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MSD in the Philippines and The Carewell Community hold wellness talk for cancer patients

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Global healthcare company MSD in the Philippines recently collaborated with The Cancer Resource and Wellness (Carewell) Community Foundation, a nonprofit foundation that provides support, education, and hope to persons with cancer and their loved ones, to hold a wellness discussion called *Talk to Doc: Well, Well, Wellness!*

The event aimed to enable cancer patients from The Carewell Community, to focus on their overall health and well-being, as they battle the disease.



MSD turns over wellness packs for cancer patients and caregivers. L-R: Gina Evangelista, Carewell volunteer; Andreas Riedel, President and Managing Director, MSD in the Philippines; Oliver Calasanz, Managing Director, Carewell; Marie Ganir, Carewell programs assistant; and Jane Beate, Carewell art instructor

The two-part discussion, which covered physical and mental wellness, was hosted by MSD's Dr. Orven Dumaoang, and facilitated by MSD Medical team led by Dr. Maan Galang Escalona, together with guest speaker, Dr. Ephraim Leynes.

Part I. Nurturing the body throughout the journey

Good nutrition is crucial for patients as it helps maintain a healthy immune system and body weight, reduce side effects of cancer treatments, and improve the quality of life. Eating a well-balanced diet that includes a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats can provide the necessary nutrients to support the body's healing process. Additionally, adequate hydration is important to prevent dehydration and aid in digestion.

Dr. Davidson Pastrana highlighted that cancer and its treatments can cause changes in appetite and digestion, making it challenging to maintain good nutrition. Therefore, consulting with a registered dietitian or healthcare provider can help cancer patients develop a personalized nutrition plan to support their recovery.

Dr. Nicole Tenorio discussed how good hygiene, skin care, and bathing are essential for cancer patients to maintain their overall health and prevent infections. Cancer and its treatments can weaken the immune system, making patients more susceptible to infections. Regular hand washing, oral care, and proper wound care can reduce the risk of infection. Cancer treatments can also cause skin dryness, irritation, and sensitivity, making it important to use gentle, fragrance-free products for skin care and bathing. Moisturizing regularly can help prevent skin cracking and infection. Patients should also avoid sharing personal items such as towels, razors, and toothbrushes to prevent the spread of germs. Consultation with a healthcare provider or dermatologist can provide guidance on skincare and hygiene practices for cancer patients.

Regular exercise can benefit cancer patients in many ways. It can improve physical function, reduce fatigue and other side effects of cancer treatment, and lower the risk of cancer recurrence. Dr. Claudio Valdes suggested some forms of exercises to help patients maintain a healthy weight and reduce the risk of other health problems such as heart disease and diabetes. Additionally, exercise can have psychological benefits, such as reducing anxiety and depression, and improving overall quality of life.

Part II. Nurturing the mind

Dr. Ephraim Leynes, a Family Medicine specialist, addressed mental health issues among cancer patients. He emphasized that mental health is integral in the overall support for cancer patients because a cancer diagnosis can cause significant psychological distress. Counseling, support groups, and other interventions can help patients manage emotions, improve well-being, enhance coping, and improve adherence to treatment and overall health outcomes. Healthcare providers must recognize the importance of addressing mental health issues and appropriately support cancer patients.

It takes a community to support patients through the cancer journey

Annually, MSD employees worldwide volunteer their time and resources to support and empower communities through the MSD Gives Back program.

"We at MSD feel honored to support The Carewell Community's mission of upholding the well-being of Filipino cancer patients and caregivers, by empowering them to lead fulfilling lives, throughout their journey, through MSD Gives Back" said Andreas Riedel, President and Managing Director, MSD in the Philippines.

"This talk on wellness for cancer patients is more than just providing information. It is an opportunity to create a supportive environment where patients can share their experiences, learn from others, and feel empowered to take control of their health. The talk fosters a sense of community among cancer patients and their loved ones, where they can find comfort and strength through shared knowledge and understanding. By coming together in this way, we can help patients navigate the challenges of cancer treatment and improve their quality of life," noted Oliver Calasanz, Managing Director, The Carewell Community Foundation.



MSD Gives Back! Employee volunteers prepare wellness kits for The Carewell Community

MSD's partnership with Carewell in holding the wellness forum for cancer patients is a testament to MSD's commitment to supporting organizations that promote the health and well-being of communities in need. By organizing events like this, MSD and its partners can empower cancer patients to lead fulfilling lives and provide the necessary resources to improve their overall health and well-being.

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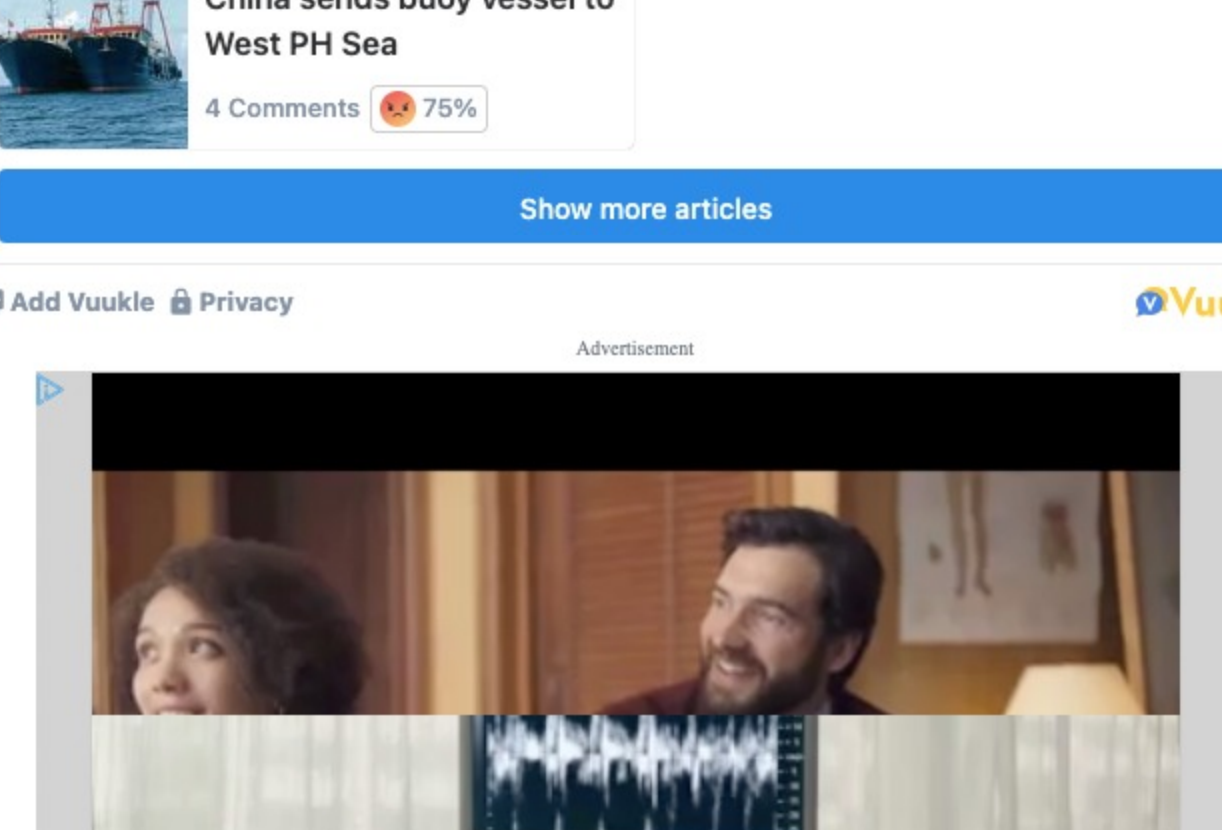
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