

RM1.25mil boost for AIDS foundation



Prof Dr Adeeba (left) receiving the contribution from Burden during the launch of the partnership.

GLAXOSmithKline Pharmaceutical Sdn Bhd (GSK Malaysia) has earmarked RM1.25mil for the Malaysian AIDS Foundation (MAF) to advance three of its high-impact AIDS programmes over the next three years.

MAF chairman Prof Datuk Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman received the funds on behalf of MAF from GSK Malaysia general manager and vice-president Ramil Burden at the official launch of the partnership.

The first programme is the MAF Paediatric AIDS Fund, which provides RM100 monthly allowance to 100 underprivileged children living with HIV or born into HIV-impacted families with a combined household income of less than RM2,000.

Initiated in 2008 with the aim of alleviating the socio-economic burden of those living with HIV, this scheme was discontinued in 2015 due to financial constraints.

The funds will be disbursed via a cashless distribution system provided by MyKasih Foundation, community partner of the fund.

The Malaysian Business

Consortium on HIV and AIDS, the second programme under the partnership, serves as a platform for businesses to share and exchange HIV and AIDS information and best practices.

It also acts as a repository for the pooling of HIV and AIDS resources, offering guidance to businesses on workplace policy development and seeks to eliminate attitudes and practices that stigmatise and discriminate against workers living with HIV.

The third – HIV Awareness and Education for Healthcare Professionals – is new and focuses on removing barriers to equitable HIV services in healthcare settings.

“Through our long history in the infectious disease sphere, we recognise not only the importance, but also the impact of community mobilisation on the prevention and control of HIV and AIDS.

“Aligned with our strong commitment to improving health for all, what we hope to achieve with the MAF partnership is a unified,

empowered, and inspired Malaysian community across all sectors and divides striving towards the common goal of ending AIDS by 2030,” said Burden

Prof Dr Adeeba said despite the many remarkable successes of the national AIDS response, most notably the 40% reduction in new HIV infections over the past decade, people living with HIV continue to face barriers in their day-to-day lives because of stigma and discrimination, causing many to live in constant fear and suffer in silence.

“In our ongoing effort to create an enabling environment for people living with HIV to thrive and succeed, we will further concentrate on working with the healthcare and business sectors, two priority areas that have a significant impact on HIV-related health and social outcomes,” she said.

Noting the challenge of financial sustainability in the AIDS response, Prof Dr Adeeba said they were grateful to GSK Malaysia for this meaningful partnership.