

# List HIV drugs: Marina

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**'This will ensure cheaper prices at public hospitals'**

**KUALA LUMPUR, Wed:** The Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC) wants the government to include HIV/AIDS drugs in its Blue Book so that they will be available at cheaper prices in public hospitals.

Its president, Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir, said Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng had assured the MAC he would review the prices of the drugs and try to include them in the Blue Book by the end of the month.

Marina hopes the price reduction of these drugs will be speeded up as it will enable the council to support more HIV/AIDS patients.

She was speaking to journalists yesterday after presenting a RM102,000 cheque to the president of Persatuan Pengasih Malaysia Mohd Yunus Mohamad Pathi to help fund the organisation's projects for this year.

The grant is part of the Malaysian AIDS Foundation's financial commit-

ment to HIV/AIDS programmes this year and will be used by Pengasih to implement programmes to benefit people living with AIDS.

The MAC also released figures on HIV infection, AIDS cases and deaths reported in Malaysia between 1986 and April this year.

According to the Health Ministry, a total of 40,049 HIV cases, 5,103 AIDS cases and 3,881 deaths were reported since 1986.

Of the 40,094 HIV cases, 37,891 or 94.6% are male, while 17,256 or 43% are those aged between 30 and 39 years.

A total of 29,042 or 72.5% of the 40,094 HIV cases are Malays.

In terms of transmission, 30,575 people or 76.3% contracted the disease through intravenous drugs usage.

Of the 5,103 AIDS cases, 4,750 or 93.1% are male, while 2,275 or 44.6% are those aged between 30 and 39 years.