

Putrajaya forms new Covid-19 task force for Klang Valley

Malaysiakini

13 July 2021

Yoursay

Putrajaya has formed a new task force to focus on dealing with Covid-19 in the greater Klang Valley area, the epicentre of the current crisis.

The task force has been given the mandate to make “quick decisions” on behalf of the Health Ministry to mobilise resources to provide relief for the healthcare system.

Health Ministry deputy director-general (public health) Dr Chong Chee Keong announced that the body was formed on July 8 but did not reveal who was on it.

Over the past five days, he said the task force had made visits and identified areas that lacked personnel and equipment.

“We (are mandated to) make decisive decisions on procurement, mobilisation of resources, (and) on factors like oxygen, beds, modular ICUs, and other areas.

“This will immediately help us reduce the stress on the public health system.

“At the same time, we also visited locations where we want to use as new Covid-19 treatment areas or quarantine areas,” he said during a press conference that was restricted to a handful of selected media.

Chong added that the task force will work with “external experts” when making decisions.

They will also engage the economic sector, such as employers, to implement a system that promotes early identification of positive cases.

“We must make sure they have a system of identifying those cases who fall ill. We don’t want people coming in late to our healthcare system.

“If they come in early, we can treat them. If they come in late, we can't.

“So they must take more responsibility for this,” he said.

Klang Valley rescue plan

Also at the broadcasted press conference was Health Ministry secretary-general

Mohd Shafiq Abdullah, who said the ministry applied for RM1.2 billion in extra funding.

It also wants to mobilise more than 6,500 healthcare workers into Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Negeri Sembilan.

“We have asked for permission to immediately add 1,190 healthcare workers in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Negeri Sembilan. We have already mobilised 417 healthcare workers from other states to these areas.

“Next, we will add more or less 5,000 officers - medical officers, nurses, assistant medical officers, and others - to support service delivery in the Klang Valley and Negeri Sembilan,” he said.

“The ministry has also applied for an additional RM1.2 billion budget from the Finance Ministry to cover operations as we face Covid-19,” he added.

Health Minister Dr Adham Baba announced a second slew of reinforcements for Klang Valley hospitals, just six days after the first:

- 365 more beds for Selangor hospitals and 334 more beds for Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya hospitals. Work with three teaching hospitals to

- bring the total Klang Valley bed capacity to 5,000.
- 105 more emergency department beds, especially in Selangor.
- 69 more ICU beds in Selangor, 27 more ICU beds for Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya.
- Turn Malaysia Agro Exposition Park Serdang (Maeps) into a full hospital for Category 3 and Category 4 patients. 1,000 more oxygen tanks plus 1,000 more oxygen concentrators will be added.
- 151 additional beds and 15 more ventilators for Klang's Tengku Ampuan Rahimah Hospital (HTAR)
- Decant non-Covid patients from Klang Valley public hospitals to private hospitals

CAC concerns

Adham also addressed concerns on congested Covid-19 Assessment Centres (CACs).

He told the press conference that all CACs will need to be open every day, not just on weekdays.

“The ministry has already added more officers and this will continue.

“Taking into account the number of patients who come forward with breathing problems, CACs will also be equipped with temporary oxygen requirements while patients wait to be referred to Maeps or hospitals,” he added.

Selangor Health director Dr Sha’ari Ngadiman also announced improvements for the Stadium Malawati CAC, including more personnel and an extra lane for discharged patients with “release orders”.

He further said that the Taman Sri Andalas CAC will be better managed to reduce anxieties and the risk of cross-infection.

The ministry will check on the centre over the next two weeks before reviewing if the CAC needs to be relocated from the housing area where it currently stands.

“We decided to cordon off the CAC area from the community and added officers to control the crowd. We have also put up tents and placed chairs.

“If this CAC is not found to be working well, we may relocate it. We will be reviewing it over the next two weeks,” he said.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd

Source: <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/582918>