

Doctor Turned Entrepreneur: The Rise of Primer Cherang

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Prologue

In the bustling town of Kota Bharu, Kelantan, a clinic stands tall, known for its vibrant red exterior- a symbol of strength and its deep connection to the local community. This is Primer Cherang, a medical clinic that has not only served patients with exceptional care but also became a beacon of entrepreneurial success in Malaysia. Today, Primer Cherang is more than just a clinic; it is the legacy of Dr. Safwan, a man whose journey from a dedicated doctor to a pioneering entrepreneur changed the healthcare landscape in his home state and beyond.

"I wonder... will they remember me? When they speak of Primer Cherang in years to come, will they remember me as Dr. Safwan, the doctor who wanted to help, or as Dr. Safwan, the businessman who built a legacy?"

Dr. Safwan Background

Dr. Mohd Safwan bin Saifudin best known as Dr. Safwan, a 38-year-old doctor from Kelantan, built his career through hard work and a passion for medicine. His journey began with academic excellence, starting from Kolej Mara Banting and continuing his studies at the International Baccalaureate Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland 2006 until 2011. He completed his medical training and gained valuable experience working at Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia (HUSM), Kubang Kerian, Kelantan and he served for a year before being transferred to Hospital Raja Perempuan Zainab II, Kota Bharu as a Medical Officer under the Pediatric Department. Throughout his years of service, Dr. Safwan treated countless patients and realized that the healthcare system needed a more personalized approach- something beyond the walls of large hospitals.

His passion for treating joint and nerve pain, especially knee issues, sparked the idea of creating his own clinic. He wanted to provide specialized treatments that patients could easily access in mainstream hospitals. For Dr. Safwan, opening his own clinic wasn't just about starting a business- it was about offering a sanctuary where people, especially those from low-income backgrounds, could find relief and healing.

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KEYWORDS

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Disclaimer

This case is written solely for educational purposes and is not intended to represent successful or unsuccessful managerial decision-making. The authors may have disguised names; financial and other recognisable information to protect confidentiality.

Building the Vision

When Dr. Safwan finally decided to open Primer Cherang in 2013, he faced a series of challenges. Transitioning from doctor to entrepreneur wasn't easy. He lacked business experience, but his drive to help patients gave him the courage to move forward. He partnered with Dr. Rahimie, and together they built a clinic that focused on patient-centered care, specializing in joint pain treatments.

Dr. Safwan and Dr. Rahimie's ability to balance business objectives with a deep sense of social responsibility has become a testament to the power of integrating purpose into entrepreneurship. They showed that it's possible to pursue ambitious goals, build a successful business, and still provide essential services that truly matter.

"Our journey wasn't easy, it required genuine effort, long hours, and an unwavering commitment to both our patients and business goals."

The clinic's bright red and black colours were chosen intentionally, representing strength and connection to Kelantan's roots. Primer Cherang quickly earned a reputation for its friendly staff, excellent care, and comfortable environment. The founders focused on hiring team members with varied skills, ensuring that the clinic could offer comprehensive services to its patients. Despite the competitive nature of the healthcare industry, Primer Cherang stood out by offering specialized services that other clinics didn't provide.

Overcoming Challenges

As the clinic expanded, so did the challenges. Competition from new private clinics and larger pharmacies was inevitable, but Dr. Safwan remained undeterred. He viewed competition not as a threat but as an opportunity to refine and improve Primer Cherang's services. His passion for providing personalized care only grew stronger.

Even when COVID-19 hit, the clinic remained resilient. Primer Cherang was one of the first private clinics to offer swab tests and vaccines, further cementing its role as a leader in the healthcare community. They also established private quarantine centers in collaboration with major hotels, further extending their reach and services.

Community Impact and Growth

Primer Cherang's commitment to helping low-income patients, particularly from the B40 and Asnaf groups, became a cornerstone of its business. Through their corporate social responsibility initiative, the Kawe Demo Clinic, they provided free treatments funded by zakat contributions. This focus on social responsibility earned the clinic not only goodwill but also a loyal patient base.

By 2020, Primer Cherang had expanded to more than 20 branches across Malaysia, with plans to continue growing. The clinic's range of products, including Vitamin C Plus and skincare items, complemented its medical services and contributed to its success. Dr. Safwan's mission had become

a reality- Primer Cherang was not just a clinic; it was a symbol of accessible healthcare and entrepreneurial achievement.

Epilogue

Today, Dr. Safwan's journey is far from over. Primer Cherang continues to expand, bringing quality healthcare to more Malaysians. As he looks back on his journey, Dr. Safwan reflects on the challenges he overcome- not just as a doctor, but as an entrepreneur who created a thriving business rooted in compassion and care. His story is a testament to the power of perseverance, vision, and the unwavering desire to make a difference.

"Maybe, after all these years, I've finally found the balance. Between the doctor I always wanted to be and the entrepreneur I needed to become." "Yes... that's enough"

