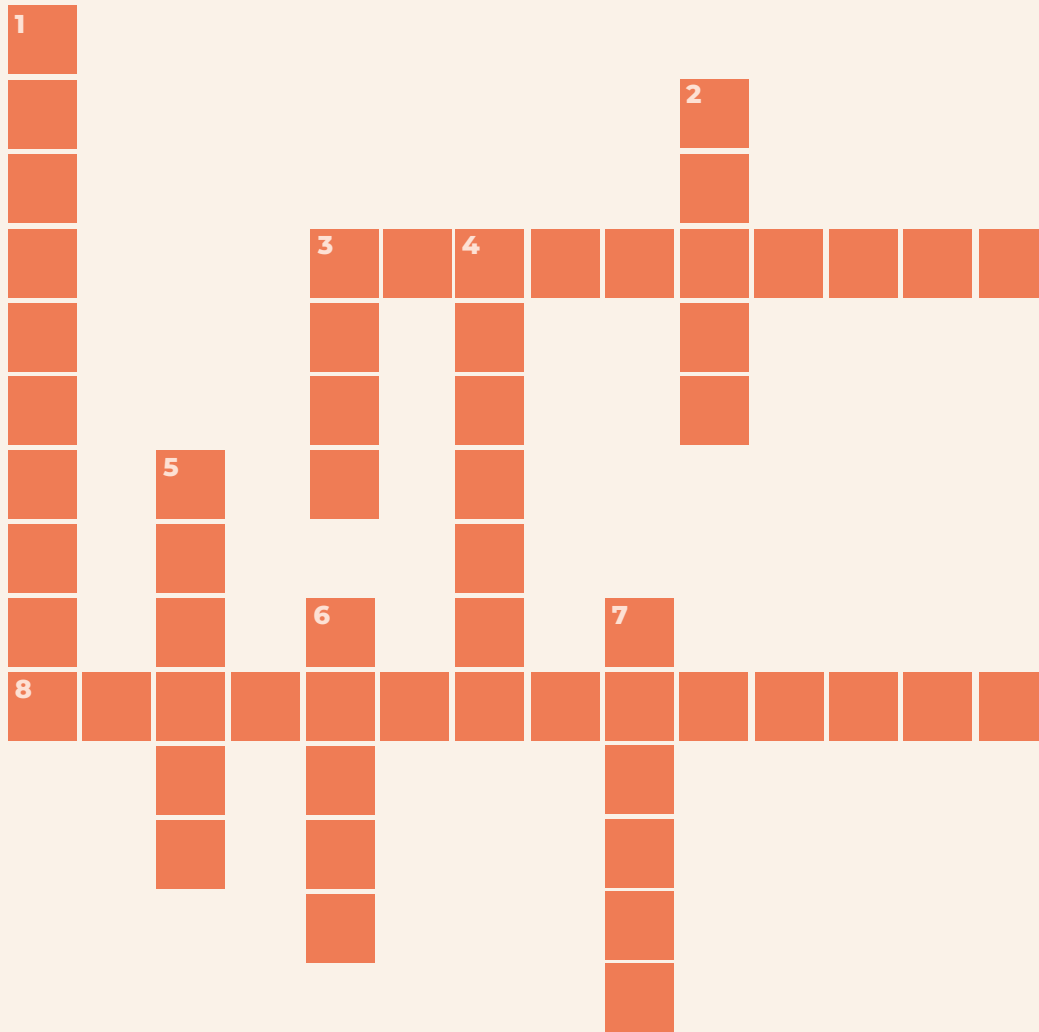
PARTNERSHIP

SPONSORS

Across

3. A physical, mental, cognitive, or developmental condition that impairs, interferes with, or limits a person's ability to engage in certain tasks or actions or participate in typical daily activities and interactions

8. The process or period of gradually regaining one's health and strength

Academic Quiz!

Down

1. A chair with wheels used especially by sick, injured, or disabled people to get about.

2. Describes a condition in which a person has a loss of vision for ordinary life purposes. Generally, anyone with less than 10% of normal vision would be regarded as legally blind.

3. Deafness refers to a profound degree of hearing loss that prevents understanding speech though the ear

4. Describes that which is different or uncommon about any person.
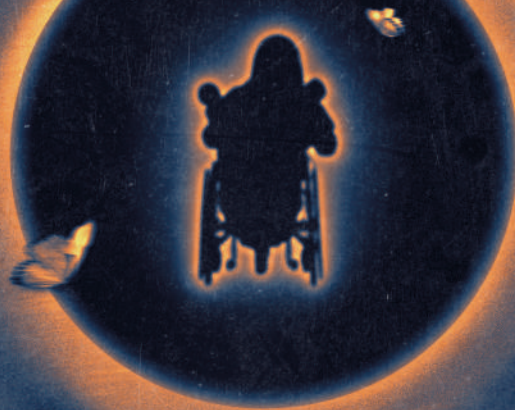
5. Something to which one has a just claim

6. As in to bully to inflict physical or emotional harm upon

7. When someone sees you in a negative way because of a particular

THIRTY #38 EIGHT

ASPIRE

"There is no greater disability in society, than the inability to see a person as more."

Robert M. Hensel