

# Fact Sheet

## National Health and Morbidity Survey 2019 Non-communicable diseases, healthcare demand, and health literacy

### INTRODUCTION

The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) is Malaysia's national health survey and was first carried out in 1986. The main objective of NHMS 2019 was to provide community-based data and evidence to Ministry of Health Malaysia on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), NCD risk factors and healthcare demand for review of national health priorities and programs.

### METHODOLOGY

NHMS 2019 was a cross sectional survey, using complex study design with two stage stratified cluster sampling. A total of 26 houses (12 for NCD questionnaire and 14 for healthcare demand questionnaire) were selected from each cluster. The survey involved all states and federal territories in Malaysia, to produce nationally representative data. Face-to-face interview was carried out by trained research assistants, together with structured self-administered questionnaires, clinical and anthropometric measurements as well as point-of-care finger prick blood test. A total of 14,965 individuals (response rate - 87.2%) participated in the NCD portion, meanwhile 16,688 individuals (response rate - 88.8%) answered the healthcare demand portion.

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### Non-communicable Diseases

##### Diabetes among Adults

- Known diabetes: 9.4%
- Raised blood glucose among unknown diabetes (Fasting blood glucose 7.0mmol/L): 8.9%
- Overall prevalence: 18.3%

An increase from 2011 (11.2%) and 2015 (13.4%), previous results reanalysed to the new cut-off.

##### Hypertension among Adults

- Known hypertension: 15.9%
- Raised blood pressure among unknown hypertension: 14.1%
- Overall prevalence: 30.0%

Plateau in the prevalence from 2011 (32.6%) and 2015 (30.3%).

##### Hypercholesterolemia among Adults

- Known hypercholesterolemia: 13.5%
- Raised blood total cholesterol among unknown hypercholesterolemia: 24.6%
- Overall prevalence: 38.1%

Changes seen from prevalence in 2011 (35.0%) and 2015 (47.7%).

##### Nutritional Status

- 50.1% of adults are overweight or obese (30.4% overweight and 19.7% obese).
- 52.6% of adults have abdominal obesity.
- Trends of overweight, obesity and abdominal obesity continue to rise compared to NHMS 2011 (15.1%, 29.4%, 45.4%) and 2015 (17.7%, 30.0%, 48.6%) findings.
- 29.8% of children 5 to 17 years of age are overweight (15.0%) and obese (14.8%).
- 21.8% of children under 5 years of age are stunted. An increase from 2011 (16.6%) and 2015 (17.7%).
- 29.9% of women in reproductive age are anaemic.

##### Others

- 25.1% of adults are physically inactive, a reduction compared to 2011 (35.7%) and 2015 (33.5%).
- 94.9% of adults do not consume the recommended adequate fruits and / vegetables of 5 servings per day. This is a rise from the 92.5% in 2011 and 94.0% in 2015.
- 21.3% of adults are current smokers, while 11.8% are current alcohol drinkers. The proportion of binge drinkers among current drinkers are 45.8%. There is a reduction of the proportion of binge drinkers from 2011 (50.2%) and 2015 (59.4%).
- 2.3% of adults have depression, while 7.9% of children 5 to 15 years of age were found to have mental health problems, mainly due to poor interaction with their peers.
- 36.6% of adult women had done a pap smear in the past 1 year. Among women age 40 years and over, 21.0% had done a mammogram in the past 3 years, while 25.0% had ever done a mammogram.
- 11.1% of adults and 4.7% of children were found have disability.

## Healthcare Demand

### Acute Health Problems and Health-seeking Behaviour

- 19.5% had acute health problems in the last two weeks.
- Among them, 57.5% sought treatment/medication/advice from healthcare practitioners (HCPs), 22.8% took medicine without advice from HCPs and 11.3% obtained advice from other resources such as internet, TV, radio and others.

### Chronic Bodily Pain

- 8.7% of the population aged 13 years old and over suffered chronic bodily pain.
- Among them, 33.1% reported daily activities were moderately to extremely disturbed.

### Health Services Utilisation

- **Outpatient healthcare** - 8.1% in the last two weeks (public sector: 64.3%).  
**An increase utilisation in public sector from 2011 (48.7%) and 2015 (60.0%).**
- **Inpatient healthcare** - 5.2% in the last 12 months (public sector: 75.5%).  
**A plateau utilisation in public sector from 2011 (74.1%) and 2015 (76.8%).**
- **Oral healthcare** - 23.7% in the last 12 months (public sector: 79.5%). 15.0% have never received dental care.

**An increase utilisation in public sector from 2011 (64.0%) and 2015 (68.4%).**

- **Community pharmacy** - 10.2% of adults in the last two weeks.
- **Domiciliary care** - 1.7% in the last 12 months (public: 88.2%).
- **Medical check-up/health screening** - 33.3% of adults in the last 12 months.
- **Private medical laboratory** - 4.8% of adults in the last 12 months.
- **Self-care (Purchase of dietary supplements)** - 13.8% of adults in the last one month.
- **Out-of-pocket expenditure** – Outpatient healthcare was the largest component (40.4%), followed by self-care (purchase of dietary supplements) (24.5%), community pharmacy (19.7%), inpatient healthcare (7.7%) and oral healthcare (3.3%).

### Supplementary Financial Coverage

- 45.5% of population in Malaysia and 70.6% of the 20% poorest population did not have any form of supplementary financial coverage, other than existing tax funded healthcare coverage provided by the government.

### Financial Sources for Health Services among Households in Malaysia

- 81.4% of households in Malaysia used current income as source of payment, 35.8% used savings and 8.1% used insurance reimbursement.
- 10.9% borrowed from family and friends, other than household members.

### Informal Care

- 5.7% of adults provided unpaid care in the last 12 months.
- Average duration of a caregiver's role was 5.3 years.
- Average hours of care per week was 24.4 hours.

### Family Doctor

- 47.1% of households visited the same clinic (public sector: 54.2%).
- 24.1% of households visited the same doctor.

## Health Literacy

- In general, 35.1% of adults have low health literacy.
- 28.0% have low health literacy in managing medical issues, 32.3% have low health literacy related with disease prevention activities, while 27.0% have low health literacy in health promotion and healthy lifestyle practices.

\*All ages included, unless specified otherwise. Adults refers to individuals 18 years and over

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NHMS 2019

National Health and Morbidity Survey 2019  
Technical Report — Volume I

## NCDs — Non-Communicable Diseases: Risk Factors and other Health Problems

National Institutes of Health (NIH)  
Ministry of Health Malaysia

NHMS 2019

National Health and Morbidity Survey 2019  
Technical Report — Volume II

## Healthcare Demand

National Institutes of Health (NIH)  
Ministry of Health Malaysia

Key results from the 2019 survey are highlighted in this compact factsheet. The above technical reports, which contain further discussion of the findings and full documentation of the survey's methods and questionnaires, are available from the IKU website: [www.iku.gov.my/nhms](http://www.iku.gov.my/nhms).

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