

MEDIA RELEASE

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IJN PERFORMS MALAYSIA'S FIRST PAEDIATRIC LVAD IMPLANTATION

KUALA LUMPUR, 24 April 2025 – Institut Jantung Negara (IJN) has made medical history by successfully performing Malaysia's first Paediatric Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD) implantation, marking a significant breakthrough in the nation's paediatric cardiac care capabilities.

The pioneering procedure was carried out on 29 March 2025 on 12-year-old Jackson Foong Yi Jie, who was urgently referred to IJN with symptoms of advanced heart failure. Upon admission, Jackson's condition deteriorated rapidly, culminating in seizures and ventricular fibrillation—a life-threatening cardiac arrhythmia.

In a critical decision, IJN's multidisciplinary team implanted a Paediatric LVAD—a mechanical circulatory support device designed to temporarily take over the pumping function of the heart as bridge to recovery. The device stabilizes patients with severe heart failure, offering the heart time to recover or serving as a bridge to heart transplantation if required.

"This was a life-saving intervention," said Mr. Khairul Anuar bin Abdul Aziz, Deputy Head of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery Department, who led the operation. "The LVAD enabled us to maintain circulation and provide the necessary time for the heart to regain function." A multidisciplinary team—including cardiothoracic surgeons, anesthetists, paediatric cardiologists, perfusionists, nurses, and operating theatre technicians—were mobilized to ensure the procedure's success.

After 16 days of LVAD support, Jackson's heart function improved significantly, allowing the device to be safely removed on 14 April 2025.

"Jackson has this contagious smile, and everyone involved in his care is thrilled that he has made an almost full recovery—with no neurological symptoms despite experiencing cardiac arrest," said Dr Joyce Darshinee, Consultant Paediatric Cardiac Intensivist, who played a key role in Jackson's postoperative care. "Fortunately, his heart recovered, and he didn't need a heart transplant."

Jackson is making a remarkable recovery on the ward and is targeted to be discharged from IJN soon. This landmark achievement reflects IJN's steadfast commitment to advancing treatment for complex paediatric heart conditions and reinforces its leadership in cardiac innovation, both nationally and regionally.

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ABOUT INSTITUT JANTUNG NEGARA

Institut Jantung Negara (IJN) has been Malaysia's leading heart specialist center since 1992, providing advanced care for a full range of heart, lung, and vascular diseases in both adults and children. As the nation's premier tertiary referral center, IJN manages complex cases with unmatched expertise, performing over 4,400 cardiothoracic surgeries and 17,000 cardiac catheterization procedures annually. It is also a lifeline for children, conducting over more 1,500 pediatric heart surgeries and serving more than 15,000 pediatric patients each year.

Recognized as a finalist in the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council's Flagship Medical Tourism Hospital Programme, IJN attracts international patients seeking world-class treatments. Beyond clinical care, IJN contributes to medical research, outreach, and education, reinforcing its role as a cornerstone of Malaysia's healthcare system.

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