



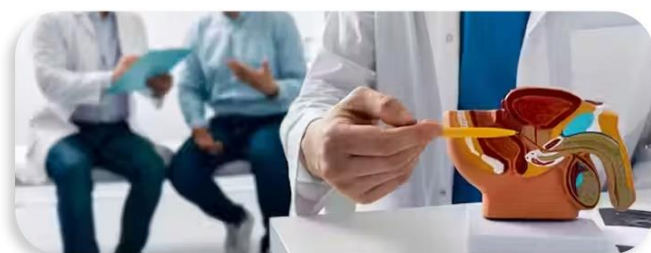
BRIDGING THE GAP

Advancing Prostate Cancer Care in Malaysia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Malaysia has made important strides in strengthening prostate cancer care, particularly in early detection efforts, availability of treatment options, and adoption of international best practices in urban centers. Yet challenges remain in equitable access, nationwide screening participation, and integration of advanced diagnostics. High urban-rural disparities, financial constraints, and limited biomarker testing infrastructure restrict Malaysia's ability to reach global standards.

With a **Level 3 – Evolving** prostate cancer maturity, Malaysia has the foundation to accelerate progress by focusing on equitable access, diagnostic innovation, and survivorship programs.



INTRODUCTION

Building on Progress While Bridging Gaps

Prostate cancer ranks among the most common cancers in Malaysian men, with incidence increasing in tandem with an ageing population and lifestyle changes. Malaysia benefits from a relatively robust healthcare system, structured cancer registries, and government-backed initiatives such as the National Strategic Plan for Cancer Control. However, prostate cancer-specific strategies are less developed compared to breast or colorectal cancers.

Current challenges include low screening participation, uneven access to biomarker testing, and affordability gaps in advanced hormonal and targeted therapies. With maturity at **Level 3 – Evolving**, Malaysia stands well-positioned to transition into a coordinated, patient-centered prostate cancer care model if gaps are systematically addressed.



PROSTATE CANCER IN MALAYSIA

Current Landscape and Strategic Gaps

Pillar	Current Status	Strength	Policy Action
Early Detection & Diagnosis	Opportunistic PSA testing available; no organized nationwide screening. Participation rates remain low, especially outside urban areas.	PSA testing is widely available in urban hospitals and private clinics.	Implement a national risk-based screening program targeting men 50+ and promote awareness campaigns to improve uptake in rural and underserved areas.
Biomarker & Molecular Testing	Limited access to advanced biomarker testing; mainly available in private hospitals at high cost.	Some availability in university hospitals and specialized cancer centers.	Integrate biomarker testing into public hospitals and subsidize costs to enable personalized treatment approaches.
Treatment Access	Surgery, radiotherapy, and systemic therapies are available; advanced hormonal and targeted therapies accessible but often costly.	Major tertiary hospitals have multidisciplinary oncology teams.	Expand reimbursement schemes for advanced therapies; increase radiotherapy units in regional centers to reduce waiting times.
Clinical Guidelines	International guidelines (e.g., ESMO, NCCN) adapted in tertiary hospitals; not yet fully standardized nationwide.	Oncologists and urologists trained in evidence-based practices.	Develop and enforce national prostate cancer guidelines, harmonizing protocols across public and private facilities.
Palliative & Survivorship Care	Palliative care is available but uneven, with better access in urban centers. Survivorship programs are limited.	Existing palliative networks and NGOs provide partial support.	Strengthen nationwide palliative and survivorship care programs, including psychological and rehabilitation support for patients.

CONCLUSION & Call to Action

Malaysia has achieved important progress in prostate cancer care but must act to reduce disparities and ensure consistency in access and quality of treatment. By strengthening early detection, integrating biomarker testing, and expanding survivorship care, Malaysia can move closer to a mature, patient-centered cancer system.



KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

1 Establish a National Screening Framework: Implement PSA-based screening for high-risk groups with government-led awareness campaigns.

2 Integrate Biomarker Testing Nationwide: Ensure biomarker testing is accessible and affordable through public sector hospitals.

3 Expand Access to Advanced Therapies: Broaden reimbursement for innovative drugs and radiotherapy services.

4 Standardize Clinical Practices: Adopt national treatment guidelines to ensure consistency across hospitals.

5 Strengthen Survivorship & Palliative Care: Expand patient support networks, rehabilitation services, and community-based palliative care.

CONCLUSION

With prostate cancer maturity at **Level 3 – Evolving**, Malaysia stands at a critical stage where promising advances must be matched with system-wide reforms. Early detection, equitable treatment access, and survivorship planning are key levers to drive improvements. By addressing rural-urban disparities, strengthening biomarker availability, and standardizing treatment pathways, Malaysia can transition toward a comprehensive, patient-focused prostate cancer system. Strategic investment, robust policy implementation, and continued public-private collaboration will ensure that Malaysian men, regardless of geography or income, have timely and equitable access to effective prostate cancer care.