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Ministry seeks council's aid

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The Health Ministry has requested the Malaysian AIDS Council to forward complaints from the public of discrimination against HIV patients in the health service.

Council president Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir said Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng made the request when he met representatives from non-governmental organisations at the Second Annual Ministerial Dialogue early this month.

She said the council had informed its affiliates of the request.

"As they were sick, some patients find it difficult to lodge such detailed reports," she said after the opening ceremony of the council's fourth annual general meeting.

Marina said incidences of discrimination had increased judging from the number of complaints the council received.

"Furthermore, we don't know how many cases go unreported," she added.

However, she added, the people knew where to seek assistance if they felt they had been discriminated against because of the publicity on the council's activities.

Meanwhile the director of disease control, Datuk Dr Abdul Aziz Mahmood, said the ministry had never given any instructions to discharge any patient on the grounds of being HIV positive.

The ministry does not practise discrimination against any patient, including those with HIV or AIDS, he said in his speech read out by his deputy, Dr C. Prathapa Senan.

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