COUNTRY: Malaysia

COMMITTE: World Health Organization (WHO)

AGENDA ITEM: Uncontrolled use of technology and digital obesity

The Government of Malaysia is based in the Federal Territory of Putrajaya, with the exception of the legislative branch, which is located in Kuala Lumpur. With a population of over 32 million, Malaysia is the world's 45th-most populous country. The capital city of Malaysia is located in the Federal District of Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia’s native language is Malay .The top religion in Malaysia is Islam, but still other religions are practiced in peace and harmony.

Uncontrolled use of technology and the internet brings various behavioral addictions that can harm people both physically and psychological. Unconscious and uncontrolled use of technology and the internet is a type of addiction that manifests itself with addictive sub-behaviors such as behavioral addictions, internet gaming disorder, and excessive use of social media and smartphones.

“Digital Obesity”—the problem of too much data—arises from recent advances in storage and communication technologies. Digital obesity is basically about overconsuming (of information), not giving enough rest. It is basically the same as constantly eating, never doing anything else.

Overdependence on the internet is a grave concern that has enveloped Malaysian youths which could lead to a variety of sequelae. Internet overdependence is regarded as a 3-factor model encompassing salience, self-control failure, and serious consequences. Sociodemographic factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity, as well as psychosocial factors such as depression, anxiety, stress, and loneliness, were found to be associated with internet overdependence among Malaysian youths. Malaysia recorded a notable increase in national internet usage from 76.9 to 88.7%, in a 4-year period, with 85.9% of them being individuals aged 44 and below.

Overdependence on the internet is prevalent among youths in Malaysia. It is associated with certain modifiable risk and vulnerability factors. However, evidence on its preventive and treatment measures is lacking and inconclusive.

To get rid of tech addictions, we can limit hours of daily internet use through weekly schedules or participating in support groups or family therapy. Guiding children to meet their friends in natural environments and enabling them to socialize in peer groups are also advised for families.