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Health Ministry supports AIDS Council in bid to stop discrimination of HIV-positive workers

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Deputy Health Minister Dr Lee Boon Chye said Health Ministry fully supports efforts by the Malaysian Aids Council (MAC) in ensuring that employees who have been treated for HIV/AIDS are not discriminated against by their colleagues. — Picture by Razak Ghazali

JOHOR BARU, Dec 2 — The Health Ministry fully supports efforts by the Malaysian Aids Council (MAC) in ensuring that employees who have been treated for HIV/AIDS are not discriminated against by their colleagues.

“In whatever condition, there is no threat, technically, of HIV-positive people, who have received treatment, infecting others around them,” said Deputy Health Minister Dr Lee Boon Chye.

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“So, we hope acts of discrimination against them will be stopped. At the same time, we support the efforts taken by MAC.”

He said this when commenting on reports that MAC was holding talks with the Human Resources Ministry regarding policies on non-discrimination of HIV/AIDS patients in the employment sector.

He told reporters this at the National-level World AIDS Day Celebration 2018 at Kilang Bateri, Tampoi, here today.

Also present was Johor Health director Dr Selahuddeen Abd Aziz.

On November 21, Health Minister M. Kula Segaran had been quoted as saying that the government proposed to draw up a policy to ban discrimination so that those affected would not be victimised in the employment sector as Malaysia currently had no such laws.



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Dr Lee said Malaysia still faced the risk of HIV/AIDS infection due to the risky behaviour of the people, including free sex.

He said that last year alone, a total of 3,347 cases were reported, with a majority of them involving those aged between 20 and 49.

Thus, efforts to prevent and provide appropriate treatment need to be stepped up to effectively curb it.

This is in line with the ministry’s aim to reduce new HIV infections in 2030 to not more than 900 cases, apart from ensuring at least 95 per cent of those living with HIV know their status and receive antiretroviral (ARV) treatment.

“Access (to treatment) for them is not a problem because health clinics have appropriate treatment available. I think there may be a misconception and refusal to accept because HIV has no symptoms.



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“So, they think they are healthy, that’s why there are those who have not sought treatment,” he said. — Bernama