

As cases rise, 76pct Covid-19 hospital beds in Sabah filled, ICU 70pct

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COVID-19 | As the pandemic in Sabah is still not showing signs of subsiding, hospital beds for Covid-19 patients are being quickly filled up by the day.

Just two days ago, Health director-general Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah announced that as of Tuesday (Oct 13), they had a total of 1,018 regular beds for positive cases with usage levels at 71 percent at the time (722 patients).

Today, figures released by the Health Ministry showed that the number of regular beds in Sabah as of Thursday (Oct 15) has increased slightly to 1,045.

However, bed usage has also increased to 76 percent, which means that currently there are 794 patients being warded at nine hospitals designated for Covid-19 treatment in the state.

The number of patients who are in serious condition and in need of intensive

care has also gone up.

According to Health Ministry data, 70 percent of 122 ICU beds allocated for Covid-19 cases in the nine hospitals have been filled up.

This translates to 85 patients, as opposed to Tuesday when there were 62 patients against 110 ICU beds (57 percent).

The number of ventilators remains at 180, but the number of patients who have to depend on these machines has now increased by two percent from 54 cases on Tuesday to 57 on Thursday.

However, according to Noor Hisham, they are expecting to increase the number of regular beds soon with the help of the Armed Forces.

He said before that a field hospital was being set up near Tawau Hospital to free up beds in the hospital and allow it to focus on handling Covid-19 cases.

"The number of beds at the field hospital is estimated between 50 and 100," he said when contacted by Malaysiakini today.

As of noon today, Sabah continued to record new positive cases in the three digits

with 489. That made up 78 percent of the total 627 local cases recorded in the country today.

The Health Ministry also announced that there were five more deaths related to the pandemic reported in Sabah as of today.

It is the ninth day in a row that Covid-19 deaths were reported in the state.

The total number of deaths attributed to Covid-19 in the country as of noon today was 176. Between Sept 18 until noon today, Sabah has accounted for 43 of those deaths.

Noor Hisham told Malaysiakini that Sabah saw many severe cases because of several factors, including age and late presentation.

As an example, he compared the level of severity in Sabah's Tawau Hospital with the Sungai Buloh Hospital in Selangor.

"In Sungai Buloh, the percentage of Category 1 and 2 (patients) is 87 percent but in Tawau, it is 52 percent.

"Elderly, late presentations are among important factors for the severity of cases

in Tawau. Because many affected are the elderly and they came late to the hospital," he said.

For the record, there are a total of five categories for Covid-19 positive patients. Category 1 is used to describe cases who are asymptomatic, while Category 2 is for those who only have mild symptoms. Both are considered as low level in severity.

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