

## **The first report on incidence of nasopharyngeal carcinoma in Sabah Borneo**

### **ABSTRACT**

Nasopharyngeal carcinoma (NPC) is the fourth common cancer in Malaysia. A few studies have looked into the incidence of NPC in Malaysia in general, but there has been no published data on its incidence in Sabah specifically, where NPC is very common among the population. The aim of this study is to present the first report on the incidence of NPC in the state of Sabah, Borneo. Data of all patients diagnosed with NPC over a 5-year period from January 2015 to December 2019 inclusive were collected from the NPC registry of 3 main hospitals in Sabah. Age-standardized rates (ASRs) for different genders, ethnicities, and districts of origin were calculated. 215 NPC patients were identified with a mean age at diagnosis of 49 (range 9–82). The ASR of NPC was 7.9/100,000 where the average age-adjusted male-to-female ratio was 2.4. The highest ASR was found in Dusun ethnicity in both male (3.19/100,000) and female (1.69/100,000) individuals, followed by Chinese (both genders), and Kadazan (for male individuals) and Bajau (for female individuals). The highest ASR was found in patients originating from Sandakan, Kota Kinabalu, Keningau, and Tawau. This is the first report on the incidence of NPC in Sabah, Borneo. The data suggest high ASRs among the population, especially in male Dusun and Chinese ethnic groups. Further research looking into NPC in this state, especially on risk factors and ways to improve diagnosis and prevention among the population, is recommended.