

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO

MUKA SURAT : 6

RUANGAN : LOKAL

KEMAS KINI SOP COVID-19

Tepat masanya tindakan kerajaan longgar peraturan

Kuala Lumpur: Langkah kerajaan mengemas kini prosedur operasi standard (SOP) Covid-19 baru-baru ini, praktikal memandangkan ia dibuat selepas mengambil kira situasi semasa kes jangkitan penyakit itu yang kian berkurangan.

Pensyarah dan Pakar Perubatan Keluarga Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Prof Madya Dr Mohd Radzniwan Abd Rashid berkata, langkah berkenaan juga tepat, susulan pengisytiharan Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO), Covid-19 tidak lagi dikategorikan sebagai kecemasan kesihatan global.

"Saya berpendapat tindakan kerajaan melonggarkan SOP ini memang tepat pada masanya dan bersifat dinamik, mengambil kira keadaan kes Covid-19 ketika ini. Dengan pengumuman ini, saya pasti ada kelegaan dalam kalangan rakyat Malaysia, kerana SOP yang jelas telah diumumkan," katanya, semalam.

Mohd Radzniwan berkata, tindakan Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) untuk menyemak semula SOP Covid-19 itu dilakukan berdasarkan kajian dan bukan disebabkan desakan oleh mana-mana pihak.

Kelmarin, Menteri Kesihatan Dr Zaliha Mustafa dalam kenyataan memaklumkan, tempoh pengasingan kes disahkan Covid-19 dipendekkan daripada tujuh kepada lima hari mulai 5 Julai ini, kerana kajian mendapati infektiviti kes Covid-19 tinggi pada lima hari pertama.

Beliau juga berkata, pesakit Covid-19 yang dahulunya diwajibkan memakai pelitup muka dalam kenderaan awam dan fasiliti kesihatan, kini hanya dikehendaki (bukan wajib) memakai pelitup muka ketika berada di kedua-dua lokasi berkenaan.

Bagaimanapun, Dr Zaliha berkata, pemakaian pelitup muka amat digalakkan bagi individu berisiko tinggi seperti warga emas, individu dengan penyakit kronik, individu dengan imuniti rendah atau ibu mengandung, terutama ketika berada di tempat sesak dan kawasan pengudaraan kurang baik.

Mengenai keputusan kerajaan melanjutkan status Kawasan Tempatan Jangkitan di Malaysia yang berakhir



Saya berpendapat tindakan kerajaan melonggarkan SOP ini memang tepat pada masanya dan bersifat dinamik, mengambil kira keadaan kes Covid-19 ketika ini. Dengan pengumuman ini, saya pasti ada kelegaan dalam kalangan rakyat Malaysia kerana SOP yang jelas telah diumumkan"

Dr Mohd Radzniwan

hari ini (30 Jun) untuk tempoh enam bulan lagi hingga 31 Dis 2023, Radzniwan berkata, tempoh itu sesuai untuk membolehkan kerajaan terus memantau trend penularan wabak Covid-19.

"Sekiranya pemantauan menunjukkan jumlah kes memasuki ke hospital dan ICU serta jumlah kematian yang mendadak, kerajaan harus menilai semula SOP ini," katanya.

Sementara itu, Pakar Perubatan Kesihatan Awam Fakulti Perubatan dan Sains Kesihatan Universiti Putra Malaysia Prof Madya Dr Malina Osman berkata, langkah yang diambil kerajaan, seiring dengan keadaan Covid-19 semasa.

"Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) sudah mengisytiharkan Covid-19 bukan lagi kecemasan global kira-kira hampir dua bulan lalu.

"Kerajaan sudah melanjutkan lagi tempoh sejak pengumuman WHO itu, dengan mempertimbangkan semua keadaan bagi memastikan kita benar-benar selamat," katanya.

Beliau berkata, kes sedia ada memang sudah dalam julat terkawal dan tiada ancaman wabak dengan kes yang menurun sebanyak 53.5 peratus (5,801 kes kepada 2,698 kes) dan kes kematian 35.3 peratus (17 kes kepada 11 kes) sejak lima minggu kebelakangan ini.

"Keputusan kerajaan melalui Kementerian Kesihatan dibuat berdasarkan bukti saintifik serta dapatan situasi semasa di Malaysia," katanya.

AKHBAR : SINAR AHAD
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

Langkah kerajaan kemas kini SOP Covid-19 praktikal – Pakar kesihatan

KUALA LUMPUR - Langkah kerajaan mengemas kini prosedur operasi standard (SOP) Covid-19 baru-baru ini, adalah praktikal memandangkan ia dibuat selepas mengambil kira situasi semasa kes jangkitan penyakit itu yang kian berkurangan.

Pensyarah dan Pakar Perubatan Keluarga Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Prof Madya Dr Mohd Radzniwan Abd Rashid berkata, langkah berkenaan juga tepat, susulan pengisytiharan Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO), bahawa Covid-19 tidak lagi dikategorikan sebagai kecemasan kesihatan global.

"Saya berpendapat tindakan kerajaan melonggarkan SOP ini memang tepat dan bersifat dinamik, mengambil kira keadaan kes Covid-19 ketika ini. Dengan pengumuman ini, saya pasti ada kelegaan dalam kalangan rakyat Malaysia, kerana SOP yang jelas

telah diumumkan," katanya.

Mohd Radzniwan berkata, tindakan Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) untuk menyemak semula SOP Covid-19 itu juga dilakukan berdasarkan kajian dan bukan disebabkan desakan oleh mana-mana pihak.

Pada Jumaat, Menteri Kesihatan, Dr Zailha Mustafa dalam kenyataan memaklumkan, tempoh pengasingan kes disahkan Covid-19 dipendekkan daripada tujuh kepada lima hari mulai 5 Julai ini, kerana kajian mendapati infektiviti kes Covid-19 tinggi pada lima hari pertama.

Beliau juga berkata, pesakit Covid-19 yang dahulunya diwajibkan memakai pelitup muka dalam kenderaan awam dan fasiliti kesihatan, kini hanya dikehendaki (bukan wajib) memakai pelitup muka ketika berada di kedua-dua lokasi berkenaan. Mengenai keputusan kerajaan



Langkah kerajaan mengemas kini SOP Covid-19 baru-baru ini adalah praktikal seiring dengan keadaan Covid-19 semasa, bagaimanapun pemakaian pelitup muka amat digalakkan bagi individu berisiko tinggi terutama ketika berada di tempat sesak. - Gambar hiasan

melanjutkan status Kawasan Tempatan Jangkitan di Malaysia yang berakhir 30 Jun untuk tempoh enam bulan lagi hingga 31 Disember 2023, Mohd Radzniwan

berkata, tempoh itu sesuai untuk membolehkan kerajaan terus memantau trend penularan Covid-19.

"Namun sekiranya pemantauan menunjukkan jumlah

kes kemasukan ke hospital dan ICU, serta jumlah kematian yang mendadak, kerajaan harus menilai semula SOP ini," katanya.

Sementara itu, Pakar Perubatan Kesihatan Awam Fakulti Perubatan dan Sains Kesihatan, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Prof Madya Dr Malina Osman berkata, langkah yang diambil kerajaan seiring dengan keadaan Covid-19 semasa.

Beliau berkata, kes sedia ada memang sudah dalam julat terkawal dan tiada ancaman wabak dengan kes yang menurun sebanyak 53.5 peratus (5,801 kes kepada 2,698 kes) dan kes kematian 35.3 peratus (17 kes kepada 11 kes) sejak lima minggu kebelakangan ini.

"Keputusan kerajaan dibuat berdasarkan bukti saintifik serta dapatan situasi semasa di Malaysia selepas penilaian risiko," kata beliau. - *Bernama*

AKHBAR : NEW SUNDAY TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 810
RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

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GOVT INITIATIVE

MADANI BOOST FOR SABAH HEALTHCARE

Medical scheme a boon for residents
in outskirts, rural areas

KOTA KINABALU

THE Madani Medical Scheme, launched on June 15, is viewed by Sabahans as an initiative that can bridge the gap in healthcare accessibility in the outskirts and rural areas of the state.

These areas lack adequate medical facilities.

A private-sector general worker, Jerfery Tongusin, 51, said the scheme's pilot project here enabled him to get medical attention quickly, without the time-consuming travel and long waiting period at government hospitals.

He said, however, that people in the outskirts and rural areas needed it more.

"It is not about the quality of government healthcare, but more about overcrowding."

"We understand the challenges faced by health workers to provide better services while working with a lack of manpower and poor facilities."

"Now with the Madani Medical Scheme, people do not have to crowd, wait a long time or travel far to get medical treatment."

"They can go to a clinic in their area," he said after seeking treatment through the scheme at Klinik Medisinar here.

Hotel employee Anne Lyn Marcelliono, 27, from Tenom, said the scheme was a medium-term solution to address outdated healthcare facilities.

"I work in Kota Kinabalu and it is easy to get medical treatment here."

"I just take along my identity card, check my eligibility and see a doctor."

"But my family in Tongod has to travel very far and wait long hours at the government clinic."

"They would no longer have to go through that when this scheme is expanded there," she said at Poliklinik Permai here.

Seafood distributor Ekhwan Shafiq Mohd Nasri, 37, from Pitas, said the scheme should focus on improving people's access to quality healthcare in Pitas, Kota Marudu and Tongod as they are among the poorest in the state.

Ekhwan said he frequently gave lifts to people in rural Pitas, who needed medical attention, to Pitas town.

"Sometimes the wait was so long that they had to stay overnight and return home the next day."

"Most people in these districts cannot afford private clinics, which charge between RM30 and RM50 per visit."

"They have no choice but to go to overcrowded government hospitals because it is only RM1."

Dr Ashley Lee Yoong, 34, a partner at Klinik Impian Sejahtera in Kota Marudu, said the Madani Medical Scheme allowed outskirts and rural

clinics like hers to provide healthcare facilities to more people, especially the needy.

"This scheme can also encourage more clinics to open and maintain branches in the outskirts."

She said her clinic had contacted the scheme to join it.

Assistant medical officer Abd Rusyaidi Abdullah, 29, said: "Sabah's rural areas are hard to reach."

"The roads are bad and we have to travel far to reach the villages to provide healthcare services, sometimes even spending the night in the jungle."

"With this scheme, we can direct our resources to areas that need it." **Bernama**



High-risk individuals are encouraged to wear a face mask, especially in crowded places and areas with poor ventilation. FILE PIC

EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION

'Apt move to relax Covid-19 SOP'

KUALA LUMPUR: The government's Covid-19 standard operating procedures (SOP) update is considered a practical move by experts, as it takes into account the decreasing number of cases.

A lecturer and family medicine specialist at Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, Associate Professor Dr Mohd Radzniwan Abd Rashid, regarded the move as apt following the declaration by the World Health Organisation that Covid-19 was no longer categorised as a global health emergency.

"With this, I am sure there is relief among Malaysians."

He said the action by the Health Ministry was evidence-based and not due to pressure

from any quarter.

Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa, in a statement last Thursday, said the isolation period for confirmed cases was shortened from seven days to five effective July 5.

Dr Zaliha said high-risk individuals like senior citizens, those with chronic diseases, individuals with low immunity or pregnant women were encouraged to wear face masks, especially in crowded places and areas with poor ventilation.

Regarding the government's decision to extend the status of local infection areas in Malaysia, which ended on June 30, by another six months until Dec 31, Radzniwan said the move would allow the government to monitor

the spread of Covid-19.

"However, if there is a surge in the number of cases admitted to hospital and Intensive Care Units, as well as deaths, the government should re-evaluate the SOP."

Public health physician and lecturer at Universiti Putra Malaysia's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Associate Professor Dr Malina Osman said: "The move was to make sure we are safe."

She said with the 53.5 per cent drop in cases and 35.3 per cent drop of deaths caused by Covid-19 in the past five weeks, it showed that the situation was within a controlled range and there was no threat of an epidemic. **Bernama**

AKHBAR : SUNDAY STAR
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : NATION

MOH: No Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes released in Negri

PUTRAJAYA: The Health Ministry has denied that Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes have been released in Negri Sembilan as claimed in a video that has gone viral.

Health deputy director-general (Public Health) Datuk Dr Norhayati Rusli instead said the video was related to the ministry's malaria eradication programme and had nothing to do with the dengue control programme using Wolbachia-infected mosquitoes.

"Dengue prevention efforts require community participation, which includes keeping residential areas and neighbourhoods clean, eliminating mosquito

breeding grounds, as well as using aerosol sprays and mosquito repellents," she said in a statement yesterday.

The statement was also issued to refute the claim that Aedes mosquitoes only feed on blood in order to survive.

According to Dr Norhayati, female Aedes mosquitoes need blood in order to produce eggs, while both male and female Aedes mosquitoes feed on plant nectar to survive.

She said that injecting Wolbachia, a bacteria found in 60% to 70% of insects, into Aedes aegypti mosquitoes could inhibit dengue virus replication and thereby prevent its transmission

to humans.

"Wolbachia-infected Aedes mosquitoes are not genetically modified and have no adverse effects on mosquitoes or the environment," she added, Bernama reported.

Dr Norhayati said a study conducted in Malaysia from 2017 to 2019 showed that the number of dengue cases dropped by 50% to 80% in localities where Wolbachia-infected Aedes mosquitoes were released, compared to areas where Wolbachia-infected Aedes mosquitoes were not released.

"The operation to release Wolbachia-infected Aedes mosquitoes in Malaysia was launched

in 2019 as an additional strategy to deal with the increase in dengue cases and outbreaks in localities with high dengue cases.

"This method has also been implemented in several countries such as Australia, Indonesia and Brazil, resulting in a decrease of between 70% and 76% of cases in localities where Wolbachia-infected Aedes mosquitoes were released. In Malaysia, this operation has so far been carried out in seven states, involving 28 localities," she said.

Dr Norhayati said two years after the operation to release Wolbachia-infected Aedes mosquitoes was implemented, 16 out of 19 localities (84.2%) (cohort 1

and cohort 2) showed a trend of decreasing dengue fever cases by 33 to 100%.

She said one of the remaining three localities had no dengue cases, while the other two showed no increase in dengue cases, and only had a small number of reported cases.

For accurate information about the operation to release Wolbachia-infected Aedes mosquitoes in Malaysia, the public can visit www.infosihat.gov.my or call the MOH hotline at 03-8883 3231, Mondays to Fridays from 8am to 5pm.

The public can also access the latest dengue information at iden-gue.mysa.gov.my.

AKHBAR : SUNDAY STAR
MUKA SURAT : 11
RUANGAN : NATION

Speed up regulation of liquid nicotine, says KJ

By JUNAID IBRAHIM
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR: The passing of regulations for nicotine-laced vape liquids must be sped up to prevent more serious public health risks, says former health minister Khairy Jamaluddin.

Noting that it had been a few months since nicotine-laced vape liquids were removed from the Poisons Act list, however, he said that sales of the products were still unregulated. With the delisting, there was no mechanism to regulate liquid nicotine and vapes, he added.

"What should've been done was for the legislation to be passed first," he told a press conference after delivering his keynote address at UCSI University Future Leaders Empowerment Series here yesterday.

During his tenure as the minister in charge, Khairy said he had refused to sign an order agreeing to delist nicotine-laced products from the list.

"I was asked to remove liquid nicotine so that we could impose tax on it, but I said only if there was legislation that could regulate the products. I refused to do so because it would pose a risk to

public health.

"It's been a couple of months since liquid nicotine was delisted but (there's still) no legislation to regulate it," he said.

Recently, Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa asked all parties to support efforts to ensure the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023 could be tabled in Parliament at the next meeting. She said the issue needed to be taken seriously due to the smoking habit and increasing use of electronic cigarettes and vaping contributing to the increase in diseases in the country.

Meanwhile, during his keynote

address, Khairy warned that the Malaysian healthcare system would collapse within the next decade or two if no action was taken to address impending health crises.

"I spent just over a year at the Health Ministry and directed most of my time towards handling the pandemic, making sure the people were vaccinated and the country got out of the lockdown to open up the economy.

"But after that, I looked at the risk factors for Malaysia and we were sitting on a ticking time bomb of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). If we don't do some-

thing today, we will break our healthcare system in 10 to 20 years," he said.

Khairy said not only NCDs were threatening the whole system but also a silent pandemic on mental health.

However, the public, especially the younger generation, had been showing a progressive change where discussions about mental health had become more normalised, he noted.

"People are now more willing to talk about it. More young people too are talking about mental health and the stigma, thankfully, is being eroded," he added.