

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

91 kes
jumlah
sebenar
kematian
kelmarin

Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) merekodkan 250 kematian akibat dijangkiti COVID-19, kelmarin, menjadikan jumlah kumulatif kematian setakat ini sebanyak 24,931 kes.

Berdasarkan data dikemas kini di portal COVIDNOW setakat jam 11.59 malam kelmarin, daripada jumlah itu, angka sebenar kes kematian dilaporkan kelmarin berjumlah 91 kes.

Ini menjadikan jumlah kes kematian tertunggak atau 'backlog' setakat semalam berjumlah 159 kes.

Mengikut data untuk dua minggu terkini berdasarkan kematian per 100,000 populasi, Malaysia secara keseluruhannya dilaporkan merekodkan 5.9 peratus kes kematian.

Berdasarkan data mengikut negeri pula, Pulau Pinang paling tinggi kematian akibat COVID-19 dengan 15.6 peratus, diikuti Johor (11.2 peratus), Sabah (7.6 peratus), Perlis (6.3 peratus), Kelantan (5.9 peratus) dan Kedah 5 peratus).

Melaka dan Perak masing-masing merekodkan lima peratus kes kematian. Disusuli Sarawak dengan 3.8 peratus, Pahang (3.7 peratus), Kuala Lumpur (3.6 peratus), Terengganu (3.5 peratus), Selangor (3.2 peratus) dan Negeri Sembilan 2.6 peratus.

Dua kawasan jajahan Wilayah Persekutuan, iaitu Labuan dan Putrajaya adalah sifar peratus kes kematian.

Mengenai jumlah individu yang diarah untuk menjalani kuarantin di rumah, data COVIDNOW menunjukkan, ia membabitkan 83.7 peratus bersamaan 163,875 kes daripada keseluruhan 195,837 kes aktif.

Mereka yang menjalani kuarantin di Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan COVID-19 (PKRC) berjumlah 20,786 kes bersamaan dengan 10.6 peratus. Di hospital pula, ia membabitkan 10,121 kes atau 5.2 peratus.

Sementara itu, Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata kes harian COVID-19 mencatat sedikit penurunan apabila sejumlah 13,899 direkodkan semalam, berbanding lebih 14,000 kes kelmarin.

Katanya, ia menjadikan jumlah jangkitan yang direkodkan kepada 2,185,131 kes, sejak wabak itu mula dikesan di negara ini awal tahun lalu.

Penularan COVID-19

Orang ramai usah gusar isi borang Penilaian Kendiri

Panggilan telefon, SMS daripada petugas KKM sebahagian tugas pemantauan CAC maya

Oleh Fahmy A Rosli
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Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) menasihatkan orang awam supaya tidak gusar jika menerima panggilan telefon atau pesanan melalui khidmat pesanan ringkas (SMS) meminta mereka mengisi borang Penilaian Kendiri (HAT) dalam aplikasi MySejahtera.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, panggilan telefon

dan SMS itu dilakukan petugas KKM sebagai sebahagian daripada tugas pemantauan Pusat Penilaian COVID-19 (CAC) maya.

"Mesej ini adalah sah. KKM sedang menghubungi kes COVID-19 melalui panggilan telefon 03-2703 3000 dan melalui SMS untuk mengingatkan mereka supaya mengisi HAT dalam MySejahtera bagi pemantauan CAC maya," katanya dalam hantaran di Facebook, semalam.

Berdasarkan tangkap layar SMS dikongsikan Dr Noor Hisham, ia tertera mesej mengkehendaki individu terbabit yang positif COVID-19 supaya menjawab status kesihatan dengan segera melalui HAT di aplikasi MySejahtera.

Selain itu, individu terbabit juga dikehendaki mengisytiharkan kontak rapat selepas disahkan positif COVID-19.

Berdasarkan penjelasan Pusat Kesiapsiagaan dan Tindakan Cepat Krisis Kebangsaan (CPRC) yang dikongsikan Dr Noor His-

KKM sedang menghubungi kes COVID-19 melalui panggilan telefon 03-2703 3000 dan melalui SMS untuk mengingatkan mereka supaya mengisi Penilaian Kendiri dalam MySejahtera bagi pemantauan CAC maya

Dr Noor Hisham
Abdullah,
Ketua
Pengarah
Kesihatan



ham menerusi Facebook miliknya semalam, beliau menegaskan sebarang panggilan menerusi nombor telefon terbabit atau melalui SMS adalah betul.

Pada Julai lalu, Timbalan Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan (Kesihatan Awam), Datuk Dr Chong Chee Kheong dilaporkan berkata, CAC Maya dibangunkan bagi mengurangkan kes positif tidak bergejala atau bergejala ringan.

Katanya, pemantauan kes itu akan diadakan secara maya tanpa keperluan menghadiri pusat penilaian itu secara fizikal selain arahan pengawasan di rumah (HSO) digital juga diberikan melalui aplikasi MySejahtera atau lain-lain dan ia sah dari segi undang-undang.

Sementara itu, Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin ketika di Dewan Rakyat pada Rabu lalu berkata, CAC maya yang diwujudkan di Lembah Klang, akan diperluaskan ke negeri lain, terutama yang merekodkan kes COVID-19 tinggi.

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Penularan COVID-19

Syor beli kit ujian sendiri di farmasi

Orang ramai boleh dapat nasihat penggunaan berbanding pesan dalam talian

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Kuala Lumpur: Orang ramai disarankan membeli kit ujian sendiri COVID-19 di farmasi berbanding menerusi dalam talian.

Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin, berkata ahli farmasi berupaya mendidik orang ramai kaedah penggunaan, penyimpanan dan pelupusan kit itu.

Beliau berkata, ahli farmasi juga boleh memberikan nasihat dan kaunseling sebaik keputusan ujian diperoleh, malah boleh menjelaskan kepada pembeli perbezaan antara jenama kit.

"Ketika kita di landasan untuk bersiap sedia hidup dengan virus, mari kita terus belajar antara satu sama lain, bekerjasama dan membimbing rakyat Malaysia ke fasa endemik.

"Kit ujian saringan sendiri adalah perkara mustahak yang perlu sama pembabitan komuniti farmasi.

"Bersama dengan fasiliti penjagaan kesihatan lain, farmasi

adalah saluran sewajarnya untuk membeli kit ujian sendiri," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika menyampaikan ucapan pelancaran webinar bertajuk *Reinvent Pharmacy Biz: Adapt Beyond the Crisis*, bersempena sambutan Hari Ahli Farmasi Sedunia 2021, semalam.

Sebelum ini, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) menasihatkan orang ramai tidak membeli kit ujian RTK-ab dan RTK-ag dalam talian serta menerusi media sosial untuk kegunaan sendiri.

Dalam ucapannya Khairy turut menyentuh peranan komuniti ahli farmasi yang dianggap mustahak dalam bersama kerajaan memerangi COVID-19.

Ahli Parlimen Rembau itu berkata, golongan berkenaan adalah titik utama aspek penjagaan dan 'penjaga pintu' sistem penjagaan kesihatan negara.

"Antara petunjuk prestasi utama (KPI) Kementerian Kesihatan dalam tempoh 100 hari adalah memberi fokus terhadap persediaan rakyat Malaysia untuk beralih ke fasa endemik.

"Kuncinya adalah perlu libat urus dengan pemegang taruh dan bekerja bersama-sama dengan komuniti ahli farmasi.

"Anda berada di barisan hadapan apabila doktor dan hospital

sebagai petugas barisan hadapan sistem penjagaan kesihatan terlalu terbeban.

"Jadi, yang seterusnya mesti melangkah masuk dengan terabit sama tidak lain adalah komuniti ahli farmasi."

"Kita boleh bekerja bersama-sama dalam bidang seperti ubat pencegahan dan mendidik orang awam bukan hanya mengenai penyakit, tetapi juga kesejahteraan," katanya.

Sementara itu, di **Hulu Terengganu**, Timbalan Menteri

Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Hal Ehwal Pengguna, Datuk Rosol Wahid, berkata kit ujian sendiri akan dijual dengan harga lebih rendah dan mampu milik, selain mudah dibeli apabila pasaran diperluaskan ke premis perniagaan lain seperti pasar raya dan kedai serbaneka, dijangka akhir bulan ini.

Beliau berkata, harga baharu akan diumumkan dalam masa terdekat sebelum sesi persekolahan bermula pada 3 Oktober depan bagi memudahkan ibu bapa membeli kit ujian itu.

"Kita sudah mengadakan perbincangan dengan pemain industri serta farmasi dan kita nampak hasil positif apabila mereka bersetuju untuk menurunkan harga ke paras lebih rendah,"

katanya.



Khairy Jamaluddin

Pengeluaran vaksin pertama negara tiga tahun lagi

Seremban: Kementerian Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi (MOSTI) menjangkakan pengeluaran vaksin COVID-19 pertama di negara ini dapat dilakukan seawal tiga tahun lagi.

Menterinya, Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba, berkata usaha itu sudah bermula menerusi penggunaan teknologi *messenger ribonucleic acid* (mRNA) yang dibangunkan dengan kerjasama tenaga pakar dalam dan luar negara.

Katanya, selain membangunkan vaksin sendiri, MOSTI juga berkeupayaan untuk membangunkan Pusat Vaksin Kebangsaan (NVC).

"Usaha mengumpulkan data masih dilakukan dan pengeluaran vaksin menjadi keutamaan selepas tidak pernah menjangkakan COVID-19 begitu pantas merebak sehingga menjadi pandemik.

"Bagaimanapun, kita harus memahami bahawa untuk mengeluarkan sesuatu vaksin memerlukan masa dan kita menggunakan pelbagai kaedah terkini bagi membangunkan vaksin COVID-19.

"Ketika ini saintis kita sedang bekerja keras di Institut Kajian Perubatan (IMR) dan ia masih pada peringkat pembinaan pengklonan genetik.

"Jangkaan kita vaksin dapat dihasilkan antara tiga hingga lima tahun," katanya pada sidang media selepas melawat Ruang Reka (Hab Reka Cipta, Teknologi dan Inovasi) di Taman Rasa Sayang, Paroi, di sini, semalam.

Beliau berkata, pihaknya tidak hanya menumpukan penghasilan vaksin COVID-19 semata-mata,

tetapi juga vaksin lain.

"Kita tidak tahu jenis wabak yang datang pada masa hadapan dan penting untuk kita buat persiapan dari segi fasiliti bagi mengeluarkan sendiri," katanya.

Sementara itu, Dr Adham berkata, MOSTI menasihatkan 5,000 peluang pekerjaan menerusi pelbagai program dan inisiatif yang akan dilaksanakan tahun hadapan.

Beliau berkata 4,145 individu dalam bidang *deep tech* (*deep technology*) dan berkaitan mendapat pekerjaan melalui inisiatif itu bermula awal Januari hingga 31 Ogos lalu.

Deep tech adalah teknologi berasaskan inovasi kejuruteraan ketara atau penemuan saintifik.

"Sasaran 4,700 peluang pekerjaan menerusi inisiatif berkenaan dijangka dapat dicapai sebelum akhir tahun ini dan kita jangkakan lebih 5,000 peluang pekerjaan baharu dapat diwujudkan tahun depan.

"Kita menyambut baik saranan Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob berkenaan pelaksanaan Pelan Strategik Penciptaan Pekerjaan Nasional.

"Ta dapat memperkasa tenaga kerja Malaysia supaya lebih berdaya tahan, berkemahiran tinggi dan tersohor di peringkat antarabangsa," katanya.

Dr Adham berkata, sebagai ahli tetap Majlis Pekerjaan Negara (NEC), MOSTI memberi tumpuan kepada kluster *Deeptech* and *Future Skills* atau skil asas yang memainkan peranan penting untuk memacu pertumbuhan sektor baharu dan moden.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
 MUKA SURAT : 4
 RUANGAN : NEGARA



DR. ADHAM (depan, tengah) bergambar ketika melawat Ruang Reka, Taman Rasa Sayang di Senawang, Seremban semalam. - MOHD. SHAHJEHAN MAAMIN.

Malaysia bakal cipta pelbagai vaksin

Oleh ZAKKINA WATI
 AHMAD TARMIZI

SEREMBAN - Kementerian Sains, Teknologi dan Inovasi (MOSTI) menjangkakan Malaysia dapat menghasilkan pelbagai vaksin sendiri termasuk pelalian Covid-19 yang pertama dalam tempoh tiga hingga lima tahun akan datang.

Menterinya, Datuk Seri Dr. Adham Baba berkata, penghasilan vaksin itu sangat penting terutama untuk negara ini mencegah wabak Covid-19 daripada terus menular pada masa depan.

"Ia dalam proses mengumpulkan data dan akan menjadi keutamaan kementerian. Kami telah berusaha mendapatkan kolaborasi dengan beberapa syarikat dari luar negara untuk membina fasiliti untuk tujuan tersebut.

"Kami juga mempunyai kemampuan untuk membangunkan Pusat Institut Vaksin Kebangsaan dan ia memerlukan masa dan sedang dibangunkan.

"Kini, kita bukan sahaja bercakap tentang vaksin Covid-19, namun sedang juga memba-

COVID-19	
Angka terkini kes Covid-19 di Malaysia sehingga semalam	
	Jumlah
Kes baharu	13,899
Impor	6
Tempatan	13,893
Pulih	18,074
Jumlah kes sembuh	1,968,541
Jumlah Kematian	24,931
Jumlah kes keseluruhan	2,185,131

ngunkan vaksin lain yang boleh melindungi masyarakat kerana tidak tahu apa lagi jenis wabak yang akan datang dan jenis keupayaan membina vaksin ada dalam negara ini," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian kepada pemberita selepas mengadakan lawatan ke Ruang Reka (Hab Reka Cipta, Teknologi dan Inovasi), Taman Rasa Sayang,

Senawang, di sini semalam.

Tambah Dr. Adham, setiap vaksin yang dibangunkan nanti perlu memenuhi syarat diperlukan Agensi Regulatori Farmasi Negara (NPRA).

"NPRA juga akan membantu merancang keperluan dalam pelbagai platform dalam tempoh tiga hingga lima tahun lagi," katanya.

Sementara itu, dalam lawatan tersebut, beliau turut menyaksikan program Ruang Reka yang merupakan salah satu inisiatif pembangunan usahawan inovasi bagi menggalakkan penglibatan lebih ramai individu dalam kalangan kategori B40 dan golongan berpendapatan sederhana.

"Saya berharap masyarakat dapat menggunakan Ruang Reka ini secara maksimum dalam membudayakan kreativiti serta inovasi di peringkat akar umbi.

"Sehingga kini, sebanyak dua projek rintis Ruang Reka iaitu di Taman Rasa Sayang, Senawang, manakala satu lagi di Projek Perumahan Rakyat (PPR) Hiliran di Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu," katanya.

Jumlah kematian hampir 25,000 kes

PUTRAJAYA - Negara merekodkan 250 kes kematian Covid-19 setakat kelmarin termasuk 91 kes kematian sebenar bagi tempoh purata tujuh hari, menurut data di laman web COVIDNOW.

Maklumat yang dikemas kini pukul 11.59 malam kelmarin memaklumkan, angka tersebut menjadikan jumlah kes kematian Covid-19 negara menghampiri angka 25,000 iaitu sebanyak 24,931 kes.

"Terdapat 49 kes kematian di luar hospital atau brought-in-dead (BID) dengan jumlah kumulatif kes BID sebanyak 4,887 kes," menurut data tersebut.

Negeri yang mencatatkan kematian melibatkan Selangor (65), Sabah (43), Johor (41), Pulau Pinang (20), Kelantan (14), Perak (14), Sarawak (16), Pahang (9) dan Kedah (6).

Terengganu dan Kuala Lumpur pula mencatatkan enam kematian, Negeri Sembilan (4), Melaka (3) dan Perlis (3) serta tiada kes dilaporkan di Labuan dan Putrajaya.

Terdapat 195,837 kes aktif terdiri daripada 163,875 kes di kuarantin di rumah, 20,786 kes di Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan Covid-19 (PKRC), 10,121 kes di hospital, 460 kes di Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU) tanpa bantuan pernafasan dan 595 kes di ICU dengan bantuan pernafasan.

Sementara itu, kes harian merekodkan angka di bawah 14,000 dengan 13,899 kes semalam, menjadikan jumlah kes positif Covid-19 sebanyak 2,185,131 kes.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr. Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, Sarawak mencatatkan sebanyak 2,712 kes, diikuti oleh Selangor sebanyak 2,341 dan Johor sebanyak 1,377 kes.

"Kelantan (1,170 kes), Perak (1,128 kes), Pulau Pinang (1,060 kes), Sabah (962 kes), Pahang (779 kes), Terengganu (760 kes), Kedah (708 kes), Melaka (339 kes), Kuala Lumpur (310 kes) dan Negeri Sembilan (194 kes).

"Putrajaya (37 kes), Perlis (17 kes) dan Labuan (lima kes)," ciap beliau di Twitter semalam.



PETUGAS kesihatan mencucuk vaksin Jenis CanSino kepada penduduk Orang Asli suku Semaq Beri di Perkampungan Orang Asli Sungai Berua, Kuala Berang semalam. - PUQTRA HAIRRY

323,000 penerima dos penggalak di Terengganu dikenal pasti

HULU TERENGGANU - Seramai 323,000 rakyat Terengganu telah dikenal pasti sebagai penerima dos penggalak vaksin Covid-19.

Pengarah Kesihatan Terengganu, Dr. Kasemani Embong berkata, ia merangkumi 31,000 petugas barisan hadapan, warga emas (104,000) dan golongan komorbiditi (188,000).

"Mereka dijangka menerima dos ketiga atau penggalak tersebut di klinik kesihatan atau hospital berhampiran.

"Ia disebabkan semua pusat pemberian awam dan integrasi di negeri ini akan ditutup sepenuhnya pada 15 Oktober depan," katanya ketika memantau program suntikan vaksin Covid-19

melibatkan masyarakat Orang Asli di Kampung Sungai Berua, di sini semalam.

Dr. Kasemani memberitahu, program pemberian dos penggalak itu akan bermula setelah pihaknya menerima arahan pelaksanaan di peringkat negeri oleh Kementerian Kesihatan.

Tambahnya, secara dasar-

nya, Jabatan Kesihatan Negeri Terengganu tidak mempunyai masalah untuk melaksanakan program terbaharu tersebut kerana bekalan vaksin adalah mencukupi.

Kosmo! melaporkan Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, garis panduan berhubung proses agihan dos

ketiga atau dos penggalak vaksin Covid-19 bakal dibentangkan pada mesyuarat Jawatankuasa Khas Jaminan Akses Vaksin Covid-19 (JKJAV) minggu depan.

Menurut beliau, pada waktu ini, panel pakar perubatan dan kesihatan sedang membangunkan garis panduan pelaksanaan pemberian dos itu.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
 MUKA SURAT : 5
 RUANGAN : NEGARA

Seramai 681,853 remaja telah terima suntikan vaksin

Oleh WAT KAMAL ABAS

BAGAN SERAI – Sebanyak 681,853 pelajar telah mendapat suntikan dos pertama sejak 20 September sehingga kelmarin, manakala 108,935 sudah lengkap dos kedua.

Mengikut peratusan pula, sebanyak 26.9 peratus bagi dos pertama, Sabah (65.3 peratus dos pertama dan 7.2 peratus dos kedua), manakala Sarawak (37.7 peratus dos pertama, 6.9 peratus dos kedua).

Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Dr. Noor Azmi Ghazali berkata, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) menasarkankan 60 peratus pelajar divaksin sehingga November dan 80 peratus pelajar menerima suntikan sebelum akhir Disember.

"Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan tertinggi iaitu 76.7 peratus dos pertama dan 6.4 peratus dos kedua, Sabah (65.3 peratus dos pertama dan 7.2 peratus dos kedua), manakala Sarawak (37.7 peratus dos pertama, 6.9 peratus dos kedua).

"Di Perak dengan jumlah pelajar seramai 203,152, yang telah menerima suntikan dos pertama seramai 53,770 orang dan 7,633 telah lengkap dua dos," ujarnya selepas meninjau program vaksinasi di Sekolah Menengah Abu Bakar Al-Baqir (Sabar) di sini semalam.



DR. NOOR AZMI (kanan) menyuntik vaksin Pfizer kepada seorang pelajar, **Muhammad Nur Iman Hishamuddin di Sekolah Menengah Abu Bakar Al-Baqir, Bagan Serai semalam.**

Dalam pada itu, katanya, ibu bapa tidak perlu bimbang dengan kesan sampingan suntikan vaksin terhadap anak-anak mereka menerusi program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (PICK) Remaja yang sedang dijalankan.

Katanya, setakat ini vaksin jenis Pfizer yang diberikan kepada remaja tidak mempunyai kesan sampingan besar, malah tiada laporan kesan seperti itu berlaku.

"Ada ibu bapa bimbang sekiranya berlaku kesan sampingan seperti radang pada otot jantung dan radang selaput jantung.

"Perkara itu berlaku di luar negara dan hasil kajian ke atas golongan muda yang terkena radang otot jantung dan radang selaput luar jantung, peratusannya juga sangat rendah.

"Risiko suntikan vaksin terhadap perkara yang dibimbangkan itu amat rendah kebarangkaliannya malah vaksin jauh lebih baik daripada terkena Covid-19," ujarnya.

Pesakit kuarantin di rumah punca kes melonjak di Perlis

KANGAR – Peningkatan kes jangkitan Covid-19 di Perlis sejak kebelakangan ini didorong oleh jangkitan antara ahli keluarga melibatkan individu positif yang dikuarantin di rumah.

Pengerusi Badan Bertindak Covid-19 Kebangsaan (CITF) negeri, Azman Mohd. Yusof berkata, individu yang didapati positif bagi kategori satu dan dua tersebut dikuarantin di rumah berbanding di Pusat Kuarantin dan Rawatan Covid-19 (PKRC) seperti sebelum ini.

"Oleh itu seluruh keluarga mungkin akan berjangkit, namun mereka berada dalam keadaan yang terkawal kerana seluruh keluarga turut dikuarantin bersama.

"Walaupun jumlah kes tinggi iaitu tiga angka Khamis lalu, namun kebanyakannya adalah daripada kategori satu dan dua sahaja," katanya ketika dihubungi di sini semalam.

Sementara itu, Azman berkata, penggunaan katil di Hospital Tuanku Fauziah (HTF), di sini ketika ini pada tahap 73.7 peratus, manakala penggunaan katil Unit Rawatan Rapi (ICU)



Walaupun jumlah kes tinggi iaitu tiga angka Khamis lalu, namun kebanyakannya adalah daripada kategori satu dan dua sahaja."

untuk pesakit Covid-19 pula adalah 68.4 peratus.

"Usaha kita kini adalah untuk mempertingkatkan vaksinasi dalam kalangan penduduk. Penduduk negeri ini masih ramai yang belum vaksin yang menyebabkan kita sukar untuk mencapai 90 peratus penduduk divaksin.

"Sekarang baru 61.9 peratus daripada jumlah keseluruhan populasi yang sudah divaksin. Jika tidak capai 90 peratus, kita mungkin tidak akan mendapat manfaat dijanjikan kerajaan Pusat," ujarnya.

Khamis lalu Perlis mencatatkan 113 kes jangkitan baharu, manakala kelmarin sebanyak 65 kes dan semalam 17 kes baharu.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : NEGARA

KKM hargai ahli farmasi didik rakyat

PUTRAJAYA – Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) menghargai peranan besar dimainkan ahli farmasi di seluruh negara terutama mendepani cabaran wabak Covid-19 dengan pelbagai varian baharu.

Menterinya, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, ketika ini tugas mereka diperlukan dalam usaha mengajar masyarakat mengenai penggunaan sepatutnya kit ujian sendiri di pasaran.

"Anda boleh didik orang awam cara betul penggunaan, penyimpanan dan pelupusan produk ini," katanya ketika berucap merasmikan webinar Persatuan Farmasi Komuniti Malaysia (MCPG) semalam.

Webinar tersebut mengangakat tema *Penciptaan Semula Bisnes Farmasi: Penyesuaian Melangkaui Krisis* bersempena dengan Hari Farmasi Sedunia diraikan setiap 25 September.

Ia selaras tarikh penubuhan Persekutuan Farmaseutikal Antarabangsa di The Hague, Belanda pada 1912 lalu dan diperakui ketika kongres badan berkenaan di Istanbul, Turki

pada 2009.

Di Malaysia pula, Persatuan Farmasi Malaysia menganggarkan terdapat 19,792 ahli farmasi yang berdaftar dengan sekitar 3,000 buah farmasi komuniti seluruh negara tahun lalu.

Mengulas lanjut, Khairy Jamaluddin berkata, penggunaan kit saringan sendiri itu ketika ini menjadi tugas penting ahli farmasi bagi membimbing rakyat agar tahu status kesihatan semasa.

"Anda juga boleh menyedialkan tugas susulan dan sesi kaunseling sejurus keputusan ujian itu diketahui selain menasihatkan pengguna mengenai perbezaan antara jenama," tambahnya.

Pada masa sama, KKM ujan-nya, menyambut baik penglibatan MCPG dalam usaha menambah baik sistem penjagaan kesihatan awam dan komited menaik taraf hidup rakyat.

Khairy Jamaluddin juga menyifatkan ahli farmasi komuniti setaraf petugas barisan hadapan apabila berganding dengan pihak hospital yang terbeban teruk ketika merawat pesakit.



KKM menghargai tanggungjawab yang dimainkan ahli farmasi di seluruh negara terutama semasa mendepani cabaran pandemik Covid-19. – GAMBAR HIASAN

AKHBAR : MINGGUAN MALAYSIA
 MUKA SURAT : 8
 RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

Jangkitan Covid-19 boleh melonjak semasa endemik

Oleh **SURAIDAH ROSLAN**
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KOTA KINABALU: Peningkatan kes Covid-19 secara bermusim mungkin berlaku apabila negara beralih kepada fasa endemik dalam masa terdekat ini.

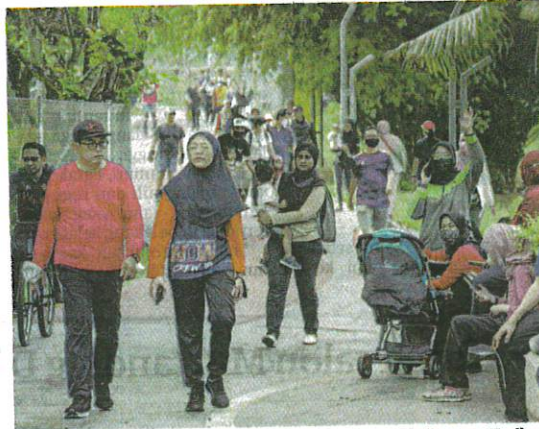
Pakar Penyakit Berjangkit Hospital Gleneagles, Dr. Timothy William berkata, peningkatan kes berkala ini mungkin berlaku pada musim perayaan atau pesta tertentu kerana orang ramai akan berkumpul dalam satu kawasan.

Beliau berkata, jangkitan akan sentiasa ada dalam komuniti kerana virus Covid-19 tidak akan berhenti menjangkiti manusia bagi satu tempoh yang lama.

"Tiada siapa boleh menjangka sampai bila rakyat terpaksa hidup bersama virus Covid-19.

"Sukar menentukan tempoh jangkitan virus ini berakhir kerana ramalan yang dibuat sebelum ini pun banyak yang tersasar dan tidak tepat," katanya kepada *Mingguan Malaysia* hari ini.

Justeru, jika ingin mengurangkan angka jangkitan,



SEBAHAGIAN warga kota meluangkan masa beriadah di Taman Tasik Titiwangsa, Kuala Lumpur, semalam. - MINGGUAN/AMIR KHALID

kerajaan perlu mengambil langkah memperbaiki sistem pengudaraan dalam bangunan, memastikan tempat kerja selamat dan menetapkan peraturan bagi kebenaran makan di restoran ke-

tika negara beralih kepada fasa endemik.

Sementara itu, Pakar Perubatan Kesihatan Awam Kanan dan Ketua Unit Kesihatan Awam, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS),

Datuk Dr. Mohd. Yusof Ibrahim berkata, endemik itu sendirinya membawa makna rakyat akan hidup seperti sedia kala dengan kehadiran virus di sekeliling.

Walaupun bagaimanapun, jangkitan yang dialami tidak akan berada pada tahap membimbangkan, sama seperti penyakit influenza.

Beliau menjangka, kes positif Covid-19 di negara ini akan kembali menurun apabila 80 peratus penduduk telah divaksin.

Situasi sama boleh dilihat di negara jiran, Indonesia yang kini mencatatkan trend penurunan kes yang begitu ketara apabila proses vaksinasi mencapai 80 peratus.

Pada 9 September lalu, Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin memaklumkan, Malaysia dijangka beralih kepada fasa endemik Covid-19 pada akhir Oktober iaitu apabila 80 peratus populasi dewasa di negara ini menerima vaksin lengkap.

Katanya, perubahan fasa senario Covid-19 itu berikutan mustahil untuk mencapai sifar kes baharu.

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD

MUKA SURAT : 12

RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Komuniti farmasi nadi jayakan PICK - Khairy

SHAH ALAM - Komuniti farmasi merupakan nadi penting dalam membantu Program Immunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (PICK) dan PICK Remaja dengan penilaian ke atas vaksin sehingga kepada pemantauan dan pelaporan *Adverse Events Following Immunization* (AEFI).

Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, peranan farmasi juga dilihat dalam pembekalan kelengkapan perlindungan diri seperti pelitup muka, sanitasi tangan, kit ujian sendiri dan lain-lain peralatan bagi mencegah Covid-19.

"Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) perlu memastikan sistem kesihatan sedia ada terus ditambah baik termasuk menerusi kerjasama dengan sektor swasta bagi memastikan masyarakat mempunyai akses berterusan kepada penjagaan kesihatan yang berkualiti dan mampu diperolehi.

"Saya berharap perkhidmatan farmasi terus berkembang maju demi meningkatkan taraf kesihatan dan kesejahteraan



KHAIRY

rakyat," katanya dalam ucapan perasmian Sambutan Hari Farmasi Sedunia 2021 Peringkat Program Perkhidmatan Farmasi secara dalam talian pada Jumaat.

Hari Farmasi Sedunia disambut pada 25 September setiap tahun bagi menghargai sumbangan dan jasa semua ahli farmasi termasuk sektor awam serta swasta.

Mengulas lanjut, Khairy berkata, kerjaya farmasi berkembang pesat sama ada dalam sektor awam dan swasta menerusi sektor penjagaan kesihatan, perubatan tradisional, akademik serta penyelidikan.

"Dalam hal ini sebagai tulang belakang kepada

KKM perlu memastikan sistem kesihatan sedia ada terus ditambah baik termasuk menerusi kerjasama dengan sektor swasta."

sistem kesihatan Malaysia, KKM melalui pegawai perubatan, penolong pegawai perubatan, jururawat dan pegawai-pegawai farmasi memainkan peranan paling ke hadapan bagi memastikan pandemik Covid-19 dapat dikawal dan tahap kesihatan awam serta rakyat terus dipelihara.

"Selari dengan tema Sambutan Hari Farmasi Sedunia 2021 iaitu 'Pharmacy: Always Trusted for Your Health', ahli farmasi membuktikan bahawa mereka adalah pakar dan sumber rujukan bagi maklumat ubat-ubatan bukan sahaja kepada pesakit malah kepada pasukan profesional penjagaan kesihatan yang lain," kata beliau.

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD
 MUKA SURAT : 13
 RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Muktamad rentas negeri 3 minggu lagi

Jangka kebenaran diberikan selepas 90 peratus populasi dewasa lengkap divaksin

JOHOR BAHRU

Kebenaran untuk rentas negeri dijangka dapat dimuktamadkan dalam tempoh tiga minggu lagi selepas negara mencapai kadar 90 peratus populasi dewasa yang lengkap suntikan vaksin Covid-19.

Menteri Kanan Pertahanan, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein berkata, berikutan itu, beberapa langkah untuk menyoerakan vaksinasi populasi dewasa akan diambil dalam masa terdekat.

Beliau berkata, Angkatan Tentera Malaysia (ATM) diarah meningkatkan kerjasama dengan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) bagi memastikan orang ramai menerima vaksin lengkap sekali gus mencapai sasaran 90 peratus dalam tempoh itu.

Katanya, antara tindakan segera yang akan dilaksanakan oleh ATM ialah mengatur gerak lebih banyak Pasukan

Vaksinasi Perubatan Medan (CMVT) di kawasan pedalaman selain memperluas program vaksinasi pandu lalu yang dilaksanakan oleh Kementerian Pertahanan kepada orang awam.

"Insya-ALLAH kebenaran rentas negeri yang ditunggu-tunggu ramai akan diumumkan dalam masa terdekat. Apa perancangan yang kita lakukan bersama KKM itu, kita harap dapat dijayakan dalam tempoh tiga minggu ini.

"Jadi sebelum ia diumumkan, banyak perkara yang perlu difikirkan dari segi prosedur operasi standard (SOP) serta tanggungjawab agensi dalam melaksanakan pemantauan.

"SOP rentas negeri kita akan umumkan sebelum pengumuman kebenaran rentas negeri dibuat dan ia akan diperinci dalam Mesyuarat Jawatankuasa Khas Pandemik yang dipengerusikan Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob minggu depan," katanya selepas meninjau pusat pemberian vaksin pandu lalu di Batalion ke-6 Rejimen



HISHAMMUDDIN

Renjer Diraja Kem Ulu Tiram di sini pada Sabtu.

Pada Jumaat, Perdana Menteri dilapor telah membayangkan kebenaran untuk rentas negeri akan dapat diberikan dalam tempoh beberapa minggu lagi dan berkata, setakat 22 September, sebanyak 81 peratus populasi dewasa telah melengkapkan suntikan vaksin Covid-19.

Mengulas lanjut, Hishammuddin berkata, disiplin orang ramai akan menjadi elemen paling penting apabila rentas negeri dibenarkan kerana adalah mustahil untuk kerajaan memantau dan melaksanakan SOP bagi menjaga setiap rakyat yang diberi kebenaran merentas negeri.

"Sebab itu disiplin orang ramai amat penting apabila menikmati kelonggaran yang bakal diumumkan.

Kita harapkan mereka sentiasa patuh kepada SOP yang akan ditentukan nanti," katanya. - Bernama

Kes harian Covid-19 kembali turun

SHAH ALAM - Kes baharu Covid-19 kembali menurun kepada 13,899 berbanding 14,554 kes pada Jumaat.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah menerusi Facebook beliau pada Sabtu memaklumkan perkembangan itu menjadikan jumlah kumulatif kes kini 2,185,131 kes.

Beliau berkata, Sarawak merekodkan kes harian tertinggi iaitu 2,712 kes diikuti Selangor (2,341), Johor (1,377), Kelantan (1,170), Perak (1,128) dan Pulau Pinang (1,060).

Menurut beliau, negeri yang mencatatkan tiga angka bagi kes Covid-19 pula ialah Sabah dengan 962 kes, Pahang (779), Terengganu (760), Kedah (708), Melaka (339), Kuala Lumpur (310) dan Negeri Sembilan (194).

"Selain itu, Putrajaya mencatatkan 37 kes manakala Perlis (17) dan Labuan (5)," katanya.

Dalam pada itu, Dr Noor Hisham memberitahu, penggunaan katil bukan unit rawatan rapi (ICU) Covid-19 di seluruh negara setakat jam 5 petang Jumaat berada pada kadar 60 peratus dengan Kelantan merekodkan penggunaan tertinggi iaitu 95



DR NOOR HISHAM

peratus diikuti Sarawak (79 peratus) dan Perlis (76 peratus).

Bagi katil ICU pula, beliau memaklumkan, kadar penggunaannya sebanyak 70 peratus dengan Pulau Pinang memiliki penggunaan tertinggi iaitu 96 peratus,

disusuli Sarawak (92 peratus), Selangor (84 peratus), Perak (83 peratus) dan Kelantan (79 peratus).

Beliau turut berkongsi kadar vaksinasi lengkap Covid-19 rakyat Malaysia setakat Jumaat mencecah 59.2 peratus dengan individu yang baharu menerima satu dos vaksin sebanyak 69.2 peratus.

Menurut beliau, Lembah Klang yang merangkumi Selangor, Kuala Lumpur dan Putrajaya mempunyai kadar vaksinasi dewasa tertinggi iaitu 108.7 peratus, diikuti Labuan (98.2 peratus), Negeri Sembilan (96 peratus), Sarawak (89.3 peratus), Perlis (88 peratus) dan Melaka (83.8 peratus).

Katanya, di Terengganu pula kadar vaksinasi dewasa mencatatkan (81.5 peratus), Pulau Pinang (78.2 peratus), Johor (75.3 peratus), Kedah (67 peratus), Pahang (66.6 peratus), Perak (66.3 peratus), Kelantan (64.4 peratus) dan Sabah (57.8 peratus).

MENDEPANI KRISIS COVID-19: APA TINDAKAN KITA?

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD
 MUKA SURAT : 29
 RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Pesakit pertama di hospital medan HPP

Pesakit Covid-19 itu berusia 60 tahun dan kini memasuki peringkat empat

Oleh SYAJARATULHUDA MOHAMAD ROSLI

GEORGETOWN

Sorang lelaki berusia 60 tahun adalah pesakit Covid-19 pertama yang dipindahkan ke Hospital Medan Angkatan Tentera Malaysia (ATM) Pulau Pinang bagi mendapat rawatan lanjut.

Pegawai Memerintah Batalion Kedua Perubatan, Letenan Kolonel Dr Mohd Zamri Derahman berkata, hospital medan di Hospital Pulau Pinang (HPP) itu mula beroperasi sepenuhnya pada jam 9 malam Jumaat.

Menurutnya, operasi hospital medan itu berjalan lancar seperti ditetapkan yang mana kemasukan pesakit akan dibuat secara berperingkat.

"Pesakit pertama yang ditempatkan di situ berusia 60 tahun dan dia adalah pesakit pe-



Pesakit pertama ditolak masuk ke hospital medan di HPP pada jam 9 malam Jumaat.

ringkat empat.

"Jumlah pesakit untuk dimasukkan ke hospital medan ini akan ditentukan oleh pihak HPP dan akan diadakan secara berperingkat," katanya ketika dihubungi pada Sabtu.

Pada Khamis, hospital medan yang dibina oleh ATM bagi fasiliti tambahan perawatan pesakit Covid-19 di HPP telah memulakan sesi *dry run*.

Sebelum itu, kerja pembinaan telah bermula pada jam 9.30 pagi pada Khamis minggu lalu di tapak letak kereta HPP di Jalan

Residensi di sini dengan keluasan 2,300 meter persegi.

Dr Zamri berkata, sebanyak 100 katil yang dilengkapi sumber oksigen ditempatkan di hospital tersebut iaitu empat buah untuk unit rawatan rapi (ICU) dan baki-

nya untuk pesakit tahap empat.

"Kita menggunakan empat pegawai dan 50 anggota untuk membina hospital medan merangkumi 23 buah khemah di sini. Bagi pengoperasian pula, ia melibatkan 309 petugas KKM, dua pegawai serta 22 anggota ATM.



Sebanyak 100 katil dilengkapi kemudahan oksigen ditempatkan di hospital medan HPP.

"ATM akan terlibat dengan kerja-kerja teknikal, keselamatan, pentadbiran dan perawatan di hospital medan. Hospital ini adalah khas untuk pesakit Covid-19 peringkat empat dan lima," katanya.

Hospital medan di HPP ini adalah yang kesembilan dibina oleh ATM yang mana sebelum ini dibina di Hospital Kepala Batas di Pulau Pinang, Hospital Sultanah Aminah di Johor, Labuan dan Tawau.

Dua minggu lalu, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia

(KKM) telah meluluskan pembukaan wad ICU hospital medan di HPP bagi menampung jumlah pesakit Covid-19 di negeri ini.

Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, lebih 100 buah katil tambahan dengan kemudahan oksigen akan dibekalkan di hospital itu untuk menampung pesakit yang akan ditempatkan di situ nanti.

Hospital medan di HPP merupakan hospital medan ATM yang kedua di negeri ini selepas ia dibuka di Hospital Kepala Batas pada Mei lalu.

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD
 MUKA SURAT : 30
 RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Ancaman Covid-19 terhadap remaja



DARI
 AKHBAR
 CINA

ONG BOON TECK

Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (PICK) Remaja yang dimulakan secara rasmi pada Isnin, lalu menyasarkan pembabitkan 3.2 juta remaja berusia 12 hingga 17 tahun di negara ini.

Pelaksanaan PICK Remaja dilakukan melalui beberapa kaedah antaranya secara jangkau luar (outreach) ke sekolah atau institusi secara berjadual, suntikan di klinik kesihatan dan hospital serta kaedah jumpa terus (walk-in) di pusat pemberian vaksin (PPV) terpilih di seluruh negara.

SinChew Daily melalui ruangan Lidah Pengarangnya menegaskan betapa perlunya

program vaksinasi dijalankan ke atas golongan remaja dalam kadar tempoh yang segera.

"Ini berdasarkan statistik peningkatan jangkitan Covid-19 dalam kalangan kanak-kanak berusia 0 hingga 18 tahun di negara ini adalah membimbangkan.

"Daripada 12,620 kes pada 2020, ia telah meningkat kepada 400,668 kes setakat 16 September lalu. Daripada jumlah tersebut, 256,569 kes adalah melibatkan murid sekolah dan 42,381 kanak-kanak prasekolah," tulis akhbar itu.

Malahan apa yang lebih membimbangkan, sebanyak 67 kematian akibat Covid-19 dalam kalangan kanak-kanak dan remaja telah dilaporkan sepanjang Januari tahun ini sehingga Isnin lalu.

Jumlah berkenaan meningkat dengan ketara berbanding hanya enam kematian dalam kalangan kanak-kanak dilaporkan pada tahun lalu.

Beberapa negara sudah memulakan langkah memvaksin kanak-kanak dengan Kanada menjadi negara pertama di dunia membenarkan penggunaan vaksin Comirnaty keluaran Pfizer-BioNTech terhadap golongan itu yang berusia 12 hingga 15 tahun.

Ulas akhbar itu, sejak pandemik Covid-19 mula menular di Malaysia, kerajaan telah melakukan pelbagai langkah pencegahan demi keselamatan dan kesihatan rakyat jelata, termasuk di kalangan remaja dan kanak-kanak.

"Antaranya ialah menutup sekolah dan mengadakan sesi pembelajaran dan pengajaran di rumah (PdPR) sebagai langkah untuk murid-murid meneruskan pembelajaran.

"Begitu juga dengan kanak-kanak di taman asuhan kanak-kanak, taman didikan kanak-kanak dan pusat tuisyen. Semuanya diarah tutup sehingga kerajaan bersetuju

membenarkan ia dibuka semula.

"Selain itu, kerajaan juga sentiasa meminta ibu bapa agar tidak membawa anak-anak kecil mereka ke kawasan tumpuan ramai seperti pusat membeli-belah," kata akhbar itu lagi.

Selepas hampir lapan bulan pelaksanaan PICK, Malaysia mencatat sejarah apabila mencapai imuniti kelompok dengan 80 peratus penduduk dewasa lengkap divaksin Selasa lalu.

Selepas berjaya mencapai sasaran imuniti terhadap golongan dewasa, Kementerian Kesihatan kini menghadapi satu lagi cabaran baharu dengan menumpukan perhatian pula ke atas golongan remaja.

Pasukan Petugas Khas Imunisasi Covid-19 Remaja (CITF-A) yang dipengerusikan Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali telah menyasarkan 60 peratus remaja berusia antara 12 dan 17

tahun mendapat sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin Covid-19 pada November ini, dan 80 peratus mendapat dos lengkap sebelum sekolah dibuka pada sesi tahun hadapan.

Bukan sahaja golongan dewasa, vaksinasi ke atas remaja juga diperlukan bagi melindungi mereka daripada varian Delta yang boleh membawa jangkitan lebih teruk.

"Kita telah berjaya mencapai sasaran vaksinasi terhadap golongan dewasa, namun bagi golongan remaja, ia baru langkah permulaan.

"Pelaksanaan PICK Remaja semestinya penting sebagai perediaan untuk pembukaan sekolah pada Oktober ini. Semua pihak sama ada pihak kerajaan mahupun ibu bapa perlu memastikan risiko jangkitan di sekolah dapat dikurangkan," jelas *SinChew Daily* lagi.

**Ong Boon Teck ialah Timbalan Pengarang Berita Sinar Harian*

AKHBAR : NEW SUNDAY TIMES
 MUKA SURAT : 2
 RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

BATTLING PANDEMIC

'DELTA MAKES CUTTING AZ DOSING GAP NECESSARY'

6-week gap strikes a balance between getting maximum level of antibodies, optimal protection, says expert

THARANYA ARUMUGAM
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SHORTENING the dosing interval for AstraZeneca vaccines anywhere from four to eight weeks after the first dose is preferred in an environment involving highly infectious variants such as Delta.

Epidemiologist Professor Datuk Dr Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud of Universiti Malaya said the Pfizer-BioNTech and AstraZeneca vaccines had shown to work against the Delta variant after two doses, but a single dose did not offer optimal protection.

Therefore, he said, reducing the dosing interval to six weeks struck a balance between trying to get the maximum level of antibodies and making sure that there was optimal protection against the Delta variant.

"A reduction in dosing interval to six weeks is also the approach adopted in Australia, which is facing a Covid-19 wave fuelled largely by Delta.

"I do not think the coverage would be affected. We are at the point where a majority of adults have already received two doses, save for some AstraZeneca vaccine recipients, who have yet to receive their second dose," he told the *New Sunday Times*.

The dosing interval for the AstraZeneca vaccine was originally set at 12 weeks following the United Kingdom government's recommendations. It was reduced to nine weeks in July amid the surge in infections in Malaysia.

Health Minister Khairy Ja-

maluddin on Friday said the window between the two jabs would be shortened further from nine weeks to six, effective Oct 1, to make the vaccination process easier for those who had been inoculated with AstraZeneca.

Dr Awang Bulgiba, who is the Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry's Covid-19 Epidemiological Analysis and Strategies Task Force chairman, said a third dose would likely be required for people in immunocompromised segments of the population.

"They include cancer patients recovering from treatment or transplant patients on immunosuppressive drugs. If the B- and T-cell immunity of the rest of the population remains strong, then the need for repeated boosters may be obviated."

He said there was no need for people to prove that there was a drop in their immune response after taking the second dose.

"The Independent Covid-19 Vaccination Advisory Committee headed by me has been calling for a Voluntary Covid-19 Vaccination Registry since December last year.

"In July last year, the government announced the setting up of the sero-surveillance programme, which we hope will provide the evidence required for policy decisions of this type.

"Data from this registry need to include the levels of neutralising antibodies, and B- and T-cell (immunity) levels over time."

This data, he said, would help determine which groups needed a booster dose.

He added that a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) on the administration of third doses was crucial to inform whether the third dose should be provided free by the government or be an optional thing that should be paid out-of-



People waiting to get their dose of the Covid-19 vaccine at the Axiata Arena vaccination centre in Kuala Lumpur on Friday. PIC BY ASYRAF HAMZAH

pocket.

"For people whose immune system does not respond that well or are unlikely to have responded well to the first two doses, I do not think they should pay for their third dose. They should be given priority over others in getting the third dose.

"I urge the government to consult our health economists, many of whom are in universities and are well-placed to perform this CBA."

Molecular virologist Dr Vinod Balasubramaniam, who is also a senior lecturer (microbiology) at the Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Monash University Malaysia, said an interval of between four and eight weeks between AstraZeneca jabs was preferred during in an outbreak situation.

In a non-outbreak setting, he said, the preferred interval remained at 12 weeks because early clinical trials (before the arrival of the Delta variant) found higher vaccine efficacy at protecting against symptoms.

"We are in an unprecedented outbreak situation where every second counts.

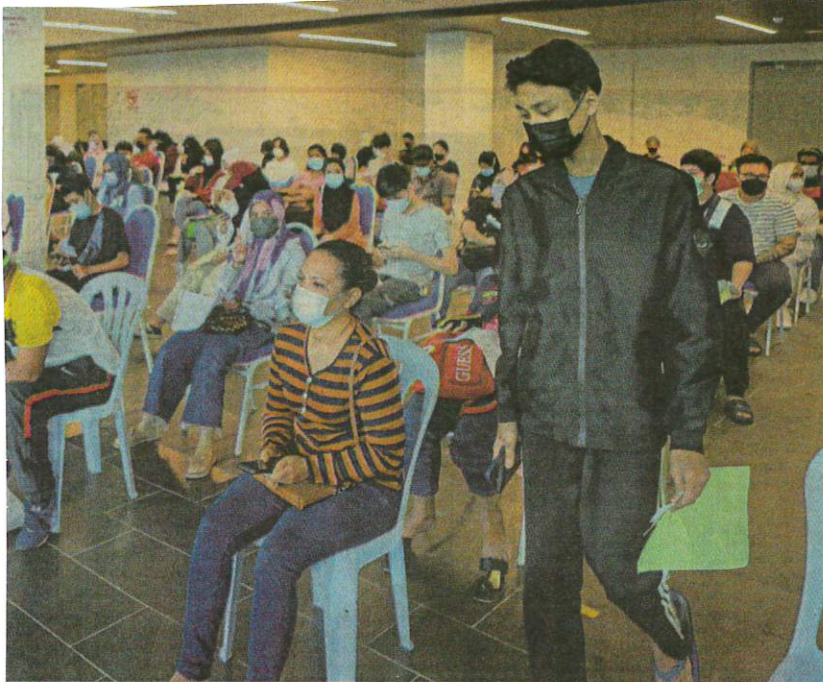
"The longer a person takes to be fully vaccinated, the higher the chances of the virus mutating and transmitting in the community.

"Unvaccinated individuals are the perfect reservoir for the virus to multiply and mutate.



Professor Datuk Dr Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud

AKHBAR : NEW SUNDAY TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : NATION / NEWS



"Protection against severe disease and death is crucial, and data show that the AstraZeneca vaccine offers strong protection against that, including when it comes to the Delta variant."

Dr Vinod said current strategies against Covid-19 should be tailored for the Delta strain as it was the most virulent and transmissible strain among all the other Variants of Concern, as well as the predominant strain.

The protection of vaccines against infection and hospitalisation with the emerging Delta have been studied internationally, where a dose of AstraZeneca reduces the risk of symptomatic infection by around 30 per cent and hospitalisation by 71 per cent.

However, two doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine reduce the risk of symptomatic infection even further, by 67 per cent, and the risk of hospitalisation by 92 per cent.

"Thus, shortening the gap between the first and second doses will bring short-term protection, which is expected to be beneficial in outbreak situations," said Dr Vinod.

On the administration of the third and booster doses, he said the third dose was meant for people who were unable to sustain or produce an adequate immune response to the first two shots in the series.

"For them, that third shot is not a booster but is a needed additional shot in their primary vaccination series to allow them to develop an effective immune response against a severe (Covid-19) infection and death.

"People who are less likely to mount an appropriate immune response are those on steroid-related treatments, who have received organ transplants, have severe HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) infections, or other

conditions."

Booster shots, he said, were given to those who, while their bodies could produce the optimum response after two doses, experienced a drop in immune response after few months to a point where it could no longer provide adequate protection against the disease.

On concerns surrounding the Sinovac vaccine's efficacy, he said the government could allow private hospitals or clinics to administer booster shots with the option for the people to pay for it.

This, however, depended on whether substantial clinical data show that there was indeed severe waning of antibody and protection levels, as well as efficacy against Delta, he said.

A recent Health Ministry study revealed that high cases of breakthrough infection, leading to mortality, came from Sinovac recipients.

Nation / NEWS

Affordable self-test kits to be available in shops

KUALA BERANG: Covid-19 self-test kits will be more affordable when they are sold at business premises, such as supermarkets and convenience stores, by month end.

Deputy Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Rosol Wahid said this would make it more affordable for parents to screen their children before schools reopened on Oct 3.

He said the new price would be announced soon.

It was earlier reported that the maximum retail price of a self-test kit was RM19.90 while the wholesale price was RM16.

The revised price, said Rosol, would enable more parents, especially those with large families, to get the device.

"We have carried out talks with the industry players. The out-

come has been positive, where they have agreed to set a lower price for the self-test kits.

"The new price will not only enable more people to get the device but also reduce their financial burden.

"Furthermore, the sale of the self-test kits will no longer be limited to healthcare premises, such as pharmacies and clinics.

"They will also be available at places such as supermarkets, mini markets and convenience shops, in accordance with the requirements set by the government," he said during a visit to the Covid-19 vaccination centre at Kampung Sungai Berua here yesterday.

Rosol said the current selling price of self-test kits was not affordable, especially to people with large families.



The current retail price of a Covid-19 self-test kit is set at RM19.90. PIC BY LUOMAN HAKIM ZUBIR

250 fatalities on Friday raise death toll to 24,931

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's cumulative Covid-19 fatalities rose to 24,931 when 250 more deaths were recorded on Friday.

Of the 250 deaths, 49 were brought-in-dead cases, which brought the tally to 4,887, according to the data shared by the Health Ministry on its CovidNow website on Friday.

The seven-day average of actual deaths was 91.

Seventy-one deaths were logged in the Klang Valley, 65 of which were recorded in Selangor and six in Kuala Lumpur.

Sabah recorded 43 deaths followed by Johor (41), Sarawak (16), Perak (14), Kelantan (14), Pahang

(nine), Kedah (six), Terengganu (six), Negri Sembilan (four) and Melaka (three).

The seven-day average of actual deaths was 91, a drop from Thursday's 115.

Penang recorded the highest number of deaths in the past two weeks, with 15.6 per 100,000 people, followed by 11.2 in Johor and 7.6 in Sabah.

At the national level, 5.9 deaths per 100,000 people were recorded in the same period.

There are 195,837 active Covid-19 cases nationwide with 163,875, or 83.7 per cent, of patients undergoing home quarantine.

Another 20,786 patients or 10.6 per cent are staying at low-risk quarantine and treatment centres, while 10,121 patients, or 5.2 per cent, are in hospitals.

A total of 595 patients are warded in intensive care units (ICU) and receiving ventilator support, while 460 others do not need breathing assistance.

CovidNow stated that Kedah and Penang registered the highest ICU utilisation rate at 99.2 per cent, while Perak had used 86 per

cent of its ICU beds.

On the national vaccination rate, 82.5 per cent of the adult population have been fully vaccinated against Covid-19 and 93.6 per cent have received at least one dose.

A total of 1,506,539 adults have yet to get a vaccine dose.

The entire adult population, numbering 23,409,600 people, is projected to be fully inoculated by Oct 30.

To date, 22.1 per cent of ado-

lescents aged between 12 and 17 have received at least one dose, while 0.8 per cent have been fully vaccinated.

The highest number of adolescents who have been immunised is in Labuan at 61.5 per cent.

It is expected that 80 per cent of adolescents, or 2.5 million people, will be fully vaccinated by Nov 10.

Up to Friday, Pfizer's inoculation made up 64.2 per cent of Covid-19 vaccines that had been dispensed this month.

This is followed by Sinovac (26.3 per cent), AstraZeneca (8.5 per cent) and Cansino (one per cent).

INFO BOX

595

people in ICUs with ventilator support

AKHBAR : NEW SUNDAY TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

HIDDEN RESERVOIR

ACTIVISTS: VAX MIGRANTS BEFORE CASES SOAR AGAIN

Undocumented foreigners distrust authorities, must be assured of safety, they say

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MALAYSIA will be caught in a never-ending cycle of Covid-19 surges if undocumented workers remain unvaccinated.

Universal healthcare advocate Dr Tharani Loganathan said it was crucial that the government grant this "hidden population" of between two and four million people amnesty soon, and called for a two-year grace period to get their jobs and paperwork in order.

The Universiti Malaya medical lecturer said it would be difficult to establish if Malaysia was on track of reaching its target of vaccinating 90 per cent of adults, as the number of undocumented migrants was unknown.

"Not vaccinating this high-risk group thoroughly would mean we would always face a reservoir

of Covid-19 infections in our population. Our health system could also likely collapse due to the overwhelming number of cases."

Dr Tharani, who researches migrant access to healthcare, said the target of vaccinating this vulnerable population by the end of next month, as proposed by epidemiologist Datuk Dr Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud, should be attempted.

"As most of them are hired by individuals or companies, employers should be given an amnesty to get their undocumented workers vaccinated without being penalised.

"If not, everyone will be reluctant to come forward," she told the *New Sunday Times*.

To make matters worse, unvaccinated migrant workers often live and work in cramped and poorly ventilated conditions that are likely hotbeds for infections.

"Singapore and Thailand are also grappling with these migrant housing problems.



Foreigners queuing at Bukit Jalil National Stadium to be vaccinated against Covid-19 on Aug 21. The stadium was the only vaccination centre for foreigners to walk in to get their shots. FILE PIX

"Thailand's resurgence of cases this year is due to the virus spreading in workplaces and housing facilities."

She said the support of undocumented workers was vital and there should be no backpedalling in the event a grace period was announced.

One major hurdle in getting their support was the lack of trust in the government, as shown by the group's reluctance to be registered on MySejahtera.

"They do not want to register and be a part of any database as they are afraid that arrests and raids would follow. So, the authorities need to assure them their data is protected and they won't face repercussions.

"Besides amnesty, they also need to be assured of safe passage to travel to and from vaccination centres and health facilities."

She said they often travelled in groups to vaccination centres because they felt there was safety in numbers, reducing any risk of harassment from enforcement personnel.

Dr Tharani said since the pandemic, there had been mixed messages from the government. Migrants were encouraged to step forward to be tested but mass raids were launched on them at the same time.

She said even the Health Ministry had a long-standing circular stating that undocumented workers had to be reported to the Immigration Department upon registration.

Dr Tharani said this led to this group turning to hospitals only when they were very sick or dying, giving doctors limited op-

tions to treat them.

She said the pandemic had presented an opportunity for the government to correct any systemic flaws by conferring to migrants the right to stay, work and access to healthcare.

The walk-in vaccination for non-citizens, she added, had to be revived as the demand for vaccines was too high, based on the queues seen at the now-shuttered Bukit Jalil National Stadium vaccination centre. Bukit Jalil National Stadium was the only walk-in vaccination centre for the group in the country.

"Walks-in vaccination is a good idea and should be continued but the way it is done has to change. The authorities can't just open one. There must be an appointment or a numbering system to better control the crowd.

"They need many such walk-in facilities and clinics, as getting appointments through MySejahtera can be difficult for the undocumented."

Project Liber8 executive director New Su Shern said there must be a constant push for vaccinating undocumented migrants as the number brought-in-dead (BID) cases was disproportionately high among migrant workers.

"They make up 35.5 per cent or 779 of the 2,249 BID cases between Aug 7 and Sept 10."

She said it was alarming as undocumented migrants made up 16.4 per cent, or 1,533, of the 9,370 deaths and 15.2 per cent, or 108,919, of the 716,355 cases that were logged over the period.

She said the percentage of undocumented migrant BID cases peaked at over 60 per cent in Au-

gust and made up between 20 and 40 per cent a day in the first week of September.

"So based on estimates that place them at 10 per cent of the population or more, we are definitely not out of the woods," she said.

Current BID data are unknown as the granular data are not available.

The activist said checks with Covid-19 Immunisation Task Force (CITF) found that 1.4 million migrants had completed their vaccination, but that number was largely made up of documented workers.

She said contradicting statements from ministers, with Home Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin saying health authorities had to report undocumented workers at vaccination centres and Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin giving an assurance that the ministry would not turn away or act against the group, were confusing.

New said her non-governmental organisation had received a growing number of complaints of migrants being approached by middlemen charging RM100 to RM300 for vaccines at vaccination centres or mobile and stand-alone clinics.

She said access to vaccines for the group was also limited as only those who were documented could register at vaccination centres.

At press time, the NST is waiting for CITF to respond to requests for the number of non-citizens, including undocumented migrants, who have been vaccinated.



Undocumented foreigners being detained by authorities in Petaling Jaya Old Town in May last year, when it was placed under the Enhanced Movement Control Order.

AKHBAR : NEW SUNDAY TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : NATION / NEWS

ADOLESCENTS AGED 12 TO 17

TEENS' VACCINATIONS GOING WELL

Process at PPVs is quick, but some parents express frustration with walk-ins

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ADOLESCENTS aged 12 to 17 are grateful to receive their first dose of the Covid-19 vaccine at selected vaccination centres (PPVs) nationwide, with the process going without a hitch.

In **George Town**, at the SPICE Arena, the vaccination for secondary students proceeded smoothly.

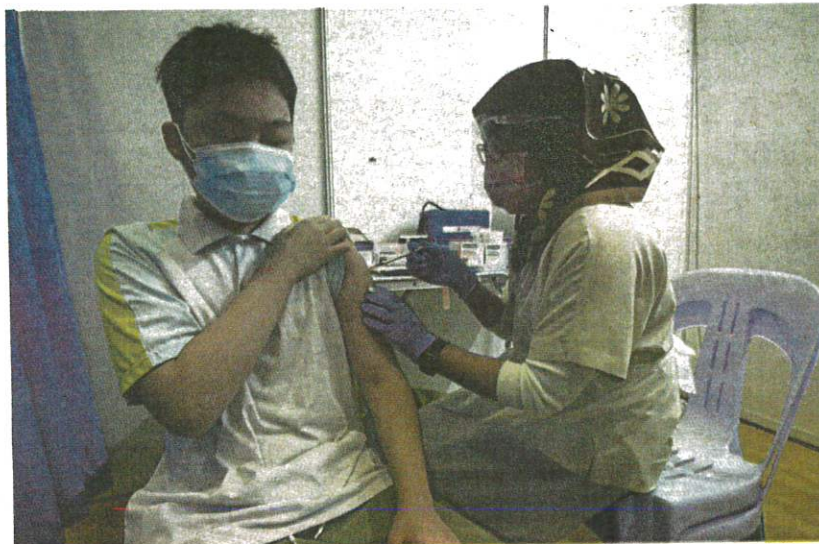
Checks at the PPV, one of four in the state, showed that there was a designated entrance for teenagers and strictly meant only for students with appointments with a "no walk-in for students" sign put up at the entrance.

Haslina Ghazalli, 43, who accompanied her 17-year-old daughter, Wan Hazirah Wan Etfendy, said the process went smoothly.

"We did not wait long for our turn and the venue was not crowded. Everything went according to the procedures.

"Now that she got her first dose, I am less anxious about her going back to school and other places. Sometimes, her immunity system is not that strong, so she could get fever or flu during cold weather," the mother of three said.

Haslina said she preferred her children to return to school for



SMK Bagan Jaya student Kong Wei Shun Justin, 16, receiving his Covid-19 vaccination at Dewan Millennium in Kepala Batas yesterday. PIC BY DANIAL SAAD

face-to-face classes.

She said her youngest daughter, who is a Form Two student, is still waiting for her inoculation appointment.

Wan Hazirah said the biggest challenges of having classes at home was that students could not ask questions face-to-face.

"Although I have to get a notice from the teacher when we can return to school, I am ready now.

"I feel safer after being vaccinated."

Irene Mooi, 48, also said the vaccination process for both her son, Ng Wei Jian, 17, and daughter, Ng Ke Xin, 16, went smoothly.

"Luckily, both of them have the same day (appointment). We do not have to make two trips.

"Although I still worry, I am more willing to let them go back to school after being vaccinated."

In **Petaling Jaya**, the Petaling Jaya City Council Civic Hall, one of nine PPVs in Selangor, also saw the vaccination process for adolescents going smoothly yesterday.

A parent who only wanted to be known as Janice said she was relieved that her 16-year-old daughter had finally been vaccinated.

"As schools will reopen soon, I believe all parents will do whatever they can to protect their children from Covid-19.

"I hope that through this vaccination programme, we can better protect them and prevent the

spread of the coronavirus at schools."

Asked about the inoculation process, Janice said it was fast and her daughter did not need to wait for long as she already had her appointment.

Student Nur Fatin Farhana Mohd Zamri also praised the smooth vaccination process at the PPV.

"I hope the vaccine will provide me with some protection against Covid-19," she said.

While it was not a problem for adolescents with appointments, checks on various social media platforms, however, saw parents expressing their frustration.

This, after they were turned away because of the respective PPV having reached the vaccine

quota for the day for walk-ins, or there being no appointment.

Tong Vi Lin said two PPVs had refused to inoculate her 12-year-old home-schooling daughter.

"I brought her to the Petaling Jaya City Council Civic Hall yesterday (Friday) and Multimedia University in Cyberjaya today (Saturday), but both centres have refused to give her vaccine.

"I am very confused. What should I do, or which specific PPV should I go to?"

Another social media user, Thresa Yap, said: "While instructions from the federal government states that walk-in is allowed for those who are home-schooling or no longer attending schools, it, however, was not the case at certain PPVs, namely Universiti Malaya, Bangi Avenue Convention Centre and Bukit Jalil Axiata Arena."

On Sept 23, Deputy Health Minister I Datuk Dr Noor Azmi Ghazali, who is also the Covid-19 Immunisation Task Force Adolescent chairman, said the vaccination programmes for teenagers at 156 PPVs was scheduled and walk-ins would only be allowed for those who were not in school.

He also called on parents not to rush to the PPV with their children, as adolescent vaccination appointment schedule was made in collaboration with the District Health and Education offices in advance.

Dr Azmi said it was important for parents to follow appointment dates and not simply walk into any PPVs to prevent congestion and ensure a smooth process for all.

The Covid-19 National Immunisation Programme for adolescents kicked off on Sept 20, targeting 3.2 million teenagers aged 12 to 17.

AKHBAR : SUNDAY STAR

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : NATION

'No hard and fast rule'

Experts: Study our own data before deciding on next shot

By ALLISON LAI
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PETALING JAYA: A study should be conducted to collect data from our past experiences and cases to help decide who needs a booster or third dose of Covid-19 vaccines, say health experts.

They said this in response to Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin's recent announcement that the ministry was currently developing guidelines on third doses and booster shots for the vaccines.

"I am confident that we can start giving the third dose first, and then followed by the booster shots starting from next month once we get the views and clinical guidelines from experts," he said.

Khairy had also explained that there was a distinction between a booster shot and the third dose.

"The third dose is given to those who may not have gotten the level of protection they need from the first two doses.

"And they require a third dose to achieve an optimum immune response.

"Booster shots are given to those who have enough immune response after receiving two doses of vaccine, but its response is slowly going down," he said.

"The priority of giving this third dose will be focused on high-risk groups first, such as health frontliner members, immuno-compromised patients, the elderly with comorbidities and individuals living or working in long-term care facilities."

Medical Practitioners Coalition Association of Malaysia president Dr Raj Kumar Maharajah said different countries have different factors and statistics, and we cannot just follow that lead.

"It's not a hard and fast rule. We cannot say that the United States is

"No matter how well protected we are, if a small group is left out, it can lead to an outbreak."

Prof Dr Moy Foong Ming

giving booster doses to everyone aged 65 and above, so we should follow.

"The decision might be related to their environmental factors, lifestyle and how they were infected.

"In Malaysia, it may be a totally different scenario.

"That's why we have to study our own data and decide who needs a third dose and booster dose," he said yesterday.

Dr Raj Kumar said there is only "a very thin line" differentiating the booster shots and third doses because a third dose can be given to someone who wants a booster dose and vice versa.

"Basically, a booster dose is given to all the high-risk groups, such as those working on the front line and those with comorbidities like hypertension and diabetes.

"A booster is given because, for any vaccine, the effect wanes after six months as the antibody counts will reduce," he said.

The third dose, he said, is given to those who have low immunity, like cancer and HIV patients, or are on certain medications that compromise their immunity level.

"They can be given the third dose as early as a month after the second

dose. A booster dose, on the other hand, is given after at least six months.

"But when it comes to who is the right candidate for a booster or third dose, it can interchange. The same person can be eligible for both," he explained.

Dr Raj Kumar also said that "retrospective studies" should be done to collect data from our past experiences and cases to help decide who needs a booster or third dose.

"For example, we can look at data of admission for Categories 4 and 5 that involves those aged 65 and above; how many ended up in the ICU and how many died.

"From these statistics, we can get a picture of the groups that are at higher risk and decide if they should get a booster dose," he said, adding that an antibody test can also tell if a booster dose is needed.

Prof Dr Moy Foong Ming from Universiti Malaya's Department of Social and Preventive Medicine also said that a booster and third dose are "interchangeable", and many countries do not distinguish between them.

"The third dose is for those who are immunocompromised, like those on cancer treatment whose immunity is clinically diagnosed as low by a doctor.

"In the United Kingdom and the United States, it is given as early as 28 days after the second dose.

"A booster dose is given when the efficacy of the vaccine has waned over time. The normally observed period is between six and eight months.

"For the elderly, deciding whether they need a booster or third dose will depend on whether they are immunocompromised," she said.

Although the terms could be confusing to the layman, Prof Moy said, for Malaysia, differentiating between a third and booster dose is

probably important to ensure that those who require the third dose need not wait for six months.

However, the government must ensure that those who have not received even their first dose are vaccinated before rolling out the third or booster doses, she said.

"No matter how well protected we are, if a small group is left out, it can lead to an outbreak.

"There are cases, for example among foreign workers and the Orang Asli, where some of them only came up for the first jab. We need to ramp up efforts to get them to have the second jab."

"Nobody is safe until everybody is safe," she added.

Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Koh Kar Chai said a third dose is recommended for certain individuals who are not able to develop an adequate response with only two doses.

A blood test can measure our immunity level, he said.

"It can determine the groups that need either a third dose or a booster dose.

"However, the Health Ministry does not currently recommend the testing of antibodies to assess immunity."

Independent health policies expert Dr Khor Swee Kheng, who suggested a "targeted booster policy" to prevent wastage, said there are "subtle differences" between third doses and booster doses.

"This depends heavily on our ability to measure the level of our immune response.

"Therefore, Malaysia's vaccination strategy can consider including a way to measure someone's levels of protection before providing them with a booster or a third dose.

"This can be a more targeted way to deliver booster shots without wasting precious vaccine supplies," he said.

AKHBAR : SUNDAY STAR

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NATION

KJ: Pharmacists are vital

They, too, are the nation's healthcare gatekeepers

KUALA LUMPUR: Community pharmacists are urged to work together with the government, learn from each other, as well as guide Malaysians into the endemic phase as the nation prepares to live with Covid-19.

Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said community pharmacists play an important role in the fight against Covid-19 as they are the primary point of care and gatekeepers of the nation's healthcare system.

"You are frontlining it ... when doctors and hospitals, those in the front line of healthcare are overburdened, the next in line must step in, and these are our com-

munity pharmacists.

"As healthcare professionals, pharmacists have a key role, not only during the pandemic, but for many years, engaging directly with the community, continuing to care for patients ... we can work together in areas like preventive medicine and educating the public, not just on disease, but also on wellness," he said.

He said this when officiating a webinar titled "Reinvent Pharmacy Biz: Adapt Beyond the Crisis" by Malaysian Community Pharmacy Guild (MCPG), in conjunction with World Pharmacists Day, which was celebrated yesterday.

Khairy said that self-test kits are

another important area where community pharmacists come in, where along with other healthcare facilities, pharmacies are the proper channels to buy self-test kits from.

He said community pharmacists can educate the public on how to use the self-test kits - its storage and disposal - providing follow-up and counselling once the results are out, and advising clients on the differences between the brands.

"The ministry welcomes MCPG's involvement to engage and improve our healthcare system and we are committed to seeing that your profession continues to progress and move forward in this area.

"As this programme has so aptly put it, we must now adapt and look beyond the Covid-19 crisis into all other aspects of healthcare. Certainly, there is more we can do together," he said.

He applauded MCPG for taking real action to prepare, train and equip its members in the event of another surge or new variant, including organising a vaccination training programme earlier this year. — Bernama

Watch the video
TheStarTV.com



Cheaper Covid-19 self-test kits

KUALA LUMPUR: The price of the Covid-19 self-test kit will be reduced by the end of the month to make it more affordable for parents to have their children screened before the start of school on Oct 3.

Deputy Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Rosol Wahid said the latest price would be announced soon.

"Its sales will not be limited to pharmacies and clinics, but will be expanded to other business premises such as supermarkets and mini markets.

"This will make it easier for the people because not only is the price cheaper, it will also be easily available.

"Although the quantum of reduction has not been finalised yet, it will be affordable and will not burden the people compared to the current price," he told reporters after witnessing the vaccination of 327 Orang Asli in Kampung Sungai Berua yesterday.

The ministry had from Sept 5 set the maximum retail price for a Covid-19 self-test kit at RM19.90 while the wholesale price is RM16.

Rosol, who is also the Hulu Terengganu MP, said the ministry held a meeting with representatives of several pharmaceutical associations which agreed to reduce the price of the self-test kit.

"Although the current price is considered cheap, it is quite high for parents, especially those whose children are still in school.

"A family of five would need RM100 to buy the self-test kits. The new price will not be burdensome. The important thing is to carry out the test to ensure that their children are healthy," he said. — Bernama

Community pharmacists ready to serve

By **ASHLEY TANG**
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PETALING JAYA: As the country prepares to enter the endemic phase of Covid-19 by end-October, community pharmacists are stepping up to help the government provide medical education to the people.

Malaysian Pharmacists Society (MPS) president Amrahi Buang said: "Community pharmacists give different kinds of care.

"We are involved in all care levels - promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative. This is how we serve the community," he said.

As such, community pharmacists could help improve health literacy

in the community.

"After one and a half years of the pandemic, health literacy in the community is still lacking.

"No one educates the people, so the government should look into community pharmacists as a channel to educate the public," he said in an interview.

Community pharmacists, he said, could also teach the B40 groups how to use items in their Covid-19 care packs, such as the self-test kits, the thermometers and pulse oximeters.

On Sept 19, the government announced that 3.6 million B40 households are set to receive Covid-19 care packs, which would include reusable face masks, four self-test kits, a thermometer and pulse ox-

imeter to help them prepare for life during the endemic phase.

Community pharmacists could also help the government do pharmacovigilance by reporting Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) from Covid-19 vaccines.

Similarly, they are ready to lend a helping hand to inoculate the public after going through the relevant training, Amrahi added.

Medical Practitioners Coalition Association of Malaysia president Dr Raj Kumar Maharajah said community pharmacists could provide a crucial supportive role to doctors for the well-being of patients.

The role of pharmacists, said Dr Raj, is to sell Medical Device

Authority approved self-test Covid-19 kits.

He said they could show the patients how to correctly do the test and dispose of the used kit.

"They could also do some counselling and refer patients to general practitioners if they need further advice or testing," he said.

Meanwhile, he said, general practitioners have become one-stop centres during the pandemic.

"We have consulted, examined, screened, vaccinated, done home monitoring and surveillance, functioned as a Covid assessment centre, and followed up with patients until they are given release orders," he added.

"On discharge, we have counselled them and their families."

82.5% of adults fully vaccinated

KUALA LUMPUR: As at Sept 24, 82.5% of the adult population (or 19,311,563 people) in the country has completed their Covid-19 vaccination.

Based on the Health Ministry's data on CovidNow, 93.6% or 21,903,061 adults in the country have received at least one dose of the vaccine as at Thursday.

It also showed that 0.8% of adolescents (or 25,326) aged 12 to 17 have completed their vaccination.

A total of 273,373 doses of the vaccine were dispensed on Thursday, with 116,881 doses as first dose and 156,492 doses as the second, bringing the number of doses dispensed under the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme (PICK) to 41,847,256.

Meanwhile, 250 deaths due to Covid-19 were reported for Sept 22, with 49 of them brought in dead (BID), bringing the total death toll due to the virus in the country to 24,931.

According to the ministry's GiHub portal, of the 250 deaths, only nine cases were the actual deaths reported for Sept 22, while the rest were backlog cases. — Bernama