

Balancing expertise and influence

Stakeholders: Influencers need expert guidance on food content

PETALING JAYA: Untrained influencers sharing content on nutrition can lead to confusion or worse, even harm, say experts.

Any influencer who is picked to promote the Health Ministry's agenda, they caution, must have a background in healthcare and nutrition.

Another solution would be to have experts work with the influencers to disseminate the correct information, they say.

"While influencers have the reach, health information, especially on nutrition, should not be based on popularity.

"Misinformation spreads easily through social media, often overshadowing science-backed advice," said ParkCity Medical Centre Dietetics and Food Services unit head Ng Kar Foo.

That said, healthcare professionals cannot work in silos either. Content creators can play a supporting role if they collaborate with qualified health professionals like dietitians, Ng said.

"More healthcare professionals should be empowered to speak up and share science-based information on digital platforms," he said, adding that all health content should be reviewed by quali-

fied professionals to ensure public safety and accuracy.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said recently that food influencers should help promote healthy eating among Malaysians.

He said the ministry would engage them to help promote a healthy agenda.

Retired health ministry director Datuk Zainal Ariffin Omar agreed that influencers can promote healthy eating if they base their advice on scientific evidence and not on fad diet trends or personal opinions.

He too said food content creators could collaborate with nutritionists and dietitians to ensure that accurate information is disseminated. Influencers, he said, should avoid promoting extreme diets or unproven supplements.

"The best approach would be to encourage food content influencers to partner with experts," he said.

Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh, dean of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's School of Liberal Sciences and Public Health Medicine Specialist said Malaysians are spoilt for choices over what to eat.



Joint effort: A file photo of a boy completing a Malaysian Healthy Plate puzzle, designed to educate Malaysians about proper portions. The Health Minister said recently that food influencers should help promote healthy eating among Malaysians.

"Beside doctors and trained nutritionists, getting advice from social media influencers is a good idea. Influencers can promote positive lifestyles like quitting smoking, promoting exercise, the effects of alcohol and vaping and getting assistance for mental health issues," she said.

However, she too warned of misinformation online.

"It is important to ensure that the information disseminated by the influencers are backed by science and data."

Members of the public, meanwhile, felt that involving influencers could be a smart move.

Ali Imran, 21, who works as a

barista at a fast food chain cafe, said influencers can make low-sugar drinks or a healthier coffee look trendy and fun.

This, he said, would be more appealing to the masses than an expert's advice.

"Experts might know the science behind nutrition, but an influencer's vibe could inspire them to try something new, like a fruit-infused tea.

"It would be good to have influencers work with nutritionists to share accurate tips," he added.

Contractor Tan Han Chuan, 37, felt influencers could spread awareness because of the trust their audience have.

Young adults top new HIV cases

75% of those infected in 2024 were between the ages of 20 to 39, says Dzulkefly

YOUNG adults made up the majority of new HIV cases reported in Malaysia last year, with 75% involving those aged between 20 and 39, says Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (pic).

He said the pattern of HIV transmission in the country has changed significantly over the years – shifting from infections caused by sharing drug needles to those spread through sexual contact.

“In 2024, sexual transmission accounted for 96% of all HIV cases. Of these, 64% involved homosexual or bisexual contact, while 32% were heterosexual,” he said in a written reply to Tan Kok Wai (PH-Cheras).

Dzulkefly said a total of 3,185 new HIV cases were reported in 2024, with a notification rate of 9.4 per 100,000 people. Most of the cases involved men, who made up 90% of the total, while women accounted for 10%.

“This shows some change compared to the 1990s, when almost all cases involved men (99%) and only 1% were women,” he added.

The overall number of new HIV and AIDS cases in Malaysia dropped by 50% between 2000 and 2009. However, the decline has slowed in recent years, with only a 27% decrease recorded from 2010 to 2024.

On a separate matter, Dzulkefly said between 2022 and 2024, a total of 705 medical officers and



1,394 nurses resigned after serving for more than five years.

He added the primary reasons for these resignations include pursuing opportunities in the private sector or statutory bodies, as well as personal and health-related issues.

Despite these departures, the Health Ministry appointed 12,761 new medical officers and 5,396 nurses within the same period to fill permanent positions.

To retain talent and mitigate the outflow of experienced healthcare personnel, the ministry has implemented several initiatives. These include exemptions from interim contract appointments for nurses by central agencies for the years 2023 and 2024, with the potential for permanent appointments in 2025.

In a written reply to Tan Kar Hing (PH-Gopeng), Dzulkefly said that shift hours for medical officers in emergency departments and ward nurses have been reduced from 45 to 42 hours per week.

The ministry has also introduced specific allowances and incentives, such as the Locum Allowance, Specialist Incentive Payment, Post-Basic Allowance, and Location and Hardship Incentives. Moreover, incentive payments are offered to pre-gazetted medical officers and supervised work experience (SWE) in recognition of their workload and specialist commitments.

Faster career progression is another focus, with time-based promotions from Grade UD9 to UD14 achievable within nine to 12 years for medical officers.

Paramedics are also eligible for Time-Based Excellence (TBK 1 and TBK 2) promotions after 13 years of service.

DISMISSED CLAIMS

No data breach in MySejahtera, says Dzulkefly

HEALTH Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad has dismissed claims of a data breach involving 3.2 million MySejahtera users, which allegedly occurred in April.

He said investigations carried out by the Health Ministry, in collaboration with relevant agencies, found no indication of unauthorised access or leakage of personal data from the MySejahtera platform.

"There was no such incident involving a breach of 3.2 million users' data as claimed," he said in a parliamentary written reply.

He added that the ministry remained committed to ensuring the integrity and security of health data, with ongoing efforts to boost cybersecurity measures.

"These efforts are in accordance with General Circular No. 4 of 2022, which outlines procedures for managing cybersecurity incidents within the public sector."

He was responding to Datuk Azman Nasrudin (PN-Padang Serai), who had raised concerns about the status of investigations by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission into the alleged breach.

Lebih 3,000 kes HIV direkod tahun lalu

Majoriti pesakit lelaki, 75 peratus pesakit golongan belia usia 20 tahun hingga 39 tahun

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Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) merekodkan lebih 3,000 kes HIV pada tahun lalu, majoritinya membabitkan golongan belia.

Menterinya, Datuk Seri

Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, berkata trend itu menunjukkan peningkatan berbanding kira-kira 35 tahun lalu, dengan golongan belia berusia antara 20 hingga 39 tahun menjadi penyumbang utama, iaitu sebanyak 75 peratus kes.

“Jangkitan baharu HIV/AIDS di Malaysia secara amnya telah mencatatkan penurunan sebanyak 50 peratus antara 2000 hingga 2009. Namun, mulai 2010 sehingga kini, kadar penurunan semakin perlahan iaitu hanya 27 peratus.

“Pada 2024, sebanyak 3,185 kes HIV baharu dilaporkan dengan kadar notifikasi 9.4 bagi setiap 100,000 penduduk. Majoritinya adalah dalam kalangan

lelaki iaitu 90 peratus berbanding wanita 10 peratus.

“Trend ini menunjukkan peningkatan berbanding 1990-an di mana wanita hanya satu peratus dan lelaki pula 99 peratus,” katanya dalam jawapan bertulis di laman web Parlimen.

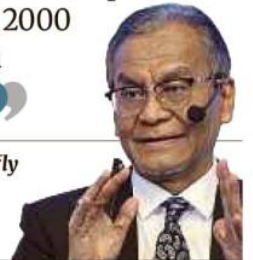
Beliau berkata demikian menjawab pertanyaan Tan Kok Wai (PH-Cheras) mengenai keadaan semasa jangkitan HIV dalam negara, termasuk jumlah pesakit mengikut kategori kumpulan umur, jantina dan punca utama jangkitan.

Perubahan mod jangkitan

Mengulas lanjut, Dr Dzulkefly berkata, jangkitan HIV di negara ini juga menunjukkan per-

“Jangkitan baharu HIV/AIDS di Malaysia secara amnya telah mencatatkan penurunan 50 peratus antara 2000 hingga 2009”

Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad,
Menteri Kesihatan



ubahan landskap mod jangkitan ketara.

Katanya, trend jangkitan itu berpunca perkongsian jarum suntikan dadah kepada jangkitan melalui transmisi seksual.

“Terkini, punca jangkitan HIV adalah melalui seksual iaitu 96 peratus pada tahun lalu, di mana 32 peratus jangkitan adalah secara heteroseksual dan 64 peratus homoseksual/biseksual,” katanya.

4,352 calon pegawai perubatan UD10 ditawarkan lantikan tetap

Putrajaya: Seramai 4,352 calon Pegawai Perubatan Gred UD10 akan menerima surat tawaran bagi lantikan tetap selewat-lewatnya 18 Ogos ini.

Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) dalam kenyataan, semalam memaklumkan semua calon yang memilih untuk menerima lantikan itu akan melapor diri ke fasiliti kesihatan KKM seluruh negara secara berfasa seawal 2 Oktober depan.

KKM berkata, ia membabit-

kan pegawai daripada beberapa kohort lantikan kontrak dan dilaksanakan secara berfasa bagi menjaga susunan kekananan serta kebajikan pegawai.

“Pelantikan tetap ini perlu dilaksanakan secara berfasa kerana ia membabitkan pegawai perubatan daripada beberapa kohort lantikan kontrak, di samping menjaga kebajikan pegawai dari aspek susunan kekananan,” menurut kenyataan itu.

KKM memaklumkan sesi li-

bat urus diadakan bersama Kementerian Kewangan (MoF), Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Awam (SPA) dan Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam (JPA) bagi memastikan proses pelantikan terbabit mengikut perancangan.

KKM turut menyatakan komitmen untuk memastikan keseluruhan proses lantikan berkenaan berjalan lancar.

“Ini selaras dengan langkah strategik KKM dalam memperkukuh sistem penjagaan

kesihatan awam negara dengan memastikan pengisian jawatan kritikal dilaksanakan secara terancang, seimbang dan berteras-kan keperluan perkhidmatan semasa,” menurut kenyataan itu.

Pada 23 Julai lalu, Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, semasa Pengumuman Penghargaan untuk Rakyat Malaysia berkata kerajaan akan menyegerakan pengisian 4,352 perjawatan di fasiliti kesihatan, termasuk lantikan doktor

kontrak pada tahun ini kerana ada keperluan mendesak terhadap sektor penjagaan kesihatan negara.

Perdana Menteri turut mengarahkan KKM mempercepat proses birokrasi yang menyebabkan kelewatan lantikan, memandangkan pada asalnya KKM menjangkakan kebanyakan atau semua jawatan terbabit hanya akan dapat diisi menjelang November depan.

BERNAMA

Paparan harga ubat di fasiliti kesihatan swasta dianggap tak wajar, mengelirukan

Kuala Lumpur: Langkah kerajaan mewajibkan paparan harga ubat, mengeluarkan preskripsi dan bil terperinci bagi setiap pesakit yang menerima rawatan di fasiliti kesihatan swasta bermula 1 Ogos lalu disifatkan tidak wajar dan mengelirukan.

Tindakan itu menunjukkan Kementerian Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Kos Sara Hidup (KPDN) melalui Akta Kawalan Harga dan Antipencatutan 2011 (Akta 723) 'campur tangan' dalam perkara yang di luar bidang kuasanya.

Presiden Pertubuhan Doktor-Doktor Islam Malaysia (PERDIM), Dr Boi Saidi Abd Razak, berpandangan Akta Kemudahan dan Perkhidmatan Penjagaan Kesihatan Swasta 1998 (Akta 586) di bawah Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) yang ketika ini mengawal operasi klinik swasta

sudah memadai.

"Kami pengamal klinik swasta (GP) tidak bersetuju Akta 723 berkaitan paparan harga ubat di klinik swasta digunakan. PERDIM turut berpendapat bahawa tatakelola klinik swasta adalah di bawah Akta 586 dan ia di luar bidang kuasa KPDN Dan Majlis Tindakan Sara Hidup Negara (NACCOL).

"Kami berpendapat semua akta sedia ada di bawah KKM sudah memadai untuk mengawal selia operasi klinik swasta di Malaysia.

"Jika KKM membabitkan KPDN, ini akan menyebabkan timbul kekeliruan di antara pemegang taruh kesihatan," kata-

nya kepada *BH*, di sini semalam.

Mengulas lanjut, Dr Boi Saidi berkata, peruntukan dalam Akta 586 jelas menyatakan klinik swasta tidak wajib mengelu-

arkan preskripsi dan bil terperinci kepada semua pesakit yang mendapatkan rawatan di klinik swasta, sebaliknya ia hanya akan dikeluarkan atas permintaan pesakit.

Justeru, beliau menggesa KPDN meneliti semula bidang kuasanya supaya tidak sesekali mengeluarkan kenyataan yang mengelirukan rakyat dan pemegang taruh kesihatan di negara ini.

Ketika sesi Pertanyaan-Pertanyaan Bagi Jawab Lisan di

Dewan Rakyat kelmarin, Timbalan Menteri Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Kos Sara Hidup, Dr Fuziah Salleh, dilaporkan berkata bermula 1 Ogos, semua klinik dan farmasi diwajibkan memaparkan harga ubat secara telus sebagai sebahagian usaha kerajaan memperkasa hak pengguna dalam sektor kesihatan.

Fuziah dilaporkan berkata, keputusan itu antara inti pati utama yang dipersetujui dalam Mesyuarat NACCOL dan Jawatankuasa Eksekutifnya yang berlangsung tahun ini, selain mewajibkan preskripsi ubat selepas setiap sesi perundingan dengan doktor.

Ahad lalu, KKM dalam satu kenyataan memaklumkan kekal dengan pemberian tempoh tiga bulan advokasi bagi pelaksanaan Akta 723, bermula sejak 1 Mei lalu.



Dr Boi Saidi Abd Razak

Get your nutrition strategy right

THINK of your body as a high-performance car engine. Without the right fuel, it will not get far or drive fast. You can build a structured training plan, but without a nutrition strategy to match your efforts, it may fall short.

Whether you are a weekend warrior or a seasoned marathoner, sports nutrition should be integrated into every phase of your workout journey.

THE RIGHT NUTRIENTS FOR BEST RESULTS

Nutrition starts with the basics - calories, and macronutrients tailored to your fitness goals.

Here's how to break it down:

Carbohydrates: Your body's go-to fuel for endurance. Eating fast digesting carbs 30-45 minutes before a workout helps maintain energy without risking digestive distress.

General training needs range from 5.5-7g per kg of body weight, while endurance athletes may require 7-10g/kg. It's even higher for ultra-endurance events.

Protein: Essential for muscle



You can build a structured training plan, but without a nutrition strategy to match your efforts, it may fall short. PICTURES CREDIT: HERBALIFE



Smart nutrition is more than what you eat, it is also about when you eat.

recovery, repair, and sustained performance. Endurance athletes should aim for 1-1.3g/kg of body weight, and those involved in strength or high-intensity training may need up to 2g/kg.

Fats: Often overlooked, fats provide long-lasting energy and support cell function. They should make up 25-30 per cent of your daily calorie intake. Prioritise sources like avocados, nuts, seeds, fatty fish, and oils like sesame or olive.

Fats are best consumed throughout the day or after a workout to avoid slowed digestion during a workout.

TIMING MATTERS

Smart nutrition is more than what you eat, it is also about when you eat:

Pre-workout: Fuel up 30-45 minutes before with a carb-rich snack, low in fibre to ease digestion. Also, drink plenty of fluids or you will be dehydrated before even starting your workout.

Adding electrolytes, especially in hot and humid Malaysian weather, can help prevent early fatigue.

Post-workout: Within 30 to 60 minutes after exercise, consume 20-40g of protein, whether from a shake, tofu, lean meat, or eggs with your choice of a carbohydrate source (fruit, rice, potatoes, or noodles). This helps repair muscle and optimise recovery.

WATER IS GREAT, BUT IS IT ENOUGH?

Hydration plays a critical role in performance, but intense activity causes the body to lose water and electrolytes through sweat and heat regulation. In tropical and humid regions across Asia, this loss can be significant. In fact, according to the National Kidney Foundation of Malaysia, most mature adults lose about 2.5 to 3 litres of fluid per day, and more for those participating in high-intensity activities and sports.

During workouts over 30 minutes, especially outdoors, replace plain water with electrolyte drinks that contain sodium and potassium to maintain endurance and prevent cramps or dizziness.

For workouts lasting longer than 60 minutes, choose an electrolyte drink with added glucose to maintain energy levels and intensity.

RECOVERY IS TRAINING, TOO

Do not underestimate the power of rest! While recovery is when real progress happens, rest is what makes that recovery possible. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep and take at least one full rest day each week. Sleep helps regulate hormones, repair muscle tissue, and replenish energy stores.

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