

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Penularan COVID-19

Tiada bukti Omicron mampu bina imuniti

Masyarakat diingat usah sengaja dedahkan diri untuk dijangkiti wabak

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Klang: Tiada bukti jelas menunjukkan pendekatan kesihatan awam di dunia, menyatakan seorang itu perlu dijangkiti COVID-19 varian Omicron untuk membina imuniti kepada wabak berkenaan.

Justeru, Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin mengingatkan, masyarakat agar tidak dedahkan diri kepada jangkitan COVID-19 varian Omicron, walaupun kesan jangkitannya lebih sederhana berbanding Delta.

"Tidak kira varian apa...Omicron ke, Delta, Alpha dan Beta, jangan sengaja nak dapatkan COVID-19, sebab yang pertama kita tidak tahu kesan wabak itu sama ada mereka sudah divaksinkan atau tidak."

"Kita tidak tahu kesan jangka panjang COVID-19 kepada mereka yang pernah dijangkiti. Hari ini mungkin kita kata Omicron ini lebih *mild* daripada Delta jadi 'why not semua' dijangkiti dengan Omicron. Kita dapat imuniti kelompok dan sebagaimana."

"Itu tidak terbukti lagi. Kita tahu Omicron *milder*, tetapi tidak bermakna kita perlu dijangkitinya (*but it doesn't mean we should get it*).

"Pendekatan tidak terbukti lagi (kesahihannya), tetapi nasihat Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM), masyarakat tetap perlu dapatkan dos penggalak," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian dalam sidang media ketika diminta



Khairy menyampaikan bantuan kerajaan kepada Majlis AIDS Malaysia kepada Presiden Majlis AIDS Malaysia, Datuk Dr Christopher Lee (kiri) pada Majlis Pelancaran Inisiatif Mengakhiri AIDS di Klang, semalam.

(Foto Salfullizan Tamadil /BH)

mengulas laporan berita yang mendakwa varian Omicron mampu meningkatkan imuniti kelompok dalam masyarakat disebabkan keadaan transmisinya yang tinggi oleh pakar virologi dari Afrika Selatan.

Terdahulu, beliau merasmikan Majlis Pelancaran Inisiatif Mengakhiri AIDS Melalui Kerjasama Pintar GO-NGO Model KK 2.0 Peringkat Gabungan di Klinik Kesihatan Pandamaran, di sini semalam.

"Selama beberapa minggu ini, pergerakan (masyarakat) meningkat disebabkan cuti persekolahan juga perayaan seperti Krismas, sambutan tahun baru, Thaipusam kemudian Tahun Baru Cina (tidak lama lagi)."

"KKM menjangkakan akan berlaku peningkatan kes harian pada bulan ini dan Februari tetapi selagi kemasukan ke hospital, unit rawatan rapi (ICU) berada dalam paras terkawal dan kadar kematian masih menurun, kita masih keadaan terkawal," katanya.

Sementara itu, Khairy berkata, 99 peratus daripada mereka yang dijangkiti Omicron di negara ini adalah pada Kategori 1 dan 2.

Ketika ditanya mengenai statistik harian jangkitan COVID-19 yang semakin meningkat, beliau meminta agar semua pihak tidak dinilai kadar peningkatan ber-

dasarkan statistik harian semata-mata.

"Selama beberapa minggu ini, pergerakan (masyarakat) meningkat disebabkan cuti persekolahan juga perayaan seperti Krismas, sambutan tahun baru, Thaipusam kemudian Tahun Baru Cina (tidak lama lagi)."

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Katanya, keadaan di Selangor juga masih terkawal, walaupun setiap hari merekodkan jumlah kes tertinggi.

"Antara sebab (kes tinggi di Selangor) adalah kemasukan pintu antarabangsa terletak di negeri itu mana (pengembawa) berdaftar di negeri ini, walaupun bukan orang Selangor," katanya.

Malaysia catat jumlah kematian perkapita tertinggi di rantau ASEAN

Kuala Lumpur: Sejumlah 3,010 kes baharu COVID-19 direkodkan setakat jam 12 tengah hari semalam.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata peningkatan kes itu menjadikan seramai 2,808,347 individu di negara ini dijangkiti virus berkenaan, setakat ini.

Sementara itu, sebanyak 19 kematian akibat COVID-19 dilaporkan setakat jam 7.48 pagi semalam, menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan meningkat kepada 31,781 orang.

Daripada jumlah itu, 31.6 peratus atau enam pesakit meninggal dunia sebelum dibawa ke hospital.

Berdasarkan data menerusi laman sesawang GitHub Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM), Malaysia mencatat jumlah kematian perkapita tertinggi di rantau ASEAN dan Asia Timur dengan 963 kematian bagi setiap satu juta penduduk.

Jumlah kematian tertinggi dilaporkan di Selangor membabitkan Lima mangsa, diikuti masing-masing tiga di Perak dan Sabah, dua di Pulau Pinang dan Terengganu dan masing-masing satu di Melaka dan Kuala Lumpur.

Lapan negeri yang merekodkan sifar kes kematian baharu ialah Kedah, Kelantan, Negeri Sembilan, Pahang, Perlis, Sarawak

Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan dan Putrajaya.

Sejumlah 17 daripada 19 kes kematian yang dilaporkan (89.5 peratus) berlaku dalam tempoh seminggu lalu.

Baki kematian berlaku lebih seminggu lalu dan hanya dilaporkan kelmarin berikut penangguhan dalam pelaporan data.

Purata 25 kematian akibat COVID-19 dilaporkan setiap hari dalam tempoh 30 hari, berbanding purata 18 kematian dalam tempoh tujuh hari, sekali gus menunjukkan pernurunan.

Dalam perkembangan lain, seramai 2,773,263 individu atau 88.1 peratus daripada populasi remaja di negara ini lengkap menerima vaksin COVID-19, setakat jam 11.59 malam kelmarin.

Berdasarkan data Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) menerusi laman COVIDNOW, sebanyak 2,861,246 individu atau 90.9 peratus daripada kumpulan berusia 12 hingga 17 tahun itu sudah menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Bagi populasi dewasa, sejumlah 22,902,459 individu atau 97.8 peratus daripada mereka sudah melengkapkan vaksinasi, manakala 23,182,938 individu atau 99 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin COVID-19.

'Ambil dos penggalak persediaan sambut Aidilfitri'

Kuala Lumpur: Orang ramai disarankan segera mendapatkan dos penggalak vaksin COVID-19 sebagai perlindungan diri dan keluarga.

"Ia sebagai satu usaha bersama kesiapsiagaan menyambut Hari Raya nanti, Insya-Allah," menerusi ciapannya di Twitter.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, berkata langkah terbabit sebagai satu daripada usaha bagi umat Islam menyambut Aidilfitri pada Mei ini.

"Sila dapatkan dos penggalak

vaksin COVID-19 untuk perlindungan diri dan keluarga.

Mesyuarat Pihak Berkuasa Kawalan Dadah (PBKD) pada 15 Jun tahun lalu pula memperuntukkan kelulusan sama kepada CanSino dan Johnson & Johnson (J&J), masing-masing jenis satu dos suntikan lengkap.

Vaksin J&J yang mendapat 'lampu hijau' pada 15 Jun lalu diperoleh kerajaan melalui pelan per-

tukan vaksin COVID-19 global, COVAX dan berdasarkan kelulusan penggunaan kecemasan oleh Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO).

Secara perbandingan, vaksin J&J atau Janssen diluluskan baru-baru ini adalah menerusi perolehan pengilang di Belgium.

Pada masa sama, Dr Noor Hisham memaklumkan setiap vaksin mempunyai kesan sampingan se-

erti kesakitan otot, demam atau sakit kepala. Namun, keadaan itu bukan satu petanda yang buruk.

"Sedikit ketidaksesuaian untuk hasil lebih baik, Insya-Allah," katanya.

Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) melaporkan 19 kes kematian akibat COVID-19 sehingga jam 7.48 pagi semalam dengan menjadikan jumlah keseluruhan kematian meningkat kepada 31,781 orang.

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : COVID-19

VARIAN OMICRON

Ada kemungkinan ia adalah terakhir: Pakar

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Kuala Lumpur

Varian Omicron mudah berjangkit namun individu dijangkiti hanya mengalami simptom ringan dan akan menghasilkan imuniti sendiri.

Pakar Perubatan Kesihatan Awam merangkap Pengerusi Pasukan Sukarelawan Komuniti (Penglibatan dan Pemerkaasan) Melawan Covid-19 (VCEE19) Datuk Dr Zainal Ariffin Omar berkata, campuran imuniti semula jadi dan vaksin diterima juga amat baik kerana ia akan meningkatkan imuniti dalam kalangan masyarakat.

Justeru, Dr Zainal berkata, pengambilan vaksin amat penting dalam usaha melawan Covid-19, biarpun tiada jaminan untuk sesiapa terhindar daripada dijangkiti pandemik terabit.

"Apabila dijangkiti (Co-

vid-19) maka badan akan membentuk imuniti semula jadi atau kekebalan sendiri.

"Varian Omicron misalnya memang mudah berjangkit namun simptomnya ringan dan ada kemungkinan ia (Omicron) yang terakhir.

"Lama kelamaan pandemik ini akan menjadi seperti penyakit biasa yang lain," katanya dihubungi Metro Ahad.

Bagaimanapun, Dr Zainal berharap masyarakat tidak mengambil mudah dan tetrus mengambil vaksin jika belum dan dos penggalak seandainya sudah mendapat tarikh temujanji.

"Terus amalkan dan patuh prosedur operasi standard (SOP) kerana itu yang paling mustahak dalam mengelak jangkitan mengambil vaksin serta dos penggalak.

"Penting untuk berjaga-jaga namun jangan pula terlalu paranoid," katanya.



PENERIMA vaksin mendapatkan suntikan dos penggalak Covid-19 di Pusat Pemberian Vaksin (PPV) Covid-19 di Pusat Dagangan Dunia (WTC) Kuala Lumpur, kelmarin. PPV WTCKL bersedia sepenuhnya bagi operasi pemberian dos penggalak dan menyediakan 9,000 dos penggalak sehingga dengan setiap individu akan mengambil masa kira-kira 30 minit bagi menyempurnakan proses vaksinasi mereka.

88% remaja lengkap divaksin

Kuala Lumpur: Seramai 2,773,263 individu atau 88.1 peratus daripada populasi remaja di negara ini sudah lengkap menerima vaksin Covid-19, setakat jam 11.59 malam kelmarin.

Berdasarkan data Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) menerusi laman Covidnow, seramai 2,861,246 individu atau 90.9 peratus daripada kumpulan yang berusia 12 hingga 17 tahun itu sudah menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin.

Bagi populasi dewasa, sejumlah 22,902,459 individu atau 97.8 peratus daripada mereka sudah melengkapkan vaksinasi, manakala 23,182,938 individu atau 99 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin Covid-19.

Dalam pada itu, 167,955 dos suntikan vaksin diberikan kelmarin membabitkan 985 dos pertama, 897 suntikan dos lengkap dan 166,073 suntikan dos penggalak menjadikan jumlah kumulatif pemberian vaksin bagi Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (Pic) kini meningkat kepada 60,729,670 dos.

AKHBAR : KOSMO

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEGARA



KHAIRY JAMALUDDIN (dua dari kiri) menyampaikan sumbangan RM7 juta kepada Presiden Majlis AIDS Malaysia, Datuk Dr. Christopher Lee (kiri sekali) di Klang semalam.

Tiada bukti jangkitan Omicron tingkat imun

Oleh MOHD. YUNUS YAKKUB

KLANG – Tiada sebarang bukti pendekatan kesihatan awam dalam dunia menyatakan jangkitan terhadap varian Omicron boleh meningkatkan imuniti dalam masyarakat.

Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, masyarakat diingatkan agar tidak sengaja mendapatkan Covid-19 tidak kira sama ada ia adalah varian Omicron, Alpha, Delta atau Beta.

"Sebab pertama, kita tidak tahu kesan Covid-19 kepada orang yang dapat Covid-19.

"Kedua adalah kesan jangka panjang terhadap Covid-19 itu. Hari ini mungkin kata Omicron

(kesan) mild (sederhana) berbanding Delta.

"Jadi kenapa tidak kita dijangkiti Omicron dapat imuniti kelompok dan sebagainya. Tidak terbukti lagi," katanya pada sidang akhbar selepas merasmikan inisiatif mengakhiri AIDS melalui kerjasama Pintar 'Go-NGO' Model KK 2.0 Peringkat Kebangsaan di Klinik Kesihatan Pandamaran di sini, semalam.

Beliau berkata demikian bagi mengulas laporan akhbar luar negara berhubung satu kajian yang dijalankan di Afrika Selatan mendapati bahawa jangkitan terhadap varian Omicron boleh meningkatkan kekebalan komuniti.

"Jelas beliau, pihaknya terus

menasihatkan orang ramai agar mendapatkan dos penggalak bagi meningkatkan imun kesihatan seseorang.

"Jangan menggunakan hujan (kajian Afrika Selatan) itu untuk tidak mengambil dos penggalak," tegasknya.

Sementara itu, beliau memberitahu, peningkatan jangkitan harian Covid-19 masih terkawal di negara ini.

Ujarnya, ini disebabkan peningkatan pergerakan ketika perayaan Krismas, cuti sekolah, tahun baharu, Thaipusam dan Tahun Baharu Cina, selain kewujudan Omicron dengan jangkaan dalam tempoh sebulan hingga dua bulan ini, kes meningkat masih lagi terkawal.

AKHBAR : KOSMO

MUKA SURAT : 11

RUANGAN : NEGARA

Jangan takut dapatkan dos penggalak

SAUDARA PENGARANG,

SEJAK awal tahun 2021, rakyat Malaysia beratur di pusat-pusat vaksinasi untuk mendapatkan suntikan dos vaksinasi utama. Biarpun ada sedikit keraguan pada awalnya, pengambilan suntikan vaksin meningkat dan setakat 4 Januari, 97.7 peratus orang dewasa (18 tahun ke atas) telah mendapat vaksinasi lengkap (2 dos). Bagi mereka yang berusia 12 hingga 17 tahun pula, peratusan vaksinasi lengkap mencapai 87.7 peratus.

Tetapi perjuangan melawan virus ini adalah berterusan. Beberapa bulan selepas kita memaparkan foto-foto sudah disuntik vaksin dengan penuh bangga, kita sekali lagi, dikehendaki pergi ke klinik dan kali ini untuk mendapatkan suntikan dos penggalak pula.

Pihak berkuasa kesihatan sebelum ini memberi jaminan

kepada kita yang dos penggalak tidak diperlukan. Jadi, kenapa berlaku perubahan pula?

"Makin banyak yang kita pelajari mengenai virus ini dari semasa ke semasa. Pada mulanya, dua (2) dos vaksin sudah difikirkan memadai.

"Tetapi penyelidikan diteruskan dan dengan data baharu, kita kini tahu bahawa kesan perlindungan (atau tahap peneutralan antibodi) bagi semua vaksin cenderung menurun mengikut peredaran masa.

"Sebab itulah kerajaan dan pihak berkuasa lain di seluruh dunia kini mengesyorkan suntikan dos penggalak," jelas Ketua dan Perunding Penyakit Berjangkit bagi Pusat Pengajian Perubatan di Universiti Perubatan Antarabangsa (IMU), Profesor Dr. James Koh.

Menurut Dr. James, perkara ini tidak sepatutnya mengejutkan

kerana kebanyakan vaksin memang ada dos penggalak.

Misalnya, vaksin Hepatitis B ada tiga (3) dos suntikan, yang mana dos kedua dan ketiga adalah dos penggalak.

"Suntikan dos penggalak anti-Tetanus pula sepatutnya diberikan sekali dalam tempoh setiap 10 tahun, manakala suntikan vaksin pneumokokal yang memberi perlindungan daripada pneumonia disarankan sekali setiap lima (5) tahun.

"Ia bukanlah unik kepada vaksin Covid-19 sahaja.

"Ini kerana, kita mungkin tidak biasa dengan vaksin dos penggalak kerana rakyat Malaysia tidak biasa mendapatkan vaksinasi," terangnya.

JOEY GAN

Perunding Utama
Era Digitalogik Services
Kuala Lumpur



PENGAMBILAN dos penggalak penting bagi membantu kerajaan melawan penularan Covid-19.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : VAKSIN UNTUK RAKYAT

Masyarakat diminta untuk tidak sengaja menjangkitkan diri dengan Covid-19

Oleh RAJA NUR FAZNIE AIDA

KLANG

Belum ada bukti yang mengatakan seseorang itu perlu dijangkiti varian Omicron untuk membina imuniti kepada wabak tersebut.

Menteri Kesihatan, Khairy Jamaluddin Abu Bakar berkata, pendekatannya juga masih belum dibuktikan kesahihannya lagi dan masyarakat diminta untuk tidak sengaja menjangkitkan diri dengan Covid-19 serta terus mendapatkan dos penggalak.

"Tidak kira varian apa, Omicron, Delta, Alpha dan Beta, jangan sengaja nak dapat Covid-19 sebab yang pertama kita tidak tahu kesan wabak itu. Yang kedua, kita tidak tahu ke-sangka panjang Covid."

"Hari ini mungkin kita kata

Tiada bukti Omicron mampu bina imuniti kelompok

Omicron ini lebih sederhana (*milder*) daripada Delta, tetapi tidak bermaksud kita perlu dijangkitinya," katanya pada sidang akbar selepas merasmikan Majlis Pelancaran Inisiatif Mengakhiri AIDS melalui kerjasama Pintar 'GO-NGO' Model KK 2.0 Peringkat Kebangsaan, di sini pada Ahad.

Khairy berkata demikian ketika diminta mengulas laporan media mengenai kajian yang dijalankan oleh pakar luar negara terutama di Afrika yang menyatakan varian Omicron mampu membina imuniti kelompok disebabkan oleh kadar transmisi yang tinggi.

Mengulas lanjut, Khairy berkata, pihaknya menjangkakan berlaku peningkatan kes pada bulan Januari dan Februari ini.

Menurut Khairy, ia susulan



FOTO: BERNAMA

**MENDEPANI KRISI COVID-19:
APA TINDAKAN
KITA?**

Khairy (dua, kanan) bersama Setiausaha KKM, Datuk Seri Mohd Shafiq Abdullah (kanan) beramah mesra dengan kakitangan jabatan kesihatan selepas Majlis Pelancaran Inisiatif Mengakhiri AIDS di Klinik Kesihatan Pandamaran pada Ahad.

perayaan Krismas, cuti sekolah, Thailupusam dan Tahun Baharu Cina.

"Jangkaan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) dalam tempoh sebulan dua ini, kita akan melihat sedikit peningkatan

an, tetapi selagi ia tidak menyebabkan kes kemasukan ke hospital naik mendadak, saya rasa ia terkawal."

"Kita lihat Selangor pun masih kekal, tiada peningkatan secara mendadak dari segi ke-

masukan ke hospital, walaupun setiap hari negeri ini mencatatkan kes harian paling tinggi."

"Dalam hal ini, bukan saya kata kita sudah keluar daripada pandemik, tetapi keadaan terkawal," katanya.

Lebih 2 juta populasi remaja lengkap vaksin

KUALA LUMPUR - Sebanyak 2,773,263 individu atau 88.1 peratus daripada populasi remaja di negara ini telah lengkap menerima vaksin Covid-19 setakat ini.

Berdasarkan data Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) menurusi laman COVIDNOW, sebanyak 2,861,246 individu atau 90.9 peratus daripada kumpulan yang berusia 12 hingga 17 tahun itu sudah menerima satu dos vaksin.

Bagi populasi dewasa, sejumlah 22,902,459 individu atau 97.8 peratus daripada mereka telah lengkapkan vaksinasi manakala

23,182,938 individu atau 99 peratus menerima sekurang-kurangnya satu dos vaksin Covid-19.

Dalam pada itu, 167,955 dos suntikan vaksin diberikan pada Sabtu melibatkan 985 dos pertama, 897 suntikan dos lengkap dan 166,073 suntikan dos penggalak menjadikan jumlah kumulatif pemberian vaksin bagi Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (PICK) kini meningkat kepada 60,729,670 dos.

Jumlah kumulatif pemberian dos penggalak pula kini sebanyak 9,212,282 dos. - Bernama

Jumlah kes Covid-19 catat penurunan

SHAH ALAM - Kes harian Covid-19 di Malaysia merekodkan penurunan apabila sebanyak 3,010 kes dilaporkan pada Ahad berbanding 3,074 pada Sabtu.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah berkata, jumlah itu menjadikan kumulatif kes sebanyak 2,808,347 kes.

Katanya, daripada jumlah baharu yang dilaporkan, 263 merupakan kes import membiarkan 204 rakyat tempatan

dan 59 warga asing.

"Daripada jumlah kes aktif itu, sebanyak 28 kes adalah kategori tiga hingga lima. Selebihnya, 2,982 kes lagi merupakan kategori satu dan dua," katanya dalam kenyataan pada Ahad.

Ujarnya, sebanyak 182 kes ditempatkan di unit rawatan rapi (ICU) dan daripada jumlah itu, 83 kes memerlukan bantuan pernafasan.

Katanya, Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) turut merekodkan 2,584 kes

sembuh dengan jumlah kes seluruhnya, 2,735,355 kes.

"Terdapat pertambahan tujuh kluster baru menjadikannya 6,212 kluster secara keseluruhan," katanya.

Daripada jumlah itu, Dr Noor Hisham berkata, 6,036 kluster telah diisyitharkan tamat manakala 176 masih aktif.

Sementara itu, tambah beliau, kadar kebolehjangkitan (Rt) negara turun kepada nilai 0.99 berbanding 1.0 pada Sabtu.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA

MUKA SURAT : 3

RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

- Lengkuk virus berjaya dilandaikan ● Nafi surat terbuka 113 doktor

Program vaksinasi berkesan

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PETALING JAYA Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan, Tan Sri Dr. Noor Hisham Abdullah menafikan surat terbuka 113 doktor yang mendakwa Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (PICK) gagal selain berisiko radang otot jantung kepada penerima.

Beliau menegaskan, PICK berada di landasan betul apabila lengkuk virus Covid-19 berjaya dilandaikan setelah pandemik itu berlaku hampir dua tahun.

Bercakap kepada *Utusan Malaysia*, katanya, usaha itu menunjukkan pengurangan amat ketara daripada segi kadar jangkitan Covid-19 dan kemasukan ke hospital, sekali gus membolehkan rakyat menjalani semula kehidupan dalam norma baharu.

Namun, katanya, Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) sentiasa memperkuatkan strategi-strategi untuk memastikan agar rakyat Malaysia mendapat akses kepada vaksin Covid-19 yang selamat dan berkesan.

"Sepanjang pandemik Covid-19, satu daripada usaha kritikal bagi KKM adalah pelaksanaan PICK. Walaupun program mendapat sambutan positif dan menggalakkan, namun kita sentiasa mem-



ORANG ramai mendapatkan suntikan penggalak vaksin Covid-19 di Pusat Pengambilan Vaksin (PPV) Integrasi Axiata Arena Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur. - UTUSAN/AFIQ RAZALI

perkuatkan strategi-strategi untuk memastikan agar rakyat Malaysia mendapat akses kepada vaksin Covid-19 yang selamat dan berkesan.

"Ini memerlukan usaha yang menyeluruh semua pihak termasuk daripada pelbagai menterian, agensi-agensi kerajaan, badan sukarelawan dan komuniti."

"Hasil usaha itu semua pihak termasuk dalam program ini, keluk pandemik Covid-19

di negara Malaysia juga telah berjaya dilandaikan," katanya.

Beliau mengulas surat terbuka oleh 113 pengamal perubatan kepada Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob yang tular baru-baru ini mendakwa risiko radang otot jantung (myocarditis) dalam populasi penerima vaksin adalah satu dalam 3,000 orang.

Mengulas lanjut, Dr. Noor Hisham menambah kadar kes jangkitan Covid-19 bagi setiap

1,000 populasi melibatkan dalam kalangan kumpulan tidak divaksin adalah jauh lebih tinggi daripada orang ramai yang menerima suntikan pelarian tersebut.

Beliau menjelaskan, rumusan itu berdasarkan kajian *The Real World Evaluation of Covid-19 Vaccination (Recovam)* di bawah PICK bagi melihatkan keberkesanan dan keselamatan vaksin sejak dilancarkan di negara ini pada tahun lalu.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA

MUKA SURAT : 21

RUANGAN : GAYA KESIHATAN



DATA Kementerian Kesihatan Chile menunjukkan campuran vaksinasi utama Sinovac dengan dos penggalak Pfizer menghasilkan kadar keberkesanan sebanyak 95 peratus terhadap virus Covid-19.

Dos penggalak bukan suntikan terakhir?

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DR. JAMES KOH

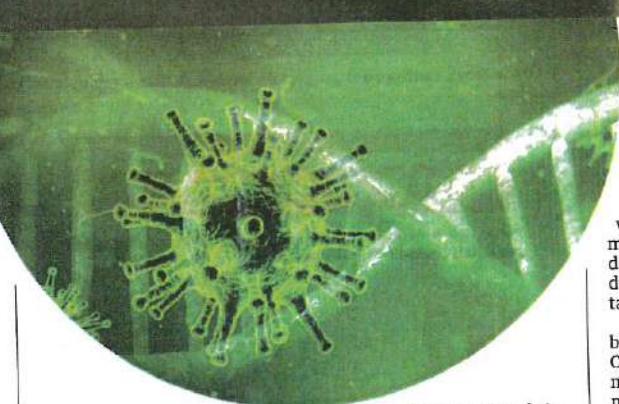
SEJAK awal tahun lepas rakyat Malaysia berurusan panjang di pusat vaksinasi untuk mendapatkan suntikan dos vaksinasi utama.

Biar pun pada peringkat awal ada sedikit keruguan mengenainya, tetapi pengambilan suntikan vaksin menunjukkan peningkatan dengan sehingga 10 Disember, 97.2 peratus orang dewasa (18 tahun ke atas) mendapat vaksinasi lengkap dua dos.

Peratusan vaksinasi lengkap mencapai 86.8 peratus bagi mereka berusia 12 hingga 17 tahun.

Sebelum ini ada jaminan dos penggalak tidak diperlukan, kenapa berubah?

Realitinya, suntikan dos penggalak diperlukan kerana kesan perlindungan atau tahap peneutralan antibodi



“Penggalak bukanlah sesuatu yang mengejutkan kerana kebanyakannya vaksin memang ada dos penggalak.”

bagi semua vaksin, cenderung menurun mengikut peredaran masa. Ketua dan Perunding Penyakit Berjangkit, Pusat Pengajian Perubatan Antarabangsa (IMU), Prof. Dr. James Koh berkata, suntikan penggalak bukanlah sesuatu yang mengejutkan kerana kebanyakannya vaksin memang ada dos penggalaknya.

Contoh, vaksin Hepatitis

B, ada tiga dos suntikan, (yang mana dos kedua dan ketiga adalah dos penggalak). Sementara itu suntikan dos penggalak anti-Tetanus, sepatutnya diberikan sekali dalam tempoh setiap 10 tahun. Suntikan vaksin pneumokokal yang memberi perlindungan daripada pneumonia disarankan sekali setiap lima tahun.

“Pemberian penggalak bukannya unik untuk Covid-19 sahaja. Yang menjadi isu sebab kita mungkin tidak biasa dengan vaksin dos penggalak kerana mendapat vaksinasi, bukanlah sesuatu yang biasa bagi kita.

“Macam dos penggalak influenza. Walaupun kita disarankan untuk mendapatkan dos penggalak influenza setiap tahun, namun tidak ramai melukukannya,” katanya.

Bersambung di muka 22

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 22
RUANGAN : GAYA KESIHATAN

Dari muka 21

KEPERLUAN mendapatkan dos penggalak menjadi mendesak kerana majoriti daripada daripada kita, mendapat suntikan vaksin Sinovac sebagai vaksinasi utama pada fasa awal.

Statistik Real-World Evaluation of Covid-19 Vaccines di bawah Program Imunisasi Covid-19 Kebangsaan (RECoVaM) menunjukkan perlindungan vaksin Sinovac terhadap jangkitan Covid-19 menurun daripada 76 peratus dalam dua bulan pertama selepas vaksinasi lengkap kepada cuma 28 peratus dalam bulan ketiga hingga kelima.

Dr. Koh berkata, kajian antarabangsa turut membenarkan dapatan itu, di mana pada bulan ketiga, tahap peneutralan antibodi dalam vaksin Sinovac, kurang daripada 50 peratus, manakala pada bulan keenam, ia hampir tidak dapat dikesan.

"Bagi vaksin Pfizer dan AstraZeneca, keberkesanannya mula menunjukkan penurunan pada bulan keenam. Oleh itu, penting mendapatkan dos penggalak yang secara asasnya membangkitkan semula sistem imuniti badan kita untuk menghasilkan antibodi," katanya.

Begitupun katanya, suntikan dos penggalak bukanlah pengakhiran, sebaliknya akan ada dos penggalak lain dan seterusnya.

"Kita tidak tahu banyak mana tetapi yang pasti ini bukanlah yang terakhir," katanya.

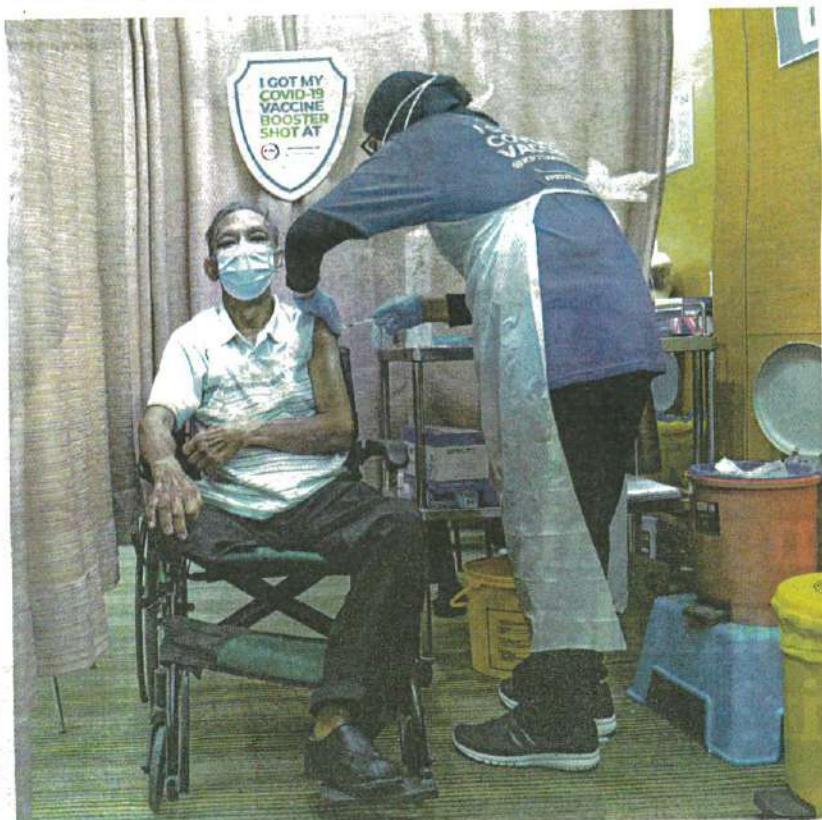
GABUNG DAN PADAN

Isu keselamatan apabila dua jenis vaksin dicampurkan turut menimbulkan keraguan. Pada awal November, Pusat Pencegahan dan Kawalan Penyakit (CDC) memberikan kebenaran menggabung padankan vaksin berbeza sebagai dos penggalak.

Namun kenyataan Ketua Saintis Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO), Soumya Swaminathan pada Julai lalu mengatakan masih tiada lagi data bagi kaedah gabung padan vaksin ini, justeru individu tidak sepatutnya membuat keputusan sendiri.

Bagaimanapun beberapa negara sudah pun melancarkan sistem gabung padan vaksin ini menunjukkan hasil yang baik.

Keperluan mendesak kerana vaksin Sinovac



PADA asasnya, suntikan dos penggalak membangkitkan semula sistem imuniti badan untuk menghasilkan antibodi.



“...dos penggalak bukanlah pengakhiran, sebaliknya akan ada dos penggalak lain dan seterusnya.”

Kajian di Singapura mendapati penurunan risiko jangkitan sebanyak 72 peratus apabila mencampurkan vaksinasi utama Pfizer dengan dos penggalak Moderna, berbanding 62 peratus sahaja bagi mereka yang mendapatkan suntikan Pfizer untuk suntikan pertama, kedua dan ketiga.

VARIAN BAHARU

- » Kemunculan varian baharu seperti Omicron semakin menakutkan.
- » Dapatan awal mencadangkan bahawa varian Omicron lima kali ganda lebih mudah menular berbanding virus asal, manakala varian Delta puluh dua kali lebih mudah berjangkit berbanding virus asal.
- » Individu dijangkiti varian Delta boleh menjangkiti dua orang lain, manakala seorang yang dijangkiti varian Omicron boleh menjangkiti lima orang lain.
- » Omicron tiga kali lebih tinggi berkebolehan menjangkiti semula.
- » Namun gejala bagi mereka yang dijangkiti varian ini adalah ringan bagi yang sudah menerima vaksin.

Data daripada Kementerian Kesihatan Chile menunjukkan campuran vaksinasi utama Sinovac dengan dos penggalak Pfizer menghasilkan kadar keberkesaan sebanyak 95 peratus terhadap virus itu.

Ini adalah satu lonjakan besar berbanding pemberian tiga dos vaksin Sinovac yang menunjukkan keberkesaan sebanyak 74 peratus.

"Saya menggalakkan semua orang untuk mendapatkan suntikan dos penggalak tanpa mengira campurannya kerana tidak mengambil dos penggalak adalah lebih berbahaya."

"Mengambil apa sahaja dos penggalak adalah lebih baik daripada tidak mengambilnya langsung. Ini bermakna mereka yang mengambil suntikan Sinovac, lambat laun mungkin perlu mendapatkan dos penggalak lebih awal," katanya.

Bagi mereka yang mempunyai sistem imuniti badan yang berkuフケngan seperti pesakit HIV/AIDS, mereka yang menjalani pemindahan organ atau pesakit barah, dos penggalak barangkali menjadi suntikan dos keempat.

"Sesetengah daripada mereka pada mulanya mungkin perlu mendapatkan tiga dos bagi merangsang sistem imuniti badan untuk menghasilkan antibodi. Bagi mereka ini, dos penggalak adalah dos keempat mereka," katanya.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : NEWS / STORY OF THE DAY



Covid-19 vaccine booster recipients at the Soka Gakkai Taman Klang Jaya vaccine delivery centre in Klang, Selangor, yesterday. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

'SILLY MOVE'

'YOU DON'T WANT TO CATCH COVID'

Health minister warns those trying to get infected to gain immunity

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IT is a bad idea and even a dangerous one to try to get infected with Covid-19 in hopes of developing natural immunity.

Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin warned that purposely infecting oneself was not the way to gain immunity against the virus and control the pandemic.

The ministry's message to the public, he said, was simple: "You do not want to catch Covid."

He said it was unwise for people to assume that their case would turn out to be mild.

"It does not matter which (Covid-19) variant, whether it's

Omicron, Delta, Alpha or Beta.

"Do not go out to get infected on purpose because firstly, we do not know the effect of Covid-19 on people, whether unvaccinated or fully immunised (as symptoms and conditions vary).

"Second, we do not know the risk of 'long Covid' (where symptoms persist for weeks or months after initial diagnosis).

"Today, we might say Omicron is milder than Delta (the highly transmissible and severe predecessor). So why not we just get infected with Omicron on purpose to supposedly build herd immunity, and get it over with?"

Khairy said this assumption had not been proven and that the ministry's advice remained, which was for those eligible to get their Covid-19 vaccine booster shot.

"For now, we know that the Omicron variant is milder, which may be a silver lining (in this pandemic management).

"But that does not mean you should go out there and get infected with Omicron.

"There is no public health ap-

proach in the world that states we should let Omicron live through society so we can all become immune (to the virus).

"It may be scientifically proven that Covid infection gives or increases your immunity, but do not use that argument to go and get infected on purpose.

"It's very silly," Khairy said here after launching the National-level End AIDS Through the "Go-NGO" Smart Collaboration Model KK 2.0 here.

Khairy was commenting on recent reports citing South African virologists who stated that the Omicron variant could help build herd immunity due to its high transmissibility.

Following this, there were reports and social media postings of people proposing the idea of intentionally mingling with the infected to get Covid-19 and get the disease "out of the way".

Khairy said almost 99 per cent of Covid-19 patients infected with the Omicron variant were in categories 1 and 2 (no symptoms and mild symptoms).

>> *Continued next page*

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

Increased mobility, Omicron causing infections to rise

» From Page 2

He said increased mobility due to social festivities as well as the highly transmissible Omicron variant had contributed to the sharp rise in daily new infections across the country.

However, he said the situation remained under control as the jump in cases, especially over the past two weeks, had not overwhelmed the healthcare system.

"We are keeping a close watch on the situation. The rise in cases can be linked to imported cases

of Omicron and community transmission of the variant.

"Besides, over the last few weeks, there has been a notable increase in mobility due to Christmas, the school holidays, New Year celebrations, and then there will be the Thaipusam and Chinese New Year celebrations.

"The ministry expects a slight increase in fresh infections over the next two months.

"But as long as hospital admissions, ICU admissions are under control and the death rate is declining, the situation is under control.

"We should not be obsessed with daily case numbers, but we must factor in these other indicators."

More than 39 per cent of the adult population in the country had received their Covid-19 vaccine booster.

Up to Saturday, 9,212,282 people or 28.2 per cent of the population had taken their booster shot.

On daily cases, Malaysia reported 3,010 new Covid-19 infections up to noon yesterday, Health director-general Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said.

This brought the country's cumulative Covid-19 cases to 2,808,347 since the pandemic struck.

On the national infectivity rate, Dr Noor Hisham said it dropped to below 1.00 to 0.99 on Saturday.

Kuala Lumpur registered the highest Rt at 1.08.

Three more states that reported a Rt higher than 1.00 on Saturday were Selangor (1.01), Negeri Sembilan (1.02) and Sabah (1.04).

Page 1 pic: People enjoying an outing in Taman Botani, Kuala Lumpur, yesterday



Tan Sri Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION



Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin presenting government aid to the Malaysian AIDS council president Datuk Dr Christopher Lee at the Pandamaran health clinic in Klang, Selangor, yesterday. With him are Selangor Health Director Datuk Dr Sha'ari Ngadiman (right) and Health Ministry secretary-general Datuk Mohd Shafiq Abdullah. PIC BY SAIFULLIZAN TAMADI

HIV INFECTIONS

'SEXUAL TRANSMISSION TOP AIDS SPREADER'

Figure now at 95pc compared with 5pc in 1990, says health minister

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THE bulk of Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) cases reported in the country has been linked to sexually transmitted infections, especially involving MSM (men who have sex with men) and the transgender population (TG).

Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said HIV infection among those who injected drugs (via contaminated needles or syringes) once accounted for more than 80 per cent of the total number of cases.

However, he said, today's new HIV infections among those who injected drugs stood at only four per cent, thanks to the ministry's harm reduction programme, which has been in place since 2005, with the cooperation of government agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGO), especially the Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC).

"The administration of antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) to people living with HIV (PLHIV) has also increased from 28 per cent in 2015 to 58 per cent in 2020.

"This coverage, however, is still low compared with the 95 per cent target in our efforts to end

AIDS by 2030.

"Malaysia has outlined a 15-year plan to end AIDS by 2030 through the National Strategic Plan for Ending AIDS 2016-2030. We are on the right track in achieving those aspirations.

"However, we are facing challenges due to the changing landscape of infection transmission from drug addicts to sexually transmitted infections."

He said this after launching the National-level Ending AIDS Through the "Go-NGO" Smart Collaboration Model KK 2.0.

He said the Integrated Bio-Behavioral Study conducted every three years by the Health Ministry had shown an increase in the rate of HIV infection among MSM and the TG.

"This situation requires commitment, as well as an aggressive and innovative response."

He said HIV from sexual transmission made up five per cent of the total cases in 1990, but the figure now stood at 95 per cent.

To address this, he said the government had been offering free HIV treatment in hospitals and health clinics nationwide.

The government, he said, also set up the Harm Reduction programme and expanded screening strategies in health facilities and the community.

"The Health Ministry has adopted a multi-sectoral and community-based approach.

"One of them is the establishment of the Malaysian AIDS Council in 1992 as an umbrella organisation to coordinate the response to HIV/AIDS by NGOs.

"The smart collaboration between the ministry and the coun-

cil, or GO-NGOs, has had a positive impact in tackling AIDS.

"In implementing this, the government, through the ministry, has channelled more than RM170 million to the council since its establishment.

"Today (yesterday), I am pleased to hand over the government's contribution of RM7 million to the council for NGOs to implement a comprehensive HIV prevention programme this year."

He said the government had been working hard to prevent, treat and control the HIV/AIDS epidemic for over three decades.

Malaysia, he said, once recorded the highest number of new cases in 2002 at 6,978 cases per year, or 28.5 cases per 100,000 population.

"With the implementation of effective prevention, control and treatment activities have seen a decline in the number of new HIV cases in 2020 to 3,146 cases, or 9.3 cases per 100,000 population, a decrease of 66 per cent compared to 2002."

He said it was crucial to educate the community and reduce the stigma and bad perception of society of not just PLHIV, but also key vulnerable populations who needed help and treatment.

"We do not pass judgment. Society is judged by how we treat those who are most marginalised among us."

"So if we continue having bad perceptions and prejudice (towards PLHIV), which are not based on scientific facts, then we will have a long way to go before we can effectively end AIDS in Malaysia."

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : NATION

KJ: Don't look for Omicron trouble

M'sians warned against getting infected with variant for herd immunity

By ALLISON LAI
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KLANG: No one should intentionally get infected with the Covid-19 Omicron variant for the sake of herd immunity as it is not a proven approach, says the Health Minister.

Khairy Jamaluddin said despite the variant appearing to have milder symptoms and being less deadly, this was no reason for anyone to get infected or refuse a Covid-19 vaccine booster dose.

"It doesn't matter what sort of variant — Omicron, Delta, Alpha or Beta. Don't go voluntarily looking to get infected."

"We don't know what the effects of the virus will be on a patient,

whether one is vaccinated or not, or what the 'Long Covid' syndrome is going to be like."

"There's still no scientific proof to say that getting infected with the Omicron variant will give us herd immunity."

"We know Omicron is milder, thank God, but it doesn't mean we should go out there and get infected," he reiterated, advising the people to get their booster dose for the best protection.

"Long Covid" refers to a variety of symptoms experienced by some patients long after the typical convalescence period. These include extreme fatigue, persistent cough, muscle weakness, memory lapses, mood changes, sleeping difficulty,

headaches, joint pain and others.

Speaking to reporters after opening the national-level GO-NGO Model KK 2.0 programme to end HIV infections at the Pandamaran health clinic here yesterday, Khairy said immunity developed from any natural Covid-19 infection should not be the basis to get infected, describing it as "very silly" to do.

"The ministry's message is simple; you do not want to catch Covid-19. Regardless of what variant it is, don't catch the virus intentionally," he said when asked about South African virologists' statement that Omicron's high transmissibility and yet milder symptoms and lower mortality rates could help build herd immunity.

Khairy said the ministry expected an increase in Covid-19 cases in January and February with the year-end holiday travel and more movement because of Thaipusam and Chinese New Year.

However, he said as long as hospital and intensive care unit admissions were under control and the death rate continued to dip, "we are in control".

"We cannot just look at daily cases, but also the other indicators. We need to look at the severity and hospital admissions. We are not out of the woods yet," he added.

He said Malaysia has made a lot of progress since last year, hence "some freedom" was proper for all to observe their celebrations in a

safe and careful manner while adhering to the standard operating procedure.

"Almost 99% of our Omicron cases are in Category 1, so we're monitoring closely," he said, adding that 2022 was about transferring responsibilities to empower the community.

The GO-NGO Model KK 2.0 programme is a collaboration between the government and NGOs using government health clinics nationwide to reach out to and rehabilitate HIV patients.

Khairy said he hoped that with the programme being expanded nationwide, more people with HIV infections would step forward for treatment.

Parents urged to understand benefits of vaccination for kids

By DIVYANA PFORDTEN
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PETALING JAYA: Parents must understand the benefits of Covid-19 vaccination for their children, say health experts.

Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia said as children were exposed to infection through their parents, teachers and schoolmates, the vaccination could help reduce the risk of them getting infected, or developing severe infections and hospitalisation.

"We have seen an increase in children infected with Covid-19, with some requiring hospital admissions in states with poor vaccine coverage," she said.

The community health professor said complications among children infected with Covid-19 were higher than severe complications from Covid-19 vaccination.

She said studies such as from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that cardiac complications from mRNA vaccines were very rare, with four to seven incidents in 100,000 adolescents.

"This rate is lower than if the child-adolescent is infected with Covid-19, where an estimated 5,500 in 100,000 children will experience complications with severe cardiac disease within three months, which is more severe and require more extensive management than complications from vaccination," she said.

As at Jan 15, a total of 376,415 Covid-19 cases or 13.4% of the total Covid-19 cases in Malaysia involved children below 12.

Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin announced yesterday that Covid-19 vaccination for children aged between five and 11 will begin at the end of the month, with

the Drug Control Authority having granted conditional registration approval for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to be used for such children.

Besides Malaysia, at least 14 countries have approved Covid-19 vaccination for children aged below 12, including Singapore, the United States and China.

A review by the CDC on Covid-19 vaccine safety in children aged five to 11 years in the United States found that serious adverse events from vaccination were rarely reported.

The report stated that 8.7 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine were administered to children in that age group between Nov 3-Dec 19, 2021, with the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) receiving 4,249 reports of adverse events after the vaccination.

However, it said 4,149 (97.6%) cases were not serious.

Universiti Putra Malaysia epidemiologist Assoc Prof Dr Malina Osman said that Covid-19 vaccination for children in the 5-11 year age group was necessary as there were significant cases of such children being infected with "Long Covid".

"Updated information related to complications of Covid infection particularly on Long Covid are quite prominent among children and this has a significant impact on their long-term healthcare and education," she said.

"The vaccination will not only reduce risk of infection and severity of infection but is proven to prevent potential Long Covid complications," she said.

The term "Long Covid" is commonly used to describe the post-Covid-19 syndrome where symptoms such as persistent fatigue, breathlessness and brain fog continue or develop long after

one has recovered from the disease.

Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Koh Kar Chai said the Health Ministry needs to highlight the safety profile of Covid-19 vaccines, as a large number of teenagers have received the vaccine without any serious adverse effects.

"Our public and private sector facilities have trained staff members to address acute adverse effects like fever and allergic reactions," he said adding that the ministry also had a robust mechanism to capture adverse effects following vaccination.

Datuk Dr Zainal Ariffin Omar, who heads volunteers for community engagement and empowerment for Covid-19, said parents who get their children vaccinated can have peace of mind while they are in school or when they have to bring their children out.

AKHBAR : THE SUN ON MONDAY**MUKA SURAT : 2****RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS**

Stigma prevents addicts from seeking treatment: Khairy

KLANG: Society's negative perception of drug abuse and addiction is one of the factors preventing addicts from seeking professional treatment, said Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin.

He said these individuals believe that if they admit that they are addicts, there will probably be legal consequences, including being arrested.

"Recently, we saw the case of a teenager accused of stealing mosque funds and how he was humiliated. I don't think that is the way our society should treat people. Addiction must be treated as a medical problem."

He said this after launching a national-level initiative, Eliminate AIDS through Smart Collaboration of Government-Non-Governmental Organisation Health Clinic Model 2.0 yesterday.

Khairy said non-governmental organisations, especially the Malaysian AIDS Council, had to some extent succeeded in changing society's perception of those living with HIV-AIDS.

He added his ministry, in collaboration with NGO, has gone on the ground and provided information, to the vulnerable in particular, about risks and treatment.

This initiative allows NGO to operate in health clinics to help strengthen programmes to reduce harm amongst HIV-AIDS patients. The Pandamaran Health Clinic in Klang has been selected to implement the programme in collaboration with the Malaysian AIDS Council.

He added that with the empowerment of the community and NGO, the Health Ministry hopes to eliminate AIDS by 2030 through the National Strategic Plan for Ending AIDS 2016-2030. — Bernama

AKHBAR : THE SUN ON MONDAY**MUKA SURAT : 4****RUANGAN : NEWS WITHOUT BORDERS**

Unproven that Omicron can boost herd immunity: Khairy

KLANG: There is no proven public health information that one should be infected with the Covid-19 Omicron variant to help build herd immunity, said Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin.

"It doesn't matter what sort of variant ... Omicron, Delta, Alpha and Beta. Don't go voluntarily looking to get infected as firstly, we do not know what its effects are."

"Secondly, we do not know the effects of 'Long Covid'. Today, we might say Omicron is milder than

Delta and therefore why don't we all get infected with Omicron to achieve herd immunity and so on. But this is not proven. We know Omicron is milder but that doesn't mean you should (voluntarily) get it," he said after officiating at the launch of the national-level End AIDS Initiative Through the Go-NGO Smart Collaboration Model KK2.0 yesterday.

Khairy instead advised the people to ensure they get their Covid-19 booster shots.

He was commenting on recent reports quoting South African virologists that the Omicron variant can help build herd immunity in societies due to its high transmissibility.

He added that 99% of those infected with Omicron in the country were in Categories One and Two.

On the rising number of daily Covid-19 cases, Khairy said the people should not gauge the pandemic situation based on case

statistics alone.

He said it should also be assessed by the number of hospital and intensive care unit (ICU) admissions, which said were still under control.

The Health Ministry is expecting an increase in Covid-19 cases this month and in February as a result of increased public movement during Christmas, the school holidays, New Year, Thaipusam and Chinese New Year.

"But as long as hospital and ICU

admissions are under control and the fatality rate continues to dip, we are in control of the situation."

Khairy said the situation in Selangor was also still under control, although it remained the state with the highest number of daily cases.

"Among the reasons for this is the international entry point is located in Selangor and travellers are recorded in this state although they are not necessarily from Selangor." - Bernama