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MAC-HIV

MAC PROPOSES GOV'T INCREASES ALLOCATION FOR HIV TREATMENT

JOHOR BAHRU, Oct 28 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Aids Council (MAC) has proposed that the government increases allocations to the Council to enable HIV/Aids patients to seek HIV antibody (anti retroviral) treatment at government hospitals.

MAC president Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir said the increased allocation would enable MAC to handle 500 HIV/Aids patients comprising the poor who could not afford to seek the treatment compared with only 50 patients presently.

MAC allocated about RM500,000 annually for the purpose but the amount was still insufficient, she told reporters after giving a talk at the seminar entitled "Avoid Aids for Happy Living" at the Kompleks Mawar, here today.

The one-day seminar, organised by the Johor Women Affairs Council (HAWA) and the state government, was officiated by the State Exco for Family Development, Women Affairs and Health, Halimah Sadique.

Marina said every HIV/Aids patient needed RM2,000 per month to undergo HIV antibody treatment which had been clearly effective in curing the patient if the ailment was detected at the early stage.

She said out of the 34,000 HIV/Aids patients in the country, only one per cent received HIV antibody treatment.

She said the increased allocation was appropriate as the government had proposed a substantial allocation for the Health Ministry, that is, RM5.7 billion as had been announced during the tabling of the 2001 Budget yesterday.

"The allocation could also be distributed to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) especially in handling HIV/Aids which had been neglected all this while," she said.

-- BERNAMA

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