**AKHBAR** : HARIAN METRO

**MUKA SURAT: 20A** RUANGAN : LOKAL

# Tiada peniaga jual gula-gula berasap

Kuala Lumpur: Selepas mbil tindakan segera selepas "Gula-gula ghost smoke itu penjualan ghost smoke diharamkan baru-baru ini, tiada lagi peruncit ataupun mana-mana pihak menjual gula-gula itu di pasaran tem-

Timbalan Menteri Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Hal Ehwal Pengguna, Chong Chieng Jen berkata, penguat kuasa kementerian mengaKementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) mengeluarkan arahan untuk mengharamkan penjualan ghost smoke.

"Kajian makmal dibuat Bahagian Keselamatan dan Kualiti Makanan, KKM mendapati tiada apa-apa bahan kimia dipercayai boleh memudaratkan pengguyang mengeluarkan asap ketika kanak-kanak makan seperti merokok.

"Oleh itu, KKM mengeluarkan arahan mengharamkan penjualannya dan penguat kuasa kita menjalankan operasi dengan se-

"Setakat ini, tak ada lagi peruncit menjual gula-gula ghost smoke ini di pasaran negara," katanya pada sidang Dewan Rakyat di sini, semalam.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika menjawab soalan Datuk Che Abdullah Mat Nawi (Pas-Tumpat) yang ingin tahu berkenaan isu ghost smoke dan langkah pencegahan penjualannya khususnya dalam kalangan murid.

**AKHBAR** : **NEW STRAITS TIMES** 

**MUKA SURAT: 10** 

**RUANGAN**: NEWS/NATION

#### **RESULTS IN 2 WEEKS**

### 'MMEA officer's death unlikely due to Zika virus'

**GEORGE TOWN:** The Health Ministry is doubtful the death of a Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) officer in Manjung is due to the Zika virus.

Health Ministry directorgeneral Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said it was highly unlikely that the 30-year-old man died due to the mosquitoborne virus.

"He was suspected to have dengue and leptospirosis as well, so it (the death) is highly unlikely to be because of the Zika virus.

"We are still investigating," he said after launching the Malaysia-Ireland Training Programme for Family Medicine at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and University College Dublin Malaysia Campus here yesterday.

The deceased, identified as Lieutenant Maritime Mohamad Ikmal, was found vomiting and suffering from diarrhoea on Sept 26.

He was admitted to hospital the following day before being transferred to the Intensive Care Unit at Manjung Hospital here on Sept 29.

The infection was registered with the state Health Depart-

ment on Oct 12.

It was learnt that the deceased, who served on board the MMEA vessel *KM Nusa Maritim* in Terengganu, was pronounced dead at 4.45am on Friday.

The Health Ministry expects the results on the cause of his death to be made known in two weeks' time.

Dr Noor Hisham said Malaysia still faced a shortage of doctors trained in family medicine.

He said these doctors were capable of managing chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular and mental health issues at an affordable cost at their clinics. Currently, there are only 700 such doctors, with the majority of them serving in the private sector.

"The country needs at least 8,000 more family medicine specialists to fulfil the needs of the population, with the target ratio of one specialist to 4,000 people.

"While we strive to ensure we have a sufficient number of doctors required to meet the size of our growing population, we must also ensure they are sufficiently trained and of good quality."

AKHBAR : THE STAR

**MUKA SURAT: 1** 

**RUANGAN: NATION** 



**AKHBAR** : THE STAR

**MUKA SURAT: 4** 

RUANGAN : NATION

## Costly meds a bitter pill to swallow

### Many companies turning to pharmacies due to high medicine prices at private clinics

By EDDIE CHUA and TAN SHIOW CHIN

PETALING JAYA: High prices of medication charged by private clinics and private hospi-tals has forced companies to deal directly with pharmacies in an effort to reduce opera

with pharmacies in an error to reduce opera-tional cost.

The move, which is trending among many local companies, helps them save millions of ringgit yearly in staff medical benefits.

Similarly, individuals who are on long-term

medication would also be able to save as much as 40% if they buy directly from inde-

pendent pharmacy stores.

A pharmaceutical industry source said the trend emerged slightly over a year ago when companies were trying to reduce their opera-

The source said companies found that by The source said companies found that by dealing directly with independent pharmacies, they could save substantially for their employees' long-term medicines, especially those who have been diagnosed for diabetic, hypertension, cardiovascular and chronic kidney diseases.

The source said the medication obtained from such pharmacies cost the employers.

from such pharmacies cost the employers between 20% and 150% less than that charged by the private clinics and private hospitals.

"As such, buying directly from the pharmacy can help them to tremendously reduce their medical bills."

A one-month supply of medicine for high blood pressure, for example, may cost RM75 at an independent pharmacy but the same medicine can be priced at between RM90 and RM100 at private clinics while the cost at private hospitals varies between RM150 and

RM200.
"There is no price control to regulate the cost of these medicines and employers have no choice then but to bear the cost."

Companies eventually realised that they could save as much as 40% by buying direct from independent pharmacies, especially for their workers who are on long-term medica-

DESCRIPTION	HUCY CODE GAA	THUOMA (Not)	DISCOURT (NO.)	GROSS AMDUNT (RM)	TAE TAE CODE ANOUNT (NR)	PAYARES .
g Group Description MEDICA	TION		THE PROPERTY			Name and
CAP (CONTENTE Q10 100HD CAP (CONTENTE Q10) OTC. BE	60	139.00	0.00	339.00	0,00 ES	119
(AMLODIFINE ATORVASTA IN) B. BL		194.00	9.60	356,50	9.60 KS	396.50
TAG (TRUNCARTAN-HCT) 1	40	240.00	0.00	240.00	0.60 Wh	240 66
18 ESSENTIALE PORTE N CAP 300NG (ESSENTIAL PHOSYNOLIPIDE 300NG) 508 OTC. ER	120 -	351,60	0.00	351.60	6,80 %3	361.65
8 NEBILET SHO TAB (NEBIVOLOL) B	40	258.00	0.00	286.00	0.00 25	288,00
PLAVIX 75MG TAB (CLOPIDOGREL NYDROGEN SULFATE) 14S B, PK	60	618.00	0.00	618.00	0.90 IS	410.00
ULTRACET 37.5MG/325MG TAB (TRAMADOL - PARACETANOL) B	30	93.00	0.00	\$3.00	0.00 %	53.00
(ALLOPURINOL) 195 Bp W	60	282.00	0.00	282.00	0.00 ES	282.0
SUB TOTAL		2,607.60	0.00	2,607.60	0.00	2,607.6
GRAND TOTAL					-	2,607.6
GRAND TOTAL						-

Three different prices: The price of longterm medication obtained from a private hospital (left) compared with a regular walk-in customer and corporate discount (right) at the local pharmacy store.

Tax Invoice
SOCOCOCC VOULK - UN

UNDOCCOCC WOLK - U 200-001004 Q2FQ015 10040 C4F15 2505233 66F30415 B00 2460F34 CASSIST MINE (2010 THE 15 140/4141 40.70(20.49 0.70 174.40 24 CHOURT tomacting fee us CO-97-00181 900/10.0100 149-16 MODELLE 900/10.010 948-16 MODELLE 900/10.010 948-16 150,000 MAR FORTH WEAR 15 (FACE C+ 52) 140,0014 210,000,014 0.00 232,00 0A Father log tax 15 1600 00 -03400 29 MANUSTRA 548-18 140/2015 48-51-97-77 0-00 416-10 24 \$1794C17 37.40G15 1800401 . 36.6001 35 600 \$1.60 26 SERVICE PROPERTY SERVICES SALE AS AS AS AS SUTTO- AMOUNT (AND CATERY)

The source said it is a huge saving for companies with a large workforce adding that a company with over 40,000 employees could save up to RM8 million a year through such

Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society treasurer Lim Jack Shen acknowledged that pharmacists could assist companies to reduce their medical cost.

He said aside from being able to help reduce cost, they would also assist to monitor

and advise on the drugs dispensed to patients.

He said doctors and pharmacists could work together to expand medical knowledge.

"While the doctors' role is to diagnose and treat a patient, the pharmacists oversee the dispensing of the drugs, to ensure the appropriate use of medications and medication safety."

He said pharmacists were not trying to play doctors and undercut the business by dispensing the medicine to the patients.

"Each of the prescriptions issued by the doctors has a validity of three months under the Health Ministry regulation and require-

ments.
"As such, pharmacists dispensing these

drugs would require the patients to get a fresh prescription every three months, to ensure they undergo proper medical review

ensure they undergo proper medical review and checkup.

Malaysian Medical Association president Dr N. Ganabaskaran said it is the patient's right to get their medicine directly from the pharmacy as long as they follow the existing law on prescription and dispensing of drugs. However, he said, the patients have to

come back to see a doctor for follow-ups and monitoring of drugs adherence, compliance and review the outcome of the treatment.

"Clinics are stringently regulated under the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act to protect the patients. Pharmacy outlets are not regulated."

Therefore, he said, they are concerned with patients' safety and care being compromised

patients salety and care being compromised through such programmes.

According to a private general practitioner (GP) in the Klang Valley, medicines that are bought in small quantity cost a lot, compared to those bought in bulk.

"I may have only one patient taking a particular medication, so I only buy one box a month just for this patient, for

example," he said.

example, "ne said.
"Clinics in a chain, like Mediviron o Qualitas, get their medications in bulk.
"The HQ buys all the medicines for them a a big discounted price, then the individua clinics buy what they need from the HQ a that cheaper price."

He added that wholesale pharmacies tha

supply clinics provide certain price packages according to the amount of medicines being

bought.

"If I buy just one box, it will be at cost price which can be pretty expensive for certain

But if I buy 1,000 boxes, the pharmacy wil give me another 500 for free, so if you coun the price for the 1,500 boxes altogether, I'm

getting a 33% discount on the cost price.

"And the more you buy, the more 'free boxes you get and the larger the discount," he said.

He added that private GPs rely on the prof

it from medications to sustain their business as the consultation fees (currently RM10-35 per consultation) are too low for doctors to make a living.