ALEEVAR CONSULTING

Elevating business, enabling capacity building

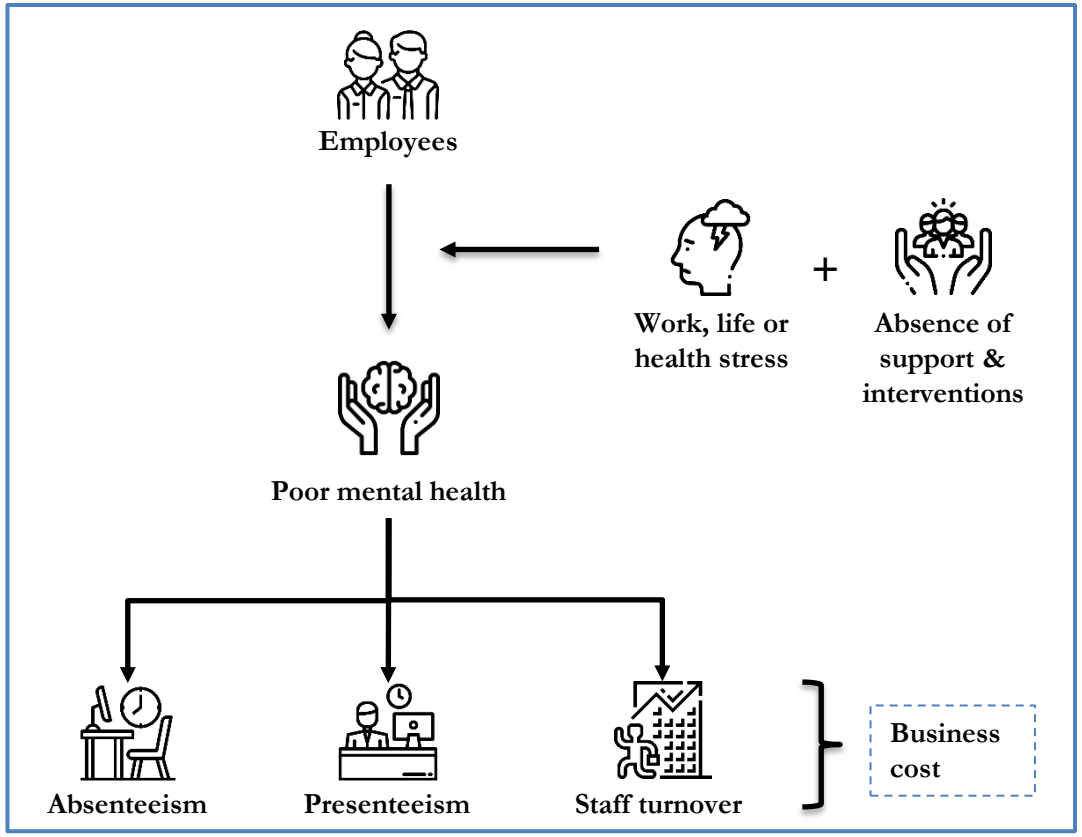
Maintaining Good Organisational Culture and Mental Wellbeing

Opening Remarks

Mental health in workplace and the associated business costs

1 According to AIA's Healthiest Workplace survey in 2018, organisations in Malaysia have suffered on average **73.1 days** of loss in work time per employee due to absenteeism at an average cost to employer of **RM2.27 million** per year.

It was also discovered that **50.2%** of employees have at least one dimension of **work-related stress**; which may eventually lead to poor mental health.



The path of poor mental health in workplace

2 On a **national** level, poor mental health in workplace may employers **RM946 per worker** per annum or a total cost of **RM14.46 billion** or **1% of Malaysia's total GDP.**

At an **organisational** level, it was reported that mental health issues could cost **Petronas** and **Nestle Malaysia RM123 million** and **RM13 million** respectively while for **civil service**, it could even escalate to **RM2.03 billion**.

	Average cost per employee	Total cost to Malaysian employers (RM billion)	Percentage of total cost (%)
Absenteeism	RM214	3.28	22.68
Presenteeism	RM644	9.84	68.04
Turnover	RM88	1.34	9.28
Total cost	RM946	14.46	100

Estimated cost of mental health issues to estimated total workforce in 2018

	PETRONAS	Nestlé (Malaysia)	Large enterprises	Medium SME	Small SME	Civil service
Average number of employees	48,000	5,267	227	66	12	1.6 mil
Absenteeism (RM)	28 mil	3 mil	49,760	11,553	1,808	461 mil
Presenteeism (RM)	84 mil	9 mil	149,281	34,660	5,424	1,382 mil
Staff turnover (RM)	11 mil	1 mil	20,530	4,767	746	190 mil
Total cost (RM)	123 mil	13 mil	219,571	50,980	7,978	2,033 mil

Estimated cost of mental health issues at an organisational level

Source: AIA, Relate; GDP: Gross Domestic Product

Introduction to mental health

1 What exactly is mental health?

Mental health

State of emotional, psychological and social wellbeing

Helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices

Poor mental health ≠ mental illness

Example of mental health service providers: SOLS Health, RELATE, WeCare Allied Health Center

2 Causes and effects of poor mental health & common mental illnesses

Causes

- Severe / long-term stress or poor health condition
- Unemployment or poor housing
- Childhood / adult abuse, trauma or neglect
- Social isolation, discrimination or loneliness
- Social disadvantage (e.g. poverty / debt)

Effects (–)

General
- Quality of life / life satisfaction
- Social problems
- Health complications

Workplace
- Productivity
- Burnout
- Turnover intention
- Job satisfaction

Common mental illnesses

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Eating disorders
- Bipolar disorders
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
- Psychotic disorders (e.g. schizophrenia)

3 Mental health stigma in Malaysia

Portrayal of media

Negative portrayals such as misrepresenting the realities of mental health in fictional stories have pictured mentally ill character as being "crazy".

Cultural beliefs

Cultural backgrounds dominated by religious or spiritual beliefs usually perceive mental health problems with demon possession, divine punishment or sickness of the soul.

Inaccurate perception

Belief that only weak people succumb to mental issues where sufferers are labelled as crazy, weak, over-sensitive, lacking in faith or over-dramatic.

4 The state of mental health in Malaysia

En route to becoming the second largest illness

According to the 2015 National Health Morbidity Survey, mental health conditions or mental illnesses are expected to rise as the second biggest health issue after heart disease this coming 2020.

300% increase in the number of patients from 2018 to 2019

According to Women, Family and Community Development Social Welfare Department (JKM), there was an increase from 671 people in 2018 to 1,929 people in 2019 attending public psychological and counselling services.

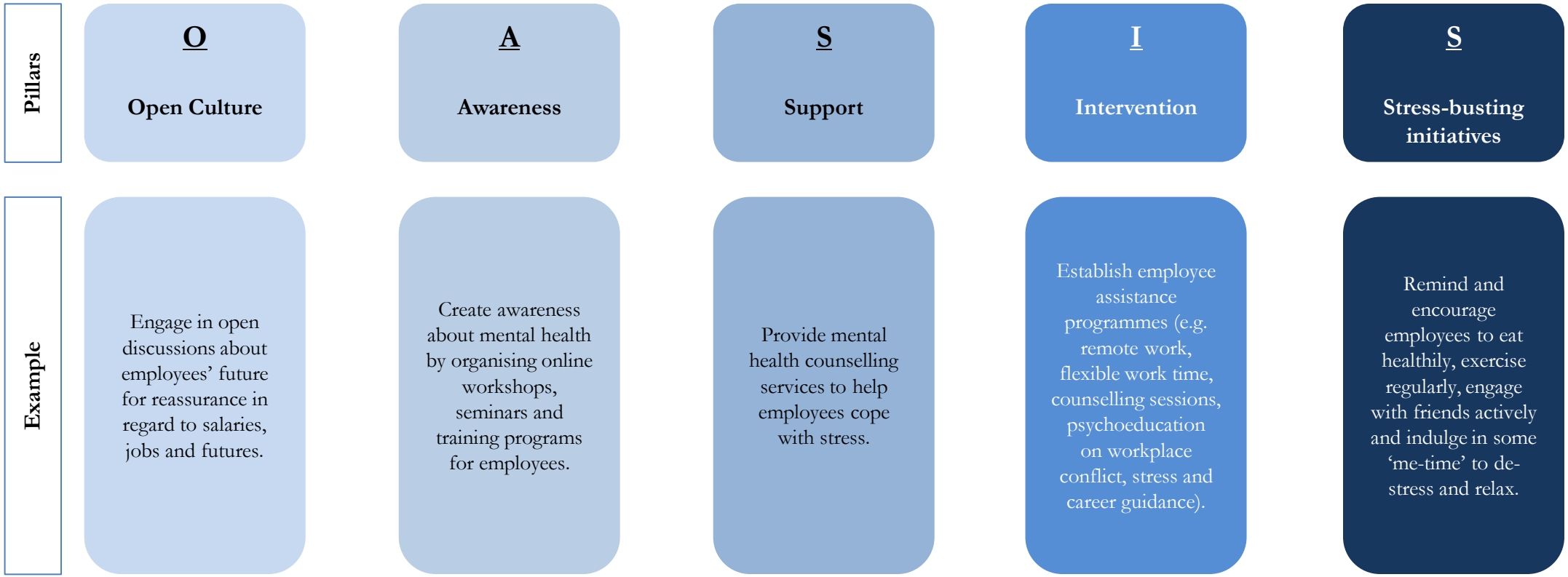
Malaysians' knowledge, beliefs and attitudes about mental health

63.2% find it hard to talk to someone with mental health problems, **62.3%** would not want their mental health problems (if they do suffer from it) to be known to the public and **61%** people believe that mental health patients should be blamed for their own condition. [n=587]

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, AIA, Mind U.K., Unite For Sight, Relate

How organisations can maintain employee mental health

OASIS



Source: Relate, Business Standard

Organisational trends in tackling mental health

Use cases

Common best practices

Flexible work arrangement

- Employees may squeeze in gym time between meetings or attend to other important matters.
- Parents that may need to pick up or drop off their children at school

Remote work

- Those working from home get to be closer to their families.
- New parents may need to stay at home to take care of their newborn baby.

Physical wellness programme

- E.g. fitness challenge, marathons, or sports & wellness club – Zumba, badminton, yoga, hiking

Facilities

- E.g. pantry, gaming room, nursing room, gym, townhall, clinic

- **Reduce stress**
- **Increase productivity**
- **Prevent workplace burnout**

- **Maintain low turnover rate**
- **Attract and retain the female workforce**

Other best practices

Mindvalley

Conspec Group of Companies

Dell

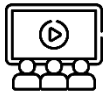
Yayasan Pahang

In-house coaching and therapy / EAP therapy / Counselling sessions

Workplace optimisation

Family-invited events

Mental health assessment



Online learning platform

Annual team engagement

Mental wellness workshops

Herb garden

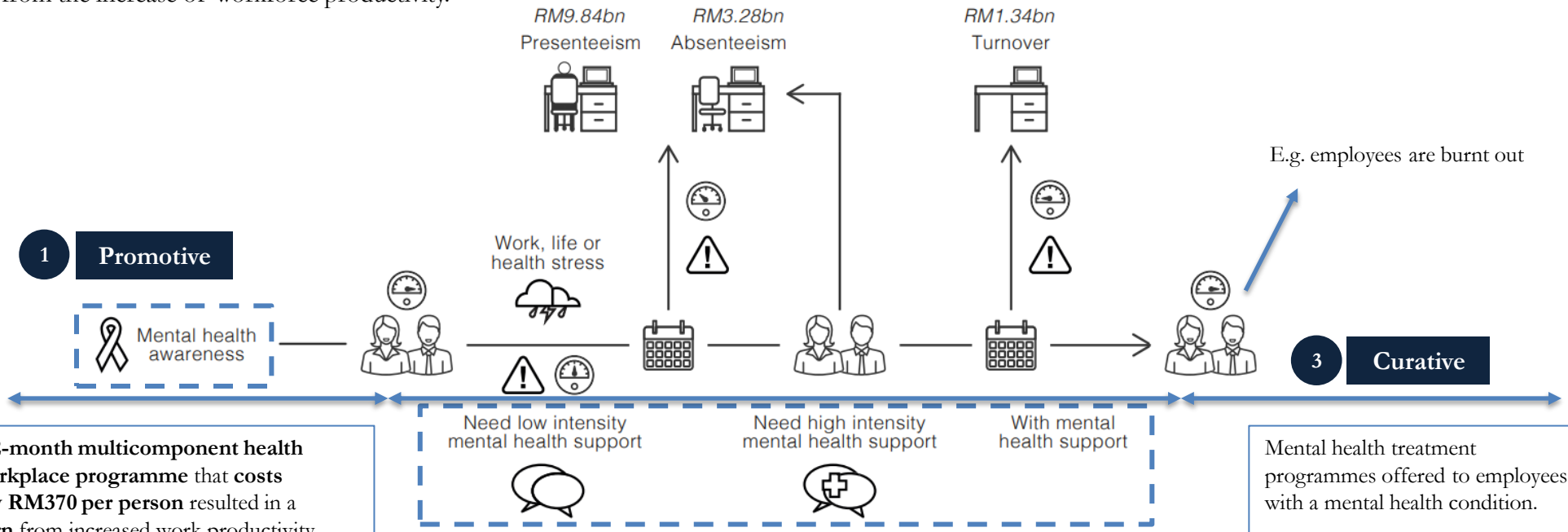
30-day paternity leave

Social activities

Source: The Edge Markets, AIA; EAP: Employee Assistance Programme

Why should we focus on promotive & preventive rather than curative?

In the diagram below, the process is segmented into three parts where promotive, preventive and curative measures come into place. It is important for organisations to focus on promotive and preventive measures rather than curative and rehabilitative as it could largely reduce the business costs of poor mental health while potentially have a return on investment from the increase of workforce productivity.



In the UK, a **12-month multicomponent health promotion workplace programme** that **costs approximately RM370 per person** resulted in a **RM3,670 return** from increased work productivity, reduced absenteeism and lower likelihood of experiencing work-related stress and depression, yielding a **return of investment (ROI) of 9.91**.

E.g. personalised health and well-being information and advice; a health-risk appraisal questionnaire; access to a tailored health improvement web portal, wellness literature, and seminars and workshops focused on identified wellness issues

For workers who are at risk of a mental health condition, a **targeted preventive programme** consisting of stress management skills workshops and individual counselling sessions had an **ROI of 1.41.** It was effective in reducing the rate of depression by 45% and the total rate of sickness absenteeism.

A randomised control trial in the UK found that cognitive behavioural therapy-based preventive programmes improved mental well-being for workers who had 10 or more sickness absence days due to poor mental health.

Mental health treatment programmes offered to employees with a mental health condition.

E.g. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or mental health services.

Source: Relate

What we can do for you. Consider these three service offerings

Employee / Organisational assessment

- Provide employee satisfaction study (i.e. behaviours and attitudes) in roles and responsibilities in achieving organisational goals and wellbeing
- Ascertain organisational culture impact on employee job performance as well as organisational productivity

Capacity building

- Review state of businesses such as customers, staff, suppliers, stakeholders, learning & development and suggest activities to promote and cultivate good organisational culture

Strategy roadmap

- Facilitate workshop with key team members to provide organisational and business operation alignment

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Contact

Yap Far Loon, Managing Director : +6012 303 6668

Kushairi Lotfi , Director : +6012 225 5874

Aleevar Consulting Sdn Bhd (1307325-H)
Unit 32-01, Level 32, Tower B
The Vertical Corporate Towers
Avenue 10, Bangsar South
No. 8 Jalan Kerinchi
59200 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Web: www.aleevar.com
Email : info@aleevar.com
Direct Tel: +603-2786 7405
General Fax: +603-2786 3501