

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 7
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

KKM siasat punca kes doktor hamil mati mengejut

Putrajaya: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) akan melakukan siasatan terperinci terhadap kes seorang doktor hamil empat bulan ditemui mati mengejut di kediamannya di Shah Alam, baru-baru ini.

Menteri Kesihatan, Dr Zaliha Mustafa berkata perkara itu akan dilaksanakan sebaik sahaja polis selesai melakukan siasatan kes berkenaan.

"Kes ini masih dalam siasatan polis, namun kita amat terkesan dengan apa yang berlaku dan mengambil berat dalam kalangan petugas kesihatan."

"KKM juga akan melakukan siasatan terperinci berhubung kes ini selepas siasatan polis selesai," katanya selepas merasmikan program The Global Association of Clinical Officers

and Physician Associates (GACOPA) di sebuah hotel, di sini, semalam.

BH pada 17 Jun lalu, melaporkan seorang doktor hamil empat bulan berusia 32 tahun, ditemui mati mengejut dalam sebuah bilik di rumahnya di Shah Alam.

Ketika Polis Daerah Shah Alam, Asisten Komisyoner Mohd Iqbal Ibrahim, berkata siasatan awal mendapati doktor berkenaan bertugas di sebuah klinik kesihatan kerajaan.

Katanya, laporan dibuat jam 8.55 malam pada 5 Jun lalu, susulan makluman daripada Hospital Sungai Buloh sebaik menerima panggilan kecemasan dari seorang lelaki berusia 32 tahun yang memaklumkan isterinya mati mengejut di rumah.

Dalam pada itu, Dr Zaliha

berkata, kementeriannya sedia mempertimbangkan cadangan untuk menambah baik penguasaan kesihatan mental dalam kalangan pegawai kesihatan.

Katanya, masalah berkenaan adalah sebahagian daripada tonggak yang disenaraikan dalam Kertas Putih Kesihatan bagi memastikan perkara seperti ini menjadi keutamaan.

"Langkah sedia ada sudah mencukupi, namun sekiranya perlu ditambah baik kita akan lakukan."

"Saya minta mana-mana petugas kesihatan yang berhadapan masalah emosi dari sudut tekanan dan sebagainya agar melakukan konsultasi dan sebagainya kerana kita mempunyai ruang untuk berbuat demikian," katanya.



Dr Zaliha beramah mesra dengan delegasi luar negara pada program GACOPA di Putrajaya, semalam.
(Foto BERNAMA)

AKHBAR : HARIAN METRO
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : LOKAL

RINGKAS

Sasar kadar derma darah 40 orang per 1,000 populasi

Johor Bahru: Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) menerusi Perkhidmatan Perubatan Transfusi menyasarkan kadar pendermaan darah negara 35 hingga 40 orang per 1,000 populasi penduduk menjelang tahun 2030.

Ketua Pengarah Kesihatan Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan berkata sasaran itu, bagi memenuhi keperluan rawatan pesakit seiring dengan kadar pertumbuhan tahunan penduduk di Malaysia.

"Kadar pendermaan darah sebelum pandemik Covid-19 iaitu pada tahun 2019 ialah 22.8 penderma per 1,000 orang penduduk di Malaysia.

"Walaupun bagaimanapun, kadar pendermaan darah ini sedikit menurun iaitu 19.7-22.5 penderma per 1,000 populasi pada tahun 2020, 2021 dan 2022 disebabkan Covid-19 yang melanda Malaysia dan Dunia.

"Justeru, Perkhidmatan Perubatan Transfusi menyasarkan kadar pendermaan darah 35 hingga 40 orang per 1,000 populasi penduduk menjelang tahun 2023, bagi memenuhi keperluan rawatan pesakit," katanya ketika berucap pada Sambutan Hari Penderma Darah Sedunia 2023 Peringkat Kebangsaan dan Ulang Tahun ke-75 Bulan Sabit Merah Malaysia di sini, kelmarin.

Sementara itu, Dr Muhammad Radzi berkata sebanyak 737,554 beg darah telah didermakan pada 2022, dengan peningkatan sebanyak 13.7 peratus berbanding tahun 2021.

'Saya sudah derma darah 141 kali'

Johor Bahru: "Setiap kali menderma darah, ada satu kepuasan yang tidak dapat digambarkan dengan kata-kata," kata Ong Wah Pu, 52, salah seorang Penderma Darah Terbanyak Peringkat Kebangsaan 2023.

Timbalan pengarah pembangunan perniagaan di sebuah syarikat yang sudah menderma darah sebanyak 141 kali berkata, ia juga sebagai salah satu cara bersedekah.

"Saya mula menderma darah ketika berusia-18 tahun, kali pertama memang takut tetapi kepuasan melakukannya membuatkan saya teruskan sehingga kini.

"Setiap kali derma darah, saya rasa sangat puas dan rasa bermotivasi dapat buat sesuatu yang baik.

"Menderma darah tidak sama dengan menderma wang ringgit atau tenaga, ia



ONG (kiri) dan Diana antara Penderma Darah Terbanyak Peringkat Kebangsaan 2023.

ibarat menjadikan penerima darah seperti mendapat peluang semula untuk meneruskan kehidupan mereka," katanya yang berasal dari Kuala Lumpur.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika ditemui selepas Sam-

butan Hari Penderma Darah Sedunia 2023 Peringkat Kebangsaan dan Ulang Tahun ke-75 Bulan Sabit Merah Malaysia di sini, kelmarin.

Sementara itu, usahawan, Diana Lim Kyun Yen, 54, berkata, meskipun takut jarum

setiap kali melakukan prosedur pendermaan darah sejak berusia 21 tahun, beliau konsisten menderma darah dan sudah melakukannya sebanyak 123 kali.

"Memang takut setiap kali jarum dicucuk, tetapi ketakutannya itu saya atasi dan sentiasa berfikir ia dapat membantu menyelamatkan nyawa orang.

"Saya bukan doktor, bukan juga jururawat tetapi saya tidak boleh melihat orang sakit.

"Saya mempunyai darah jenis O, selagi saya mampu saya akan lakukannya (menderma darah).

"Tabiat saya ialah suka mengajak orang menderma darah, saya akan ajak sesiapa yang saya kenal untuk bersama menderma darah termasuk ahli keluarga, pembantu rumah, rakan dan kenalan," katanya.

AKHBAR : KOSMO

MUKA SURAT : 1

RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN

BAHANA TELAN PIL GUGUR ONLINE

**Gadis hamil hampir putus nyawa,
bayi dilahirkan cacat kesan ambil
ubat tanpa kawalan doktor**

Oleh NUR FATIN ZAHRA
dan AZMI NORDIN

PETALING JAYA – Lambakan ubat-ubatan seperti pil penggugur janin yang boleh didapati dengan mudah secara dalam talian tanpa preskripsi doktor boleh mengundang bahaya termasuk kehilangan nyawa.

Disebabkan itu, ada individu yang sanggup merisikokan

diri masing-masing dengan membeli produk farmaseutikal tersebut tanpa diketahui sama ada ia tulen atau tiruan.

Seorang gadis yang dikenali sebagai Nita, 21, mengakui, dia bagaikan mati hidup semula apabila mengalami pendarahan yang teruk selepas mengambil sejenis pil kononnya berkesan untuk menggugurkan janin yang dibeli secara online.

• BERSAMBUNG
DI MUKA 2



GAMBAR HIASAN

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 2
RUANGAN : NEGARA

Bahana telan pil gugur online

DARI MUKA 1

Mimpi ngeri itu bermula selepas dia disahkan hamil selepas terlanjur dengan teman lelakinya. Bagi mengelak malu dan disisihkan keluarga, gadis itu membuat carian di internet untuk membeli pil gugur janin secara online.

"Pada mulanya, kawan-kawan nasihatkan saya supaya membeli ubat 'turun darah' di kedai kerana ia dapat membantu menggugurkan kandungan, tetapi ubat tersebut tidak berkesan.

"Setelah diperiksa, kandungan saya rupa-rupanya sudah mencecah lapan minggu. Jadi, ubat itu sudah tidak berkesan.

"Disebabkan terdesak kerana perut semakin membesar, saya membeli pil gugur janin secara dalam-talian dan berhabis hampir RM600," katanya kepada Kosmo! di sini semalam.

Cerita Nita, selepas berkomunikasi dengan penjual tersebut, dia bersetuju untuk membeli ubat berkenaan secara online.

Jelasnya, dia berasa lega kerana penjual ubat tersebut berjanji akan membantunya untuk menggugurkan janin tersebut.

"Selain itu, peniaga terbabit turut memberi jaminan bahawa ubat itu adalah tulen dan tiada sebarang kesan sampingan termasuk jika mahu hamil pada masa akan datang," ujarnya.

"Selepas ambil ubat itu, saya

Tiada Long term side effects. Ubat akan cuci terus sampai clear. Tak perlu nk pergi klinik atau hospital untuk cuci. Nak mengandung lagi tiada masalah. Tapi masa guna ubt ni awk akan rasa pening, loya, muntah & kadang boleh cirit-birit dgn demam. Serta sakit perut dan kejang kaki. Sakit lagi kuat dari senggugut. Macam contraction pun ada.

3 JENIS ubat gugur kandungan

1. 100mcg x 100mcg

2. 100mcg x 200mcg

3. 100mcg x 300mcg

100mcg dos biasa

200mcg dos kuat

300mcg dos kuat + kurang sakit

100mcg ambil masa 3 hari lepas guna ubt untuk bertindak (SLOW)

200mcg dim masa 5 jam dah

MESEI daripada penjual berkenaan pembelian ubat menggugurkan janin.

mula mengalami pendarahan yang kemudiannya berlarutan hingga seminggu. Bila saya bertanya kepada penjual, dia beritahu itu adalah kesan biasa, tetapi saya rasa tidak sedap hati

dan seperti mahu pitam.

"Walaupun takut, saya gagahkan diri berjumpa doktor. Doktor tersebut kemudian memaklumkan saya kehilangan darah yang banyak. Jika, terlambat jumpa doktor, mungkin nyawa saya sudah melayang," katanya lagi.

Sementara itu, seorang lagi gadis dikenali sebagai Ina, 23, memberitahu, dia menanggung penyesalan seumur hidup kerana proses pengguguran janin tidak berjaya akibat pengambilan sejenis pil.

"Saya menyedari hamil selepas tidak datang haid selama sebulan, saya beritahu pasangan, tetapi dia enggan bertanggungjawab. Disebabkan takut, saya membeli pil gugur secara online yang berharga RM400.

"Namun, apa yang terjadi sebaliknya apabila ubat tersebut adalah tiruan. Selepas itu, saya membeli pil sama daripada penjual lain pula. Disebabkan kandungan sudah masuk trimester kedua, saya memerlukan ubat gugur yang lebih 'kuat', harganya juga mahal.

"Disebabkan pengambilan ubat gugur itu juga, bayi yang saya lahirkan mengalami kecacatan pada anggota badan.

"Sedih memang sedih. Tapi, saya anggap ia sebagai balasan ke atas perbuatan saya," katanya.



PENGAMBILAN ubat gugur janin merupakan jalan pintas bagi gadis hamil yang menggugurkan kandungan.

hi sis. awak jual ni original ke sis

7:35 AM



UBAT-UBATAN terkawal boleh didapati dengan mudah secara dalam talian tanpa perlu berjumpa dengan doktor atau pakar perubatan.

Beli dalam talian sebab mudah

PETALING JAYA – Faktor mudah dan takut berjumpa doktor membuatkan ramai rakyat negara ini sanggup membeli ubat-ubatan secara dalam talian sebagai jalan pintas walaupun produk tersebut dijual pada harga yang tidak masuk akal.

Lebih menghairankan, kebanyakan ubat-ubatan yang dijual secara online itu tersenarai dalam Kategori B Akta Racun 1952 yang mana ia tidak boleh dibeli tanpa preskripsi doktor.

Berdasarkan tinjauan Kosmo!, antara ubat yang dicari orang ramai adalah untuk tujuan kecantikan termasuk langsing, gugur janin dan mencegah kehamilan.

Menurut Pegawai Farmasi Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM), Nur Namira Mahmud, pengambilan ubat terkawal yang dijual secara online tanpa konsultasi dan preskripsi doktor bertauliah

boleh membawa mudarat kepada diri sendiri.

"Ubat ini mempunyai kesan sampingan, jika dibeli secara online, tidak ada orang yang boleh pantau jika ada kesannya," katanya ketika dihubungi.

Menurutnya, individu yang mengambil ubat tanpa paman-tauan pakar juga bakal berdepan risiko kerosakan buah pinggang.

"Ramai yang tidak tahu pemberian dos ubat adalah berbeza mengikut pesakit. Ada beberapa jenis ubat yang dosnya bergantung pada indeks jisim badan (BMI) seseorang.

"Selain itu, ada juga risiko kontraindikasi sekiranya pesakit mengambil ubat terlarang, tetapi masih lagi mengambil ubat-ubatan yang lain.

"Sebagai contoh, pengambilan ubat terlarang ini boleh mendatangkan mudarat jika pesakit

mengambil ubat merawat penyakit jantung atau tekanan darah tinggi," jelasnya.

Mengulas mengenai keberkesanan ubat secara online, Namira tidak menafikan misalnya pil kurus dapat membantu menurunkan berat badan, tetapi ia bergantung kepada individu.

Justeru, Namira menasihatkan pengguna agar selidik dahulu kesihatan produk sebelum membeli kerana kebanyakan ubat terkawal yang boleh didapati secara online mungkin diperoleh secara haram.

"Sekiranya berasa sangsi atau ragu-ragu dengan kesihatan sesuatu produk, orang ramai boleh melayari portal dalam talian yang disediakan Bahagian Regulatori Farmasi Negara (NPRA) untuk semakan status pendaftaran produk tersebut," katanya.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 15
RUANGAN : NEGARA

Siasat kes doktor hamil maut akibat stres

KKM tangani tekanan petugas kesihatan

Oleh KAMARIAH KHALIDI

PUTRAJAYA – Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) sedia menambah baik langkah-langkah menangani tekanan dan kesihatan mental dalam kalangan petugas kesihatan.

Menteri Kesihatan, Dr. Zaliha Mustafa berkata, perkara itu turut menjadi keutamaan KKM dan antara terkandung dalam tonggak kedua menerusi Kertas Putih Kesihatan.

Katanya, ketika ini petugas kesihatan yang mempunyai masalah emosi, tekanan boleh mendapatkan bantuan sokongan daripada golongan profesional.

"Langkah-langkah sedia ada

bagi saya mencukupi, tapi kalau kita lihat ia perlu ditambah baik, saya pasti kita perlu lakukannya.

"Saya harap semua khususnya petugas kesihatan menjaga kesihatan diri dan perkara ini tidak terus berulang.

"Mereka boleh menghubungi Talian Krisis Kesihatan Mental Kebangsaan (Talian HEAL) di 1555 yang beroperasi setiap hari bermula pukul 8 pagi sehingga 12 tengah malam," katanya selepas Persidangan Antarabangsa Global Association of Clinical Officers and Physician Associates (GACOPA) 2023 di sini semalam.

Zaliha mengulas mengenai laporan kematian seorang doktor hamil empat bulan berusia 32

tahun ditemui mati mengejut di rumahnya di Shah Alam.

Ketua Polis Daerah Shah Alam, Asisten Komisioner Mohd. Iqbal Ibrahim berkata, mangsa bekerja di klinik kesihatan dan pihaknya tidak menolak kemungkinan tindakan mangsa ekoran tekanan perasaan.

Mengulas lanjut, Zaliha berkata, pihaknya akan melakukan siasatan terperinci terhadap kes berkenaan dan perkara itu akan dilaksanakan selepas polis melakukan siasatan kes berkenaan.

"Kes ini masih dalam siasatan polis, namun kita amat terkesan dengan apa yang berlaku dan mengambil berat dalam kalangan petugas kesihatan," ujarnya.



ZALIHA (dua dari kanan) beramah mesra dengan peserta yang hadir pada GACOPA 2023 di Putrajaya semalam.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 1
RUANGAN : MUKA HADAPAN

Hanya 6,985 dokter pakar, tidak cukup rawat pesakit

Oleh MOHD. FADHLI
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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia hanya mempunyai 6,985 pakar perubatan yang berkhidmat di hospital-hospital kerajaan dan jumlah tersebut tidak mencukupi untuk merawat 80 peratus daripada 33.2 juta penduduk terutama dalam kalangan berpendapatan rendah B40.

Kekurangan doktor pakar itu melibatkan pelbagai bidang antaranya pakar kardiotorasik (jantung), onkologi (kanser), perubatan paliatif (kanser), perubatan geriatrik (penyakit orang tua), neurosurgeri (otak), obstetrik (sakit puan) dan ginekologi serta psikiatri.

Bersambung di muka 2

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA

MUKA SURAT : 2

RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

Hanya 6,985 doktor pakar, tidak cukup rawat pesakit

Dari muka 1

Akibat kekurangan tersebut, daripada 145 hospital kerajaan di seluruh negara hanya kira-kira 70 hospital ada khidmat doktor pakar manakala baki hospital menyediakan khidmat pakar secara lawatan ke hospital-hospital tersebut.

Semakan *Utusan Malaysia* terdapat lebih 60 hospital kerajaan tiada doktor pakar dan kebanyakannya di luar bandar dan pedalaman.

Rekod Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) sehingga 31 Disember 2022 mencatatkan Malaysia hanya mempunyai 6,985 pakar perubatan yang masih berkhidmat di fasiliti kesihatan kementerian.

Bercakap kepada *Utusan Malaysia*, Presiden Persatuan Pakar Perubatan Kesihatan Awam Malaysia, Datuk Dr. Zainal Ariffin Omar berkata, melihat kepada jumlah hospital kerajaan lebih separuh tidak menyediakan doktor pakar, menunjukkan Malaysia ketinggalan.

Oleh itu, melalui Kertas Putih Kesihatan diluluskan di Dewan Rakyat baru-baru ini, kerajaan perlu mereformasi sistem kesihatan negara bagi meningkatkan akses rakyat untuk mendapatkan rawatan berkualiti.

"Sudah sampai masanya Malaysia sediakan doktor pakar di hospital-hospital. Kerajaan perlu mengenal pasti lokaliti memerlukan doktor pakar dan letakkan sekurang-kurangnya dua atau tiga doktor pakar mengikut disiplin perubatan masing-masing.



Kerajaan perlu mengenal pasti lokaliti memerlukan doktor pakar dan letakkan sekurang-kurangnya dua atau tiga doktor pakar."

DR. ZAINAL ARIFFIN OMAR

"Ada pesakit terpaksa berge-rak dari kawasan pedalaman ke kawasan bandar untuk mendapatkan khidmat doktor pakar," kata beliau.

Menurut beliau, isu kekurangan pakar di hospital kerajaan menyusahkan pesakit kerana mereka terpaksa mengembara jauh untuk mendapatkan rawatan.

Kata Zainal, contohnya pesakit di Hospital Semporna, Sabah dirujuk ke Hospital Tawau yang jarak kedua-dua lokasi melebihi 100 kilometer (km) dan mengambil masa hampir dua jam perjalanan.

"Kos perjalanan mungkin lebih RM100 naik kenderaan, sehalo. Jika perlu merujuk ke hospital pakar utama di Kota Kinabalu jaraknya lebih 500km, pesakit perlu memandu lebih 10 jam atau menggunakan pengangkutan udara lebih mahal.

Difahamkan, kira-kira 80

peratus daripada 33.4 juta penduduk Malaysia terutama B40 yang jumlahnya 8.7 juta orang, menggunakan perkhidmatan kesihatan awam untuk mendapatkan rawatan.

Mengulas lanjut, Zainal berkata, jika kerajaan tidak mampu mengisi kekosongan pakar perubatan di semua hospital kerajaan, namun paling tidak pun separuh hospital di setiap negeri perlu ditempatkan doktor pakar.

"Perlu ada nisbah, contohnya, jika sebuah negeri mempunyai 12 hospital kerajaan, sekurang-kurangnya enam daripadanya ada doktor pakar. Ini yang perlu ditumpukan, jangan fokus pada hospital besar dalam bandar sahaja.

"Ada kes pakar-pakar kita tidak mahu berkhidmat dengan kerajaan kerana penat terlalu ramai pesakit, jadi berilah insentif supaya kita tidak kehilangan mereka," katanya.

Sementara itu, Presiden Persatuan Perubatan Malaysia (MMA), Dr. R.R. Muruga berkata, kebanyakan hospital peringkat daerah tidak mempunyai doktor pakar.

"Kita memerlukan lebih ramai doktor pakar terutama dalam bidang perubatan dalam, pembedahan pediatrik serta obstetrik dan ginekologi kerana Malaysia terlalu kurang pakar untuk merawat rakyat.

"Ada juga beberapa kawasan di pedalaman Sabah dan Semenanjung orang awam terpaksa ke bandar atau pergi ke negeri lain untuk mendapatkan khidmat pakar," katanya.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : NEWS / NATION

ALLEGED SUICIDE OF PREGNANT DOCTOR

Zaliha: Health Ministry to try to reduce stress among officers

PUTRAJAYA: The Health Ministry will look into ways to reduce stress among its healthcare officers.

This follows a news report that a doctor who was four months pregnant allegedly hung herself in her house on June 6. The doctor, 32, was believed to have worked at a health clinic.

Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa said the ministry was ready to make improvements to measures to deal with mental health problems, if needed.

"The measures that we have now are sufficient. But if there is a need to beef up (the measures),

we must do it.

"I advise everyone, especially healthcare officers with emotional problems, to go for consultations. We have the place and platform for it.

"A detailed investigation will be conducted and I hope a case like this will not recur," she said after launching the International Conference of the Global Association of Clinical Officers and Physician Associates here.

Dr Zaliha added that mental health problems were prioritised in the second pillar of the Health White Paper to boost health promotion and disease prevention.



Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa hitting a gong to mark the opening of the International Conference of Global Association of Clinical Officers and Physician Associates in Putrajaya yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : NATION

Attending preschool a way for poor kids to get nutritional meal

By REBECCA RAJAENDRAM
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KUALA LUMPUR: Attending preschool is not all about getting a child ready for their schooling years where they will learn and interact with others.

For poor families, it is possibly the only place where their kids can get a nutritional meal.

Currently, children at public

preschools receive free meals that are heavily subsidised by the government.

These dishes – which are clean, nutritious and balanced – are prepared based on the guidelines from the Health Ministry to meet the appropriate caloric and macronutrient requirements for a growing child.

World Bank Senior Education Specialist Dr Aija Maarit Rinkinen

said nutrition and health are among issues facing Malaysian preschools.

“Providing proper food to children is not only about giving them healthy food, it is also a way to educate them about nutrition and its importance,” she added.

In this year’s national budget, the preschool food aid was increased from RM89mil to RM108mil, a 21% increase.

This is expected to increase the food aid from RM2 to RM2.50 per child in the peninsula and RM2.25 to RM2.75 in Sabah and Sarawak.

According to the World Bank “Shaping First Steps: A Comprehensive Review of Preschool Education in Malaysia” report, 14.1% of Malaysian children under five are underweight, 21.8% are suffering from stunting, 9.7% from wasting and 5.6%

are overweight and obese, with the trend worsening.

The report suggests that the food assistance rate for preschools be reviewed to evaluate if the allowance is sufficient to meet the nutritional and developmental needs of children.

“Food prices are rising and parents are finding it more and more difficult to afford nutritious food,” said Rinkinen.

Healthy food to fuel growth

Importance of nutritional meals cannot be ignored

By GERARD GIMINO
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PETALING JAYA: Addressing growing children’s nutritional needs is crucial to effectively tackle malnutrition and stunting among children, say nutritionists and health experts.

They welcomed the increased allocation for food aid programmes at public kindergartens and primary schools.

Currently, there are two food aid programmes – the Preschool Food Aid (BMP) for all children and the Supplementary Food Aid (RMT) for pupils from underprivileged families.

The current rate for BMP and RMT meals are fixed at RM2 and RM2.50 respectively per child in Peninsula Malaysia, and RM2.25 and RM3 per child in Sabah and Sarawak.

The rate for BMP is expected to increase by 50 sen per child while RMT’s rate will increase by RM1 per child.

Consultant paediatrician Datuk Dr Amar-Singh HSS said a universal preschool and school breakfast programme should be introduced to ensure the meals served

meet the nutritional demands of children, as practised in many countries.

“Good data on social determinants of health are required to identify those with inequities and target support for them,” he added.

While the allocations for BMP and RMT have increased, he said the hike was small, at 21% and 24% respectively, and the sum could be inadequate.

Under Budget 2023, the Education Ministry received a total of RM55.2bil.

Of the amount, RM108mil was set aside for BMP, up from the previous RM89mil and set to benefit some 240,000 students while RMT gets RM777mil, an increase from RM625mil and set to benefit some 700,000 students.

According to statistics from the Health Ministry’s Adolescent Nutrition Survey, as part of the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2017, more than 8% of school children were stunted.

“Serial NHMS surveys also showed an increasing stunting rate from 6.6% (2011) to 17.7% (2015) and shot up further to



Full bellies: Preschoolers at Nurkids Islamic Kindergarten in Taman Puncak Jalil having a meal during recess. — AZHAR MAHFOT/The Star

21.8% in 2019.

“These suggest that we are regressing to become like poorer developing nations, which have 25% stunting rates,” said Dr Amar, an Honorary Senior Fellow at the Galen Centre for Health and Social Policy.

Stunting also brought significant implications as it implied poorer cognitive development that could mean a lifetime poverty trap, he said.

“We must remember that stunting starts in the womb, so we must identify mothers with malnutrition in pregnancy, support them financially and only through good nutrition can we end stunting in children,” he added.

Nutrition Society of Malaysia president Dr Tee E Siang said BMP and RMT could also be leveraged to ingrain values of healthy eating among children.

“The long-term measure should be promoting nutritional education and advocating healthier eating habits from a young age.

“We’re not talking about conducting an entire syllabus, but rather having some three to five-minute lessons whenever the food is distributed,” he suggested.

Dr Tee said engagements should be held between canteen operators and the Health and Education ministries, to ensure healthier food options.

“It would be futile if we make the effort to educate our children on healthy eating, but less nutritious food is still being served in schools,” he said.

Malnutrition in the short term could induce negative effects such as being underweight and possibly resulting in children having a weaker immune system, he added.

“The weaker immune system could result in them having a higher tendency to fall sick, resulting in absenteeism.

“Falling sick also causes a further lack of appetite, potentially leading to under-eating and children being even more underweight,” he said, adding that long-term malnutrition could also lead to stunting.

He said if a stunted child begins to build an appetite, it might cause the kid to eat more and possibly be overweight or obese.

“This potentially brings a higher prevalence of non-communicable diseases in their later years,” he added.

FOR MORE STORIES See page 4

Preschoolers food aid increase not a lot but will help

By IMRAN HILMY
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GEORGE TOWN: Real, natural food is best for preschool kids aged four to six.

That means potatoes instead of fries, brown instead of white rice and actual fruits instead of juices, said nutritionist Annie Yee.

And while the government’s effort to increase aid for preschool meals is commendable, Yee was concerned that a budget of RM2.50 to RM2.75 per meal would not be enough.

“Kids may miss out on important nutrients from dairy products or nut, which would be more expensive,” she said.

Yee, who is the senior nutrition-

ist at Penang Adventist Hospital, said parents and preschools should give children real food instead of fast or highly processed food.

She urged parents to top up on the government’s efforts and collaborate with their children’s preschools to ensure sufficient budget for quality nutrition in their children’s meals.

As an idea for nutritious food on a tight budget, family medicine specialist Dr Mastura Mohd Soplan said fresh sardines are inexpensive, and the fish could be filleted and deboned, then fried with rice for a good serving of protein and Omega-3 fatty acids.

She added that the leftover heads and bones could be boiled

into a soup stock.

Dr Mastura, who is from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), said good nutritional intake is a high priority for kids because of their rapid growth.

Aside from macro nutrients such as proteins and fats, she said attention must be paid to micro nutrients for tooth and bone development and cognitive activity.

She said iron-rich food like vegetables, meats instead of high-calorie food to make preschoolers feel full is crucial.

“Children should be encouraged to eat a high fibre diet and stay away from highly processed food,” she said.

Kindergarten operators inter-

viewed applauded the move to increase the budget for food aid.

In this year’s national budget, the preschool food aid was increased from RM89mil to RM108mil, a 21% increase.

Tadika Pavitra principal V. Santhi said the increased aid is significant to parents in the B40 group.

“This is good long-term help for kids in lower income groups because it will increase their nutrient intake,” she said.

Santhi, who has been running her kindergarten in Simpang Empat on mainland Penang for the past 25 years, said the typical morning meals for preschoolers were fried noodles, nasi lemak or roti canai.

With the increased aid, she said fruits and milk could be included in their breakfasts.

Tadika Bijak Pintar operator Christine Tan, expressed similar enthusiasm and asked for clarification on how the aid would be channelled.

“Will it be channelled through subsidies or other mechanisms?” she asked.

Malaysia Preschool Teachers Association president Sally Ng praised the government’s focus on preschoolers’ nutritional needs.

“Although the amount is not much, it adds up over the months and with the increased cost of living, it means a lot for the kids and their parents,” she said.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 5

RUANGAN : NATION

Measures for health workers adequate for now, says Zaliha

PUTRAJAYA: The existing stress and mental health management measures for health workers are sufficient but can be improved if necessary, says Health Minister Dr Zaliha Mustafa.

She was commenting on the sudden deaths of two health workers – including a doctor who was four months pregnant – in Klang on June 4 and 6, as well as the need to improve stress management measures at her ministry.

Zaliha said existing methods included counselling interventions and contacting the National Mental Health Crisis Line, or HEAL Line, at 15555 to help those facing mental health problems get early help, adding that her ministry remains concerned about mental health issues among health workers, which is always a priority.

“For any worker who has emotional or stress issues, we have the space to have consultations and so on,” she said, adding that the deaths are still under police investigation, Bernama reported.



Look at that: Zaliha touring the exhibition booths at the GACOPA conference in Putrajaya. – Bernama

Zaliha also said the issue of mental health is the second pillar of the Health White Paper, which outlined the challenges faced by the country's healthcare system and solutions to ensure a higher-quality, sustainable and resilient healthcare system.

She had earlier officiated the International Conference of the

Global Association of Clinical Officers and Physician Associates (GACOPA) here yesterday.

Those suffering from stress or mental health problems can reach out to the Mental Health Psychosocial Support Service at 03-2935 9935 or 014-322 3392; Talian Kasih at 15999 or 019-261 5999 on WhatsApp; Jakim's

(Department of Islamic Development Malaysia) family, social and community care centre at 0111-959 8214 on WhatsApp; and Befrienders Kuala Lumpur at 03-7627 2929, or go to befrienders.org.my/centre-in-malaysia for a full list of numbers nationwide and operating hours, or email sam@befrienders.org.my.

AKHBAR : THE STAR

MUKA SURAT : 8

RUANGAN : NATION

Afraid of needles, but she keeps donating blood

By VENESA DEVI
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JOHOR BARU: Despite being afraid of needles, Diana Lim Kyun Yen has never missed the opportunity to donate blood in the hope of saving lives.

The 54-year-old mother of two started donating blood in her early 20s, beginning with a blood donation drive in Negri Sembilan.

"It was scary at first, but after I donated my blood for the first time, I realised there was nothing to be afraid of as it was a painless process.

"I still have a bit of fear for needles, but it has never stopped me from donating blood.

"Each time I want to donate blood, I remind myself this is a small deed and I am capable of doing it to save others.

"I am not a doctor nor am I a nurse who can help those fighting for their lives.

"Donating blood is the only way I can help them," she said in an interview.

The Sabahan businesswoman who now lives in Kuala Lumpur has donated blood a total of 123 times to the National Blood Centre (PDN).

She was awarded with the title of individual who has donated blood the most number of times to PDN for the female category during the National World Blood Donors celebration at Persada Johor International Convention Centre here.

Lim said that she has also encouraged many of her friends and family to donate blood as she strongly believes in the cause.

"I will invite others to donate blood with me,

even people I hardly know.

"I hope others will also come forward to do their part as there are many who are relying on the blood we give," she said.

Receiving the same award for the male category was Ong Wah Pu, who has donated blood a total of 141 times to PDN.

Ong said that he eagerly waited until he reached the age of 18 so that he could donate his blood for the first time.

"When you are young, you may not have the money or time to help those around you.

"Donating blood is one way for me to do my part for the community.

"After donating my blood for the first time, I feel a great sense of satisfaction and continue doing so every three to four months until today.

"It has now become a habit for me," said the 52-year-old father of one.

Ong, who is the deputy sales development director of a factory in Kuala Lumpur, hopes to see the younger generation donating blood as well.

"Regular blood donors from my generation will soon have to stop donating once we reach the age of 60.

"It is important that young people replace us in replenishing the blood supply," he said.

On Sunday, Health director-general Datuk Dr Muhammad Radzi Abu Hassan said that blood donation rate in Malaysia is gradually improving after falling during the Covid-19 pandemic.

He added that the ministry has set a target to increase the blood donation rate to between 35 and 40 donors for every 1,000 people by 2030.



The importance of giving: Ong and Lim with the awards they received in conjunction with the National World Blood Donors celebration at the Persada Johor International Convention Centre.