

# HOW MANY DEATHS WERE 'AVOIDABLE' IN 2017?



Ministry of Health Malaysia



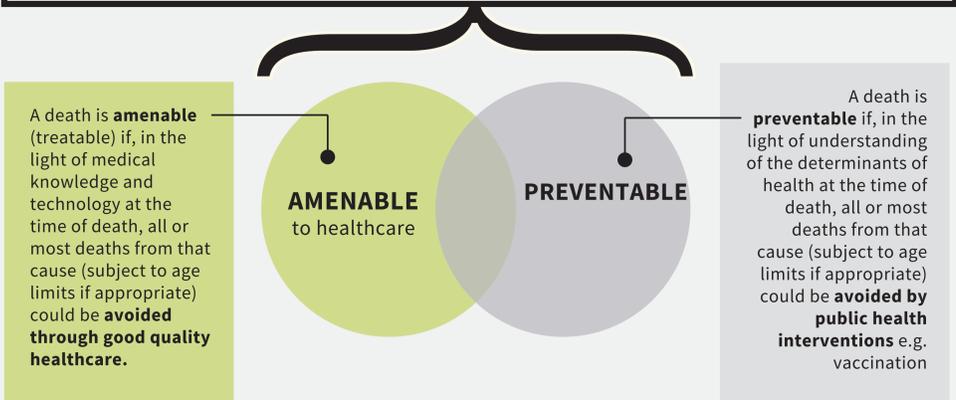
LA Tan, Azahadi O, Shubash S, MFuad MAnuar, Nazirah A  
Centre for Burden of Disease Research, Institute for Public Health, Ministry of Health, Malaysia

## INTRODUCTION

'Avoidable' mortality provides a measure of the quality of healthcare, public health services, and health policy<sup>1,2</sup>. It is based on the concept that deaths caused by certain conditions, for which effective medical and public health interventions are available, should be rare, and ideally should not occur<sup>3,4</sup>.



Avoidable mortality has two components<sup>4</sup>; these are defined as **AMENABLE** and **PREVENTABLE**:



\* Avoidable deaths are all those defined as preventable, amenable or both, where each death is counted only once; where a cause of death is both preventable and amenable, all deaths from that cause are counted in both categories when they are presented separately.

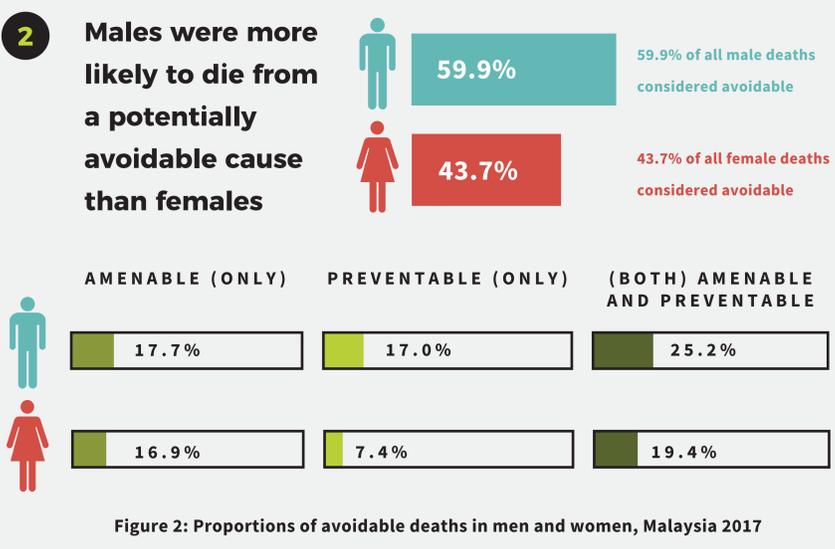
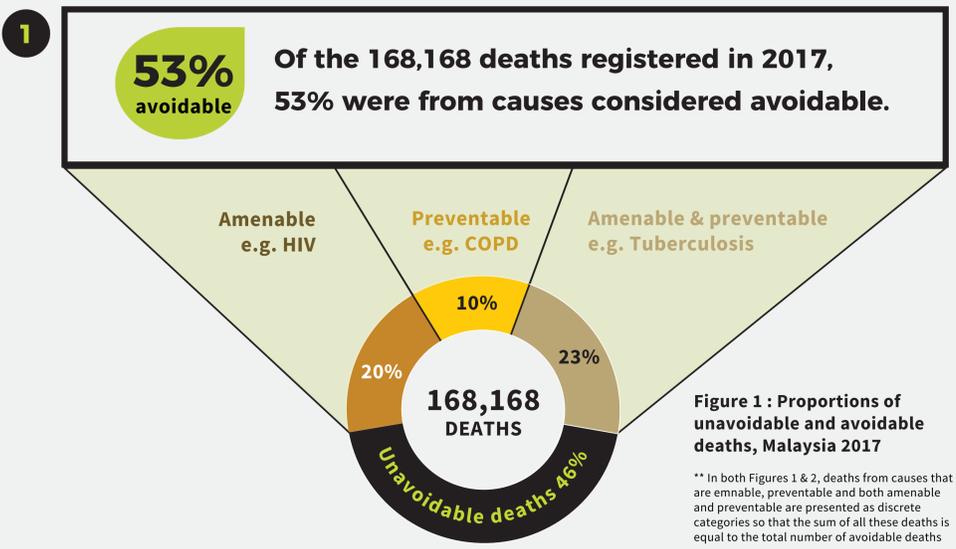
## OBJECTIVE

Existing literature on avoidable mortality only focused on high-income countries<sup>5</sup>. Where global comparison was done, only estimated figures for Malaysia were used<sup>3</sup>. **This study explores levels of avoidable mortality in Malaysia for the year 2017.**

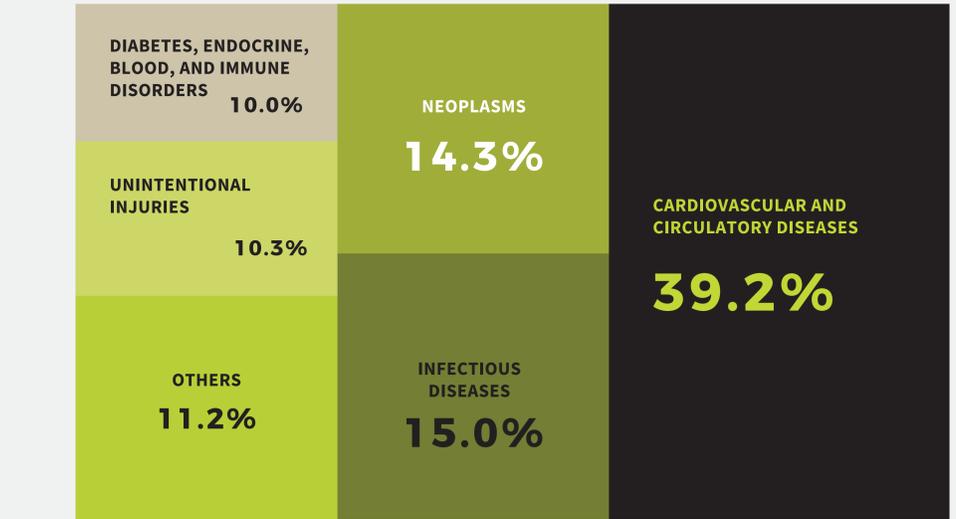
## METHODOLOGY

All registered deaths in Malaysia in 2017 were classified using a modified selection of 'avoidable' conditions based on previously published lists<sup>6-10</sup>, which had been revised in keeping with local disease patterns and burden. 'Avoidable' deaths are further classed into 'amenable' deaths and 'preventable' deaths, which are not mutually exclusive (refer adjacent diagram). Adjusted cause-specific mortality estimates (based on algorithms derived from the 2013 Study on Determination of Cause of Deaths in Malaysia)<sup>11</sup> were used to account for the large number of non-medically certified deaths in the country.

## KEY FINDINGS



**3 The two largest broad groups contributing to avoidable death were cardiovascular and circulatory diseases and infectious diseases.**



## DISCUSSION / CONCLUSION

Overall, the avoidable mortality rate in Malaysia was found to be considerably higher than in other countries in which similar studies were done<sup>1,2,4,5,7-9</sup>. **There are obvious limitations to using avoidable mortality to measure how effective our healthcare system is; many other factors affect overall levels of health such as well-planned and smart urbanisation, as well as advances in education, road safety and housing.** Still, observing avoidable mortality trends over time and across the socioeconomic spectrum may provide new insights into inequalities in access to care within populations in Malaysia.

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