

'No' to pregnancy test on NS trainees
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Women, Family and Community Development Minister Shahrizat Abdul Jalil said today the ministry is against conducting pregnancy tests as a requirement for female National Service (NS) trainees.

She said this was because there were issues of privacy involved, as a matter of policy.

At such, she urged the National Service Council to reconsider the ministry's proposal to introduce reproductive health module in the NS curriculum.

She pointed out that under the current law, any procedures that involved children under the age of 18 would require parental consent.

"I'm very concerned for the well-being of women and children.

"It is unfortunate that the young woman had given birth under the given circumstances," she said in a statement today in response to a news report that an 18-year-old NS trainee had given birth in the toilet at Camp Ovai in Papar, Sabah.

Following the incident, the NS Council had proposed to make the pregnancy test compulsory for future female participants.

Shahrizat said the ministry would also continue to advocate the view that educating the young on reproductive and social health was paramount to impart knowledge on healthy relationships and avoid teenage pregnancies.

She said the proposal to introduce the module was initially proposed in 2008 and was approved by the defence minister.

- Bernama

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