

Diversity and Equity to Healthcare in Asian Pacific Region: Barriers & Initiatives

Dr. Bryan CM LEONG

Consultant Nephrologist & Physician

Sunway Medical Centre Penang, Malaysia

Barriers of Healthcare Provision

Country	Geography
Australia & NZ	✓
Hong Kong	X
Japan	✓
Korea	✓
Indonesia	✓
Myanmar	✓
Mongolia	✓
Malaysia	✓
Singapore	X
Taiwan	X
Thailand	✓

Barriers of Healthcare Provision

Country	Cultural/ Linguistic	
Australia & NZ	✓	Indigenous & remote population
Hong Kong	✓	Minor ethnic groups
Japan	✓	Cultural and religious beliefs regarding deceased donor organ donation
Korea	✓	Minority population (LGBTQ, HIV)
Indonesia	X	
Myanmar	X	
Mongolia	X	
Malaysia	X	
Singapore	X	
Taiwan	X	
Thailand	X	

Barriers of Healthcare Provision

Country	Human Resource	
Australia & NZ	X	
Hong Kong	X	
Japan	X	
Korea	✓	Number of dialysis specialists and nurse caseload were factors associated with patient mortality
Indonesia	✓	0.57 nephrologist pmp
Myanmar	✓	Shared among general physicians and diabetologists
Mongolia	✓	Especially in rural areas
Malaysia	✓	Shortage of staff
Singapore	X	
Taiwan	X	
Thailand	✓	Shortage of staff

Barriers of Healthcare Provision

Country	Financial/ Economic	
Australia & NZ	✓	Indigenous & Pacific people; limited renal medicines in NZ, eg ns-MRA, SGLT2i only in DKD
Hong Kong	X	
Japan	X	
Korea	X	Except some foreigners living in Korea
Indonesia	✓	
Myanmar	X	
Mongolia	X	
Malaysia	✓	
Singapore	X	
Taiwan	X	
Thailand	✓	Different schemes; selective drugs

Barriers of Healthcare Provision

Country	Facilities/ Infrastructure	
Australia & NZ	X	
Hong Kong	X	
Japan	X	
Korea	X	
Indonesia	✓	Scarcity of dialysis centers in remote areas
Myanmar	✓	Imported PD solutions
Mongolia	X	
Malaysia	X	
Singapore	X	
Taiwan	X	
Thailand	X	

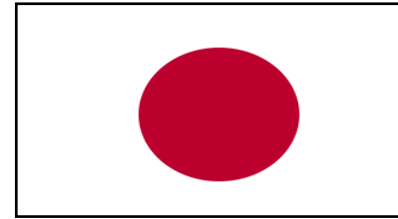
Barriers of Healthcare Provision

Country	Geography	Cultural/ Linguistic	Human Resource	Financial/ Economic	Facilities/ Infrastructure
Australia & NZ	✓	✓	X	✓	X
Hong Kong	X	✓	X	X	X
Japan	✓	✓	X	X	X
Korea	✓	✓	X	X	X
Indonesia	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Myanmar	✓	X	✓	X	✓
Mongolia	✓	X	✓	X	X
Malaysia	✓	X	✓	✓	X
Singapore	X	X	X	X	X
Taiwan	X	X	X	X	X
Thailand	✓	X	✓	✓	X

Initiatives on CKD

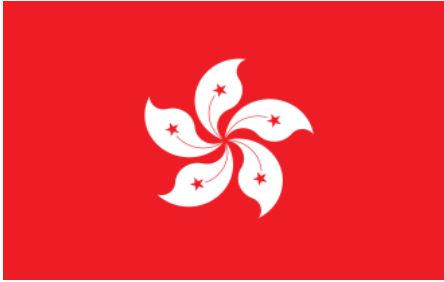


- Kidney Health Australia: provide patient education and advocacy, focused on early detection and management of CKD with a focus on vulnerable at-risk groups



- Additional health insurance points for patient education

Initiatives on CKD



- Chronic Disease Co-Care Scheme: Early detection and treatment of chronic diseases (eg DM and hypertension) to reduce the burden of CVD and CKD
- PD-First Policy



- Kidney Health Plan 2033: focusing on prevention, slowing disease progression, especially in diabetic kidney disease, and expanding home therapy options

Initiatives on CKD

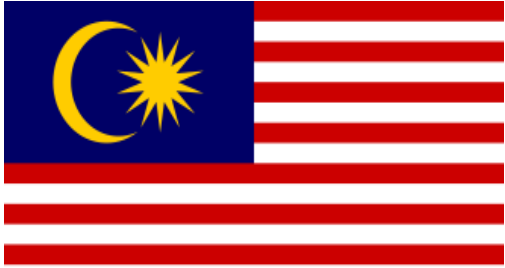


- Uro-Nephrology Priority Program: aiming to strengthen early CKD detection, to improve distribution of dialysis access and treatment, to enhance workforce training, and to improve distribution of nephrology services across underserved regions



- Kidney health initiatives: emphasizing early detection and treatment of hypertension and diabetes mellitus to prevent CVD and CKD

Initiatives on CKD



- National Action Plan for Healthy Kidneys (ACT-KID)
- Chronic Kidney Disease Roadshow
- PD-preferred policy

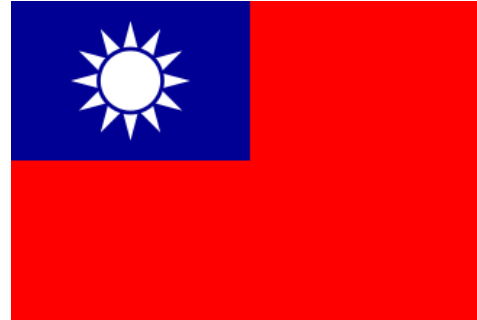


- The Holistic Approach to Lowering and Tracking CKD (HALT-CKD): aims to slow down CKD progression and prevent ESKD development by systematically recruiting and tracking patients with risk factor control at the primary care level

Initiatives on CKD



- The Ministry of Public Health's SALTS strategy (2016–2025)
- National collaborative CKD screening initiative
- CKDNET: village health volunteers and multidisciplinary teams
- PD-First policy transforming to comprehensive care with collective decision



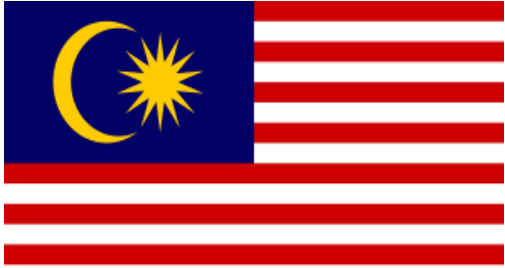
- CKD prevention incentives with several national pays for performance programs
- National CKD prevention program

Initiatives to Promote Kidney Transplant

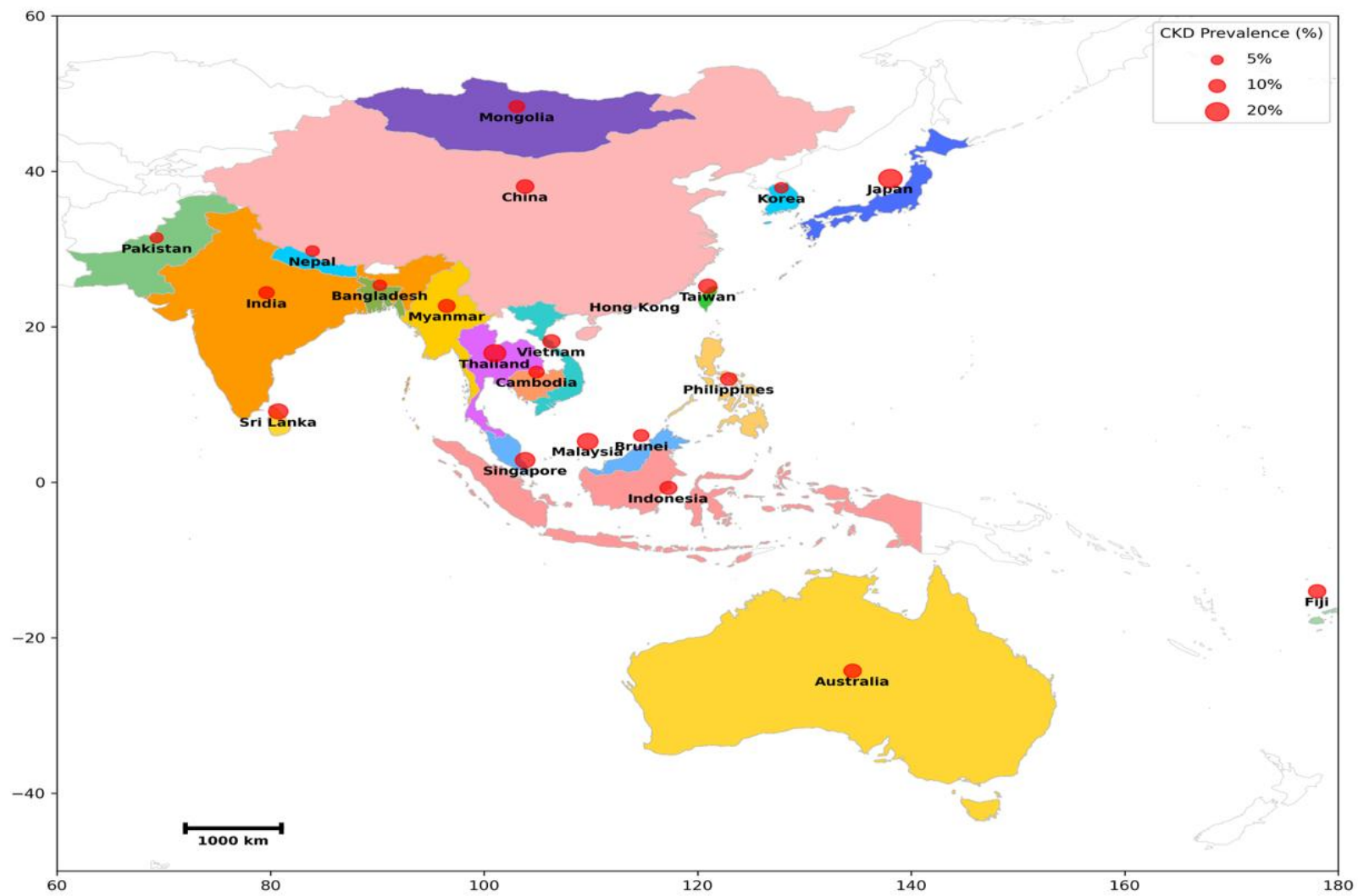


- The Support for Living Organ Donors Program: provides financial assistance to living kidney donors, covering out-of-pocket expenses and lost income, thereby promoting living organ donation
- DonateLife: Australia's organ donation agency which drives national strategies to improve organ donation rates
- The National Indigenous Kidney Transplant Taskforce: addressing inequitable transplant rates

Initiatives to Promote Kidney Transplant



Malaysian Kidney Allocation System: to optimize the transplant outcomes of deceased-donor kidney transplantation. It was designed using a mathematical scoring system to manage the waiting list for deceased donor kidney transplants instead of the use of dialysis vintage-based criteria



SWOT Analysis of Kidney Disease Burden and Care Systems in the Asia-Pacific Region: Insights from the APSN Diversity and Equity Committee Review

Dimension	Key insights to achieve regional kidney health
Strengths	Universal health system coverage; national kidney initiatives; robust registries; multidisciplinary models; PD initiatives
Weaknesses	Intra-regional heterogeneity; rural service gaps; low donor rates; limited resources to under-represented population; workforce shortages
Opportunities	Regional collaboration; telehealth and digital transformation; scalable prevention; NGO/industry partnerships; workforce development
Threats	Rising CKD burden; economic constraints; environmental CKD; disaster vulnerability; ongoing minority inequities

