
Five deaths linked to vape use

Dzulkefly: 83 cases of diseases due to smoking products as of June this year

A TOTAL of five deaths linked to the use of e-cigarettes or vapes were reported between 2019 and June 2025, says Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He said his ministry received a total of 83 reported cases of diseases linked to the use of smoking products, including e-cigarettes or vapes, as of June 2025.

"Of these, 44 cases involved serious complications affecting the lungs, while the remaining 39 cases involved other health complications not directly related to the lungs.

"Although there have been deaths involving individuals who

used e-cigarettes or vape, a direct causal link between vape use and the cause of death is difficult to confirm, due to limited clinical evidence and other contributing factors," he said in a written reply to Wan Razali Wan Nor (PN-Kuantan).

Wan Razali wanted the Health Ministry to reveal the number of deaths related to the use of e-cigarettes and vapes.

He also asked the ministry to explain its efforts to curb the use of e-cigarettes and vapes among children and teenagers.

Dr Dzulkefly said the ministry is currently strengthening surveillance to identify the causes of

deaths associated with smoking products.

This effort, he added, is in line with the implementation of Section 21 of the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024, which gives the minister the authority to ban or restrict the import, manufacturing, distribution, or sale of smoking products, based on the recommendations of a committee established under that section.

He also said that in 2024, a total of 230 primary school pupils were found to have smoking problems and 193 of them have undergone smoking cessation interventions.

For secondary school students,

44,211 were identified to have smoking problems and 36,870 have undergone interventions, he said.

To curb e-cigarette and vape use among children and teenagers, the ministry has taken several measures, including enforcing regulations under the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024 to protect them from being exposed to and influenced by smoking habits, said Dr Dzulkefly.

"The ministry is also implementing a strict prohibition on the sale and purchase of all smoking products, including electronic cigarettes and vapes, especially to

those who are underaged," he added.

In addition, the ministry also implemented prevention and smoking cessation intervention programmes for school students through the Oral Health Without Smoking Practice Program.

He said smoking cessation services are also provided through 837 Quit Smoking Clinics and 111 One Stop Centres for Addiction across the country.

"Parents or guardians can bring children who are involved in smoking or using electronic cigarettes or vapes to these clinics to get professional treatment and cessation support," he said.

230 murid sekolah rendah terjebak rokok

Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mendedahkan 230 murid sekolah rendah dikesan mempunyai masalah merokok dengan 193 daripadanya sudah menjalani intervensi berhenti merokok tahun lalu.

Selain itu, seramai 44,211 pelajar sekolah menengah dikesan mempunyai masalah sama dan 36,870 daripadanya sudah menjalani intervensi berhenti merokok bagi tempoh sama.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, berkata angka itu berdasarkan statistik Program Kesihatan Oral Tanpa Amalan Merokok (KOTAK) dilaksanakan sebagai pencegahan dan intervensi berhenti merokok dalam kalangan pelajar sekolah.

Selain itu, beliau berkata, KKM turut merekodkan lima laporan kematian berkemungkinan berkaitan

penggunaan rokok elektronik atau vape, antara 2019 hingga Jun lalu.

Bagaimanapun, katanya, hubungan langsung antara penggunaan vape dengan punca kematian sukar disahkan biarpun terdapat kes kematian membabitkan individu menggunakan alat berkenaan.

“KKM juga menerima 83 laporan kes penyakit yang dikait dengan penggunaan produk merokok, termasuk rokok elektronik atau vape, sehingga Jun lalu.

“Sebanyak 44 kes daripada jumlah berkenaan membabitkan komplikasi serius yang memberi kesan kepada paru-paru. Selain itu, 39 kes lagi membabitkan komplikasi kesihatan lain yang tidak membabitkan paru-paru secara langsung,” katanya dalam jawapan bertulis di laman sesawang Parlimen.

Beliau menjawab soalan Wan Razali Wan Nor (PN-Kuantan) mengenai jumlah kematian berkaitan aktiviti menghisap rokok elektronik dan vape serta usaha KKM membendung pembabitkan remaja dan kanak-kanak daripada terjebak menghisap alat berkenaan.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, KKM kini memperkukuh sistem surveilans bagi mengenal pasti punca sebenar kematian dikaitkan dengan produk merokok.

“Usaha ini selari pelaksanaan Seksyen 21 Akta Kawalan Produk Merokok Demi Kesihatan Awam 2024 (Akta 852) yang memberi kuasa kepada menteri melarang atau menyekat pengimportan, pengilangan, pengedaran atau penjualan produk merokok berdasarkan syor jawatankuasa ditubuhkan di bawah seksyen berkenaan,” katanya.

Pengambilan baharu jururawat dibuat secara lantikan tetap

Kuala Lumpur: Pengecualian lantikan kontrak interim bagi jururawat antara inisiatif bagi meningkatkan jumlah perjawatan untuk kesinambungan penyampaian perkhidmatan kesihatan.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, berkata ini membolehkan semua pengambilan baharu Jururawat Gred U5 dilaksanakan secara lantikan tetap.

Katanya, pengambilan pelatih Diploma Kejururawatan di Institut Latihan Kementerian Kesihatan juga ditingkatkan daripada 1,500 kepada 3,000 dengan seramai 5,077 pelatih sedang mengikuti latihan Diploma Kejururawatan di institut itu, sehingga Mac lalu.

Beliau berkata, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) juga menyasarkan pengambilan 1,000 jururawat graduan diploma kejururawatan keluaran universiti awam dan institusi pengajian tinggi swasta (IPTs), tahun ini.

“Selain itu, penamatan moratorium bagi program Diploma Kejururawatan di universiti awam dan IPTs oleh Kementerian Pendidikan Tinggi, mulai 1 Ogos 2024. Sehingga kini, sebanyak 13 kolej sudah memohon untuk membuka program baru bagi Diploma Kejururawatan.

“Menerusi Lembaga Jururawat Malaysia, kementerian melonggarkan syarat memasuki ke program Diploma Kejururawatan lulus Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) bagi menyasarkan peningkatan lepasan SPM ke bidang kejururawatan di Institut Latihan Kementerian Kesihatan, universiti awam dan IPTs,” katanya.

Beliau menjawab soalan Datuk Seri Jalaluddin Alias (BN-Jelebu) mengenai langkah mengatasi masalah kekurangan jururawat di hospital awam yang semakin kritikal menerusi jawapan bertulis di laman sesawang Parlimen.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, inisiatif terbaru diperkenal kerajaan iaitu Sistem Saraan Perkhidmatan Awam (SSPA) mulai 1 Disember 2024, bertujuan meningkatkan kualiti dan memperbaharui perkhidmatan awam dengan mengambil kira gaji, insentif serta kemudahan kepada anggota perkhidmatan awam, termasuk pegawai yang berkhidmat dengan KKM.

Ahli Parlimen syor hapus doktor kontrak

Kuala Lumpur: Isu kebajikan petugas kesihatan menjadi tumpuan Ahli Parlimen ketika perbincangan usul Rancangan Malaysia Ke-13 (RMK13) di Dewan Rakyat kelmarin.

Dr Kelvin Yii Lee Wuen (PH-Bandar Kuching) mencadangkan kerajaan memansuhkan sistem kontrak dalam kalangan doktor bagi menangani isu kekurangan petugas kesihatan di kemudahan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM).

“Bagi saya, mereka yang sudah berkhidmat lebih daripada tiga tahun dan berkhidmat di desa atau pedalaman, harus diberikan

keutamaan untuk mendapat penempatan tetap secepat mungkin, manakala yang baharu masuk dalam sistem KKM, kita mansuhkan terus sistem kontrak ini,” katanya.

Lee Wuen turut meminta kerajaan mempercepat kenaikan elaun *on-call* atau tugas atas panggilan doktor dan jururawat serta menyediakan peruntukan khas dan emolument.

Dr Halimah Ali (PN-Kapar) berpandangan sistem kesihatan memerlukan perubahan sistemik, terutama dalam proses perpindahan, waktu kerja dan imbuhan.

Selain itu, beliau mencadangkan KKM untuk mengadakan perbincangan dengan Kementerian Sumber Manusia serta Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat bagi memastikan petugas sektor itu dapat mencapai keseimbangan hidup dan kerja.

Datuk Adnan Abu Hassan (BN-Kuala Pilah) pula membangkitkan isu kekurangan petugas kesihatan yang membimbangkan, selain menegaskan kemudahan kesihatan yang moden dan serba lengkap, tidak akan dapat dimanfaatkan sepenuhnya tanpa

tenaga kerja mencukupi.

Beliau berkata, penempatan tenaga kerja KKM wajar dijadikan indikator utama dalam pelaksanaan projek kesihatan di bawah RMK13, khususnya di kawasan luar bandar.

“Setiap projek baharu sama ada hospital, klinik atau pejabat kesihatan perlu disertakan dengan unjuran sumber manusia yang realistik termasuk aspek perjawatan tetap dan kontrak bagi memastikan pelaksanaan projek fizikal selari dengan keupayaan operasi,” katanya.

BERNAMA



Report on
page 3

The Health Ministry says it is enhancing its surveillance system to pinpoint the causes of vape-related deaths, in line with the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024. — AMIRULSYAFIQ MOHD DIN/THESUN

Death from vaping?

Health Ministry has recorded five deaths likely linked to electronic cigarettes since 2019, but says establishing direct causal link remains difficult due to limited clinical evidence and other contributing factors.

Vape deaths **under scrutiny,** govt steps up crackdown

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PETALING JAYA: The Health Ministry has recorded five deaths likely linked to electronic cigarettes or vapes from 2019 to June this year.

In a written reply to Parliament, it said 83 reports of illnesses related to smoking products, including vapes, were received during the period, comprising 44 cases of serious lung complications and 39 involving other health problems.

"While some deaths have involved vape users, establishing a direct causal link remains difficult due to limited clinical evidence and other contributing factors," it said.

The ministry said it is enhancing its surveillance system to pinpoint the causes of vape-related deaths, in line with the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024

➤ Health Ministry ramps up enforcement, boosts surveillance and school intervention programmes to curb puffing

(Act 852). The law empowers the minister to restrict or ban the import, manufacture, distribution or sale of smoking products based on expert committee recommendations.

To curb vaping among minors, the ministry is enforcing Act 852 provisions, including a ban on the sale and purchase of smoking products by those under 18.

"As of June, 27 offence notices have been issued, amounting to RM1,350 in compounds. Additionally, the use of such products by minors is prohibited, with 2,619 notices issued, totalling

RM130,950 in compounds," it said.

Strict advertising bans have led to 340 investigations, while restrictions on sales in schools, online platforms, vending machines, vape trucks and markets have triggered 45 cases to curb minors' access.

"Furthermore, there is a ban on disposable vape pods resembling toys or food items, which have prompted 51 investigations. These combined efforts reflect the government's commitment to prevent youths from engaging in vaping and protecting public health," the ministry said.

On Aug 4, *theSun* reported that vape liquids containing a dangerous synthetic substance dubbed "magic mushroom" were being sold via online platforms.

The ministry said school-based prevention and cessation programmes are also being rolled out. This year, 230 primary pupils and 44,211 secondary students were identified as smokers, with most receiving cessation interventions.

It added that collaboration with the Education and Higher Education ministries has reinforced bans on students carrying vapes, while over 12,500 teachers have been trained to conduct anti-smoking programmes.

"Across the country, 857 quit smoking clinics and 111 one-stop-centres for addiction offer professional support to those seeking to quit."

The ministry said it is also working on community advocacy with NGOs, including the Malaysian Drug Prevention Association, National Cancer Society Malaysia, Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia and Parents Against Smoking and Vaping Association.

"The involvement of all parties reflects a 'whole of society' approach towards a smoke-free Malaysia by 2040."



PATRIOTISM IN BLOOM ... Retiree Abdul Aziz Shaari, 63, of Kangar, Perlis transforms his garden into a Merdeka haven each National Month and Malaysia Day, using recycled materials to craft Jalur Gemilang decorations. — **BERNAMAPIC**

Fitness for work a better way to decide retirement age

THE conversation on extending the retirement age in Malaysia is gaining momentum. With rising life expectancy, improved health-care and the need to retain skilled workers, many argue that older employees can still contribute meaningfully to the workforce.

From an occupational health perspective, the key question is not simply "How old are you?" but rather "Are you fit for your work?"

Extending the retirement age without proper health checks may lead to increased workplace accidents, reduced productivity and higher absenteeism.

On the other hand, regular Fitness for Work (FFW) assessments can ensure that experienced employees remain healthy, safe and effective in their roles.

From my experience in occupational medicine, an effective FFW

programme for older employees should focus on:

- > Functional capacity evaluation, which involves assessing the person's physical strength, stamina, flexibility and coordination in relation to the demands of the job;

- > Cognitive health screening to evaluate memory, decision-making and reaction time, especially for safety-critical roles;

- > Vision and hearing tests, which are essential for jobs involving driving, machinery operation or detailed visual inspection;

- > Chronic disease management aimed at monitoring conditions like hypertension, diabetes and heart disease to prevent sudden health events at work; and

- > Ensuring mental health and well-being by addressing work stress, burnout and emotional resilience.

Older employees often bring unmatched experience, mentorship skills and institutional knowledge. However, physiological changes with age can impact reaction speed, musculoskeletal endurance and sensory perception.

These changes don't necessarily mean one is unfit to work. It simply means job roles may need to be adapted through ergonomic adjustments, flexible schedules or lighter physical demands.

If the retirement age in Malaysia is indeed extended, a structured framework should be in place with mandatory periodic FFW assessments by certified occupational health physicians, workplace modifications to suit ageing workers, return-to-work programmes after illness or injury, and clear guidelines for redeployment to suitable roles when full

duties are no longer possible.

This approach not only safeguards the health of older employees but also protects organisations from avoidable incidents and productivity loss.

We should view the extension of the retirement age not as a blanket policy but as an opportunity to implement evidence-based occupational health strategies. By combining medical assessments, workplace adjustments and employee support, we can ensure that older workers will thrive.

Age is inevitable; decline is not. With the right occupational health interventions, many employees can remain valuable assets to their organisations well beyond the official retirement age.

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