BLUE wave walk brings new hope to cancer survivors

In the end, he came in last, but for cancer survivor, Ab Malek Hussein it surely felt like a victory lap.

Ab Malek, 54, was slowly but surely hobbling his way in crutches towards the finishing line of the Blue Wave Walk organized by University of Malaya with the support of friends and volunteers.

It was a long walk for the former landscape architect from Kumpulan Arkitek but for him his journey started six years ago when he was diagnosed with bone cancer.

“I was diagnosed with bone cancer in 1998 and had to undergo an operation in the same year to amputate my left leg as the cancer had spread to my femur,” he said after the walk which was held in conjunction with World Cancer Day today.

“I had a steel bone which was then fitted into a prosthesis into my leg. The prosthesis lasted for four years until I had a fall and had replaced it with a new one.

“I had to replace the prosthesis this year as I had to undergo an operation to remove a bigger part of my knee bone as it became more brittle. Currently I am walking without one and hope to get a new replacement soon,” added Ab Malek who also lost his wife due to ovarian cancer in the same year.

Not only that, Ab Malek continued to beest by tragedy as he was diagnosed with colorectal cancer in 2004. While many in his position would be in deep despair, Ab Malek shows no sign of losing hope with his positive outlook and fighting spirit in overcoming his affliction.

“The message that I want to send out to all cancer sufferers is that you should not wallow in self pity. My advice to them, always remain positive, we should keep reminding ourselves that there are other people that are even worse condition than us,” he added.

Around 30 participants were flagged off at 7.45 a.m. around a 1.5 km circuit passing through Jalan Universiti and ending at the starting point, Rumah Persatuan Alumni (RPA), Petaling Jaya.

The run was organized for the first time by Keep Alike Cancer Community Program, Community & Industry Relations Centre (CITRA) UM and PAUL to help raise awareness on colorectal cancer.

According to the organizer, Dr. Loh Swee Yim, from the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, even though the run was held a day after the long holiday period, the response was encouraging as around 30 participants turned up.

“We worked around the clock to organize this event as we had only three weeks to prepare. Even though it was held a day after the Chinese New Year holidays and a normal working day, we still managed to gather a sizable crowd.

“You may have heard about the pink ribbon. Pink ribbon raises cancer which is the number one cancer among women in Malaysia.

“Blue ribbon, on the other hand, hopes to raise awareness on colorectal cancer which is not well known in the country but effects many Malaysians,” she added.

Tan Sri Dr. Mahadewran launching the Blue Wave Walk
Participants walking along the designated route.

"You'll never walk alone" - Abdi Malik being given support and encouragement along the walk.

Participants and organizers taking a commemorative photo after the walk.