

Media urged to run verified HIV stories

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues: Journalists and media practitioners should gather more precise information before running stories on HIV and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC) president Datuk Paduka Marina Mahathir said this will prevent dissemination of wrong or misleading facts, which can cause a lot of harm and confusion.

"The media have created a lot of awareness and attention towards HIV/AIDS issues. However, the question is whether the attention is appropriate and whether it does more good than harm."

Vernacular newspapers, especially, should ensure that their reports have the facts verified as they have a wider readership, she added.

Speaking at the council office, Marina invited entries for the Red Ribbon Media Awards 2000 and the Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Award.

"The award is our way of saying thank you to members of the media, and to recognise the contributions of individuals and groups for their invaluable help in disseminating HIV/AIDS messages to the public."

Malaysians can submit works relating to HIV/AIDS that have been published, broadcast, performed or produced between May 1, 1998 and May 31 this year.

The public are also invited to send in nominations for the Dr Siti Hasmah Award.

Closing date for submission of entries for both awards is July 28, while the deadline for submission of materials like brochures, pamphlets, posters, billboards and postcards is July 23.

For further information and to obtain entry forms, call Nik Fahmee or Yante Ismail of the MAC at 404 26133 or visit the website at <http://medi-awards.tripod.com>.