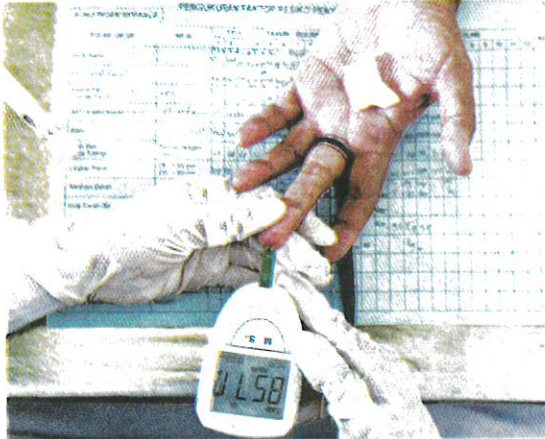


AKHBAR : KOSMO
MUKA SURAT : 14
RUANGAN : NEGARA

Penduduk Bentong rekodkan pesakit darah tinggi paling ramai di Pahang

Ramai orang Pekan ada diabetes



PENGESANAN awal penyakit kencing manis boleh menyelamatkan kaki penghidapnya dipotong. - GAMBAR HIASAN

Oleh **ABDUL RASHID
ABDUL RAHMAN**

KUANTAN - Jabatan Kesihatan Pahang mendedahkan lebih 565,000 individu terutama di daerah Bentong dan Pekan tidak mengetahui mereka sebenarnya menghidap penyakit diabetes dan darah tinggi.

Pengarahnya, Datuk Dr. Rusdi Abd. Rahman berkata, pecahan daripada jumlah itu menyaksikan seramai 262,249 individu menghidap diabetes, manakala tekanan darah tinggi pula seramai 303,347.

Katanya, keadaan itu sangat membimbangkan kerana masih ramai yang dikesan tidak mengetahui status penyakit kencing manis dan darah tinggi yang dihidapi mereka ketika ini.

"Selain itu, seramai 165,213 individu tidak tahu status penyakit

kencing manis yang mereka alami, manakala 148,521 tidak tahu mereka menghidap tekanan darah tinggi.

"Risiko lewat mendapatkan rawatan akan mengakibatkan mereka berdepan dengan kerosakan mata, buah pinggang, saraf, jangkitan teruk pada luka di kaki yang akan menyebabkan ia dipotong, strok, angin ahmar dan jantung," katanya.

Menurut Rusdi, Tinjauan Kebangsaan Kesihatan Morbiditi tidak berjangkit itu masih lagi tinggi dan membimbangkan.

Tambahnya, Bentong merekodkan pesakit tekanan darah tinggi terbanyak, manakala ramai menghidap kencing manis di Pekan.

"Mereka yang tidak mengetahui menghidap penyakit itu juga membimbangkan. Mereka hanya

tahu selepas diperiksa di klinik atau hospital dan ia agak terlambat," katanya.

Dalam pada itu, beliau berkata, pihaknya akan terus komited untuk memastikan kawalan pencegahan penyakit seperti diabetes dan tekanan darah tinggi ini sentiasa berada pada tahap optima.

"Strategi adalah berfokus kepada meningkatkan saringan pra-penyakit melalui inisiatif saringan kesihatan kebangsaan dan memperluaskan aktiviti kawalan kesihatan sendiri melalui sukarelawan MyChampion yang menjadi nadi penggerak kepada komuniti.

"Selain itu melalui pementauan dan pengesanan awal komplikasi penyakit diabetes dan hipertensi bagi mengurangkan kadar kematian akibat penyakit tidak berjangkit," ujarnya.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

6

Utusan Malaysia
SELASA • 23 APRIL 2024

Dalam Negeri

Tubuh Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Kesihatan dibentang ke Kabinet

Oleh **MOHD. HUSNI MOHD. NOOR**
utusannews@mediamula.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Cadangan dan mekanisme penubuhan Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Kesihatan kini dalam peringkat penelitian akhir sebelum dibentangkan kepada Kabinet dalam masa terdekat.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr. Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, perkara itu perlu dirujuk kepada

Kabinet terlebih dahulu sama ada menerusi nota Kabinet atau memorandum Jemaah Menteri.

“Saya harap dalam waktu terdekat kita akan dapat umum perkara ini,” katanya ketika ditemui selepas melancarkan Laporan Tahunan Clinical Research Malaysia (CRM) 2023 di sini, semalam.

Katanya, cadangan penubuhan suruhanjaya itu telah diangkat sebagai satu pembaharuan dalam manifesto pilihan raya

umum lalu.

Dr. Dzulkefly berkata, cadangan itu pastinya akan direalisasikan kerana ia antara perkara yang disebut dalam manifesto.

“Bagaimanapun, butiran dan mekanisme penubuhannya tidak dapat didedahkan buat masa ini,” katanya.

Cadangan penubuhan suruhanjaya itu pernah dicetuskan Gerakan Hartal Doktor Kontrak (HDK) tahun lalu sebagai satu usaha menangani isu berkaitan

skim perkhidmatan petugas kesihatan terutamanya doktor.

Malah, bekas Menteri Kesihatan, Dr. Zaliha Mustafa sebelum ini pernah memaklumkan, kerangka suruhanjaya itu akan dibangunkan termasuk struktur tadbir urus dan pembentukan pelbagai jawatankuasa dinamakan kumpulan kerja teknikal.

Cadangan penubuhan suruhanjaya itu penting kerana ia sebahagian daripada manifesto

Pakatan Harapan (PH), malah dianggap platform terbaik memperkasakan kebajikan dan jaminan kerjaya untuk staf kesihatan kontrak di Malaysia.

Penubuhan segera suruhanjaya itu juga penting bagi mengengkang pengaliran keluar “insan kesihatan” terbaik negara justeru, sektor perkhidmatan kesihatan ini harus dipisahkan daripada Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Awam dan Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA
MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

Gas sulfur tinggi ancam kesihatan penduduk Asia Tenggara

PETALING JAYA: Gas sulfur dioksida tinggi terbentuk daripada letusan Gunung Ruang yang bergerak melalui atmosfera rantau Asia Tenggara membawa kesan buruk kepada kesihatan manusia selain merosakkan harta benda serta ekosistem.

Bercakap kepada *Utusan Malaysia*, Pengerusi Jabatan Sains Bumi dan Alam Sekitar, Fakulti Sains dan Teknologi, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Profesor Dr. Mohd Talib Latif berkata, letusan gunung berapi seperti ini biasanya memiliki kesan jangka panjang terhadap ekosistem dan iklim dan mempengaruhi perubahan iklim berdasarkan skala letusan tersebut.

Menurutnya, bagi pesakit yang mempunyai masalah pernafasan, pergerakan keluar ru-

mah juga harus terbatasi mengikut keperluan.

"Langkah berjaga-jaga harus dilakukan melalui pemantauan pergerakan arah angin ke sesuatu kawasan," katanya.

Dalam pada itu, pakar meteorologi, Profesor Datuk Dr. Azizan Abu Samah berkata, di Sabah ketika ini, arah angin berada pada aras 13 hingga 15 kilometer.

"Arah angin ini 'membawa debu dari gunung meletus ke arah utara Borneo Sabah dan disebabkan itu laluan terbang yang berisiko terkena debu Gunung Ruang.

"Kesimpulannya, hanya laluan penerbangan sahaja yang akan terjejas dengan debu Gunung Ruang," katanya ketika dihubungi.

Mengulas lanjut, Azizan

berkata, tiada sistem teknologi yang boleh digunakan untuk mengatasi perkara itu, namun orang ramai perlu menyesuaikan diri dengan keadaan tersebut.

"Debu Gunung Ruang berkait dengan letupan yang tidak boleh dihentikan serta aliran udara juga tidak boleh diubah.

"Oleh itu, kita perlu memantau dan juga melakukan ramalan arah angin serta bagaimana debu akan dibawa oleh angin tersebut," katanya.

Antara langkah yang wajar dilakukan adalah mengelak kawasan berdebu tinggi dan berbahaya pada pesawat serta menukar laluan penerbangan atau jadual penerbangan yang mengurangkan risiko merentasi kawasan debu tebal.

AKHBAR : NEW STRAITS TIMES
 MUKA SURAT : 13
 RUANGAN : LETTERS

S'PORE VAPING BAN SHOWS LIMITATIONS

MALAYSIANS know Singapore as a no-nonsense island state with strict controls on everything, from chewing gum to drugs.

So it came as a surprise that the republic is unable to contain a modern-day scourge: electronic cigarettes.

Singapore's *Straits Times* reported on April 3 that despite strict laws banning vaping since 2018, illicit devices still found their way into the republic — with the purchase, use or possession of e-cigarettes surging to 7,900 cases in 2023.

This should be a wake-up call for Malaysia, which is many times larger than Singapore and has a more porous border. On top of that, we have a penchant for finding legal loopholes.

The Singapore experience should teach us that blanket bans — as advocated by some anti-tobacco activists — do not work.

Now that the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2023 has been gazetted, we need to be smart about controlling smoking.

It is imperative that we acknowledge the evolving landscape of tobacco consumption and smoking habits.

One aspect is to discern between conventional cigarettes, vaping devices and heated tobacco prod-

ucts, and approach regulation with nuance and balance.

Conventional cigarettes have long been recognised as the primary driver of tobacco-related health issues. However, with the emergence of vaping devices, we are witnessing a shift in smoking habits.

Vaping involves inhaling aerosolised vapour produced by heating a liquid solution, which may contain nicotine and flavourings. While vaping avoids combustion and thus reduces exposure to certain toxins, concerns persist regarding its long-term health effects and appeal to young people.

Similarly, heated tobacco products offer an alternative method of tobacco consumption.

These products heat tobacco rather than burning it, resulting in an aerosol containing nicotine with significantly reduced levels of harmful chemicals.

Despite that, questions remain regarding the long-term health implications of heated tobacco use.

Thus, our government faces the challenge of formulating tobacco control policies that protect public health while acknowledging the complexities of different smoking products.

While bans may seem like a sim-

ple solution, the Singapore experience shows that they risk driving consumers towards illicit markets or less regulated alternatives, potentially exacerbating rather than mitigating health risks.

We must recognise the limitations of blanket bans in addressing complex behavioural patterns. Instead, a balanced approach that promotes harm reduction and encourages smokers to transition towards less harmful alternatives should be taken.

This could involve enforcing strict regulations to ensure the safety and quality of vaping and heated tobacco products, restricting marketing practices that target young people, and providing comprehensive education on the risks and benefits of different smoking products.

By adopting such an approach, we can safeguard public health while respecting individual choices and promoting alternatives to traditional smoking.

Policymakers must recognise the nuances of smoking habits and prioritise evidence-based strategies that will address the complex challenges posed by smoking in our society.

AHMAD DAHLAN SHUKRI
Kota Damansara, Selangor

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 5
RUANGAN : NATION

Eyes on psychosocial pandemic

Experts: Youth's mental wellbeing requires transformation of cities and social life

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Youth Mental Health Index can be a vital tool for monitoring the "psychosocial health" of youth on a periodic basis, say experts.

Consultant paediatrician Datuk Dr Amar Singh HSS said the mental health problem faced by youth is not peculiar to Malaysia but has been observed worldwide.

"It might be better to move from calling this a 'mental health' problem to a 'psychosocial' problem. We can only expect it to worsen over time unless we act decisively to improve the situation for our youth," he said.

The index, he said, is vital as a critical tool or guide to periodically monitor the psychosocial health of Malaysian youth.

Dr Amar was commenting on the findings of the Malaysian Youth Index 2023 (MyMHI'23) launched yesterday. It covers

seven domains, namely lifestyle, surrounding environment, personal characteristics, life experiences, social support, coping mechanism, and healthy mind.

"MyMHI'23 overall rating was 71.9, from close to 6,000 participants, and shows us that Malaysian youth, as a whole, face a moderate risk of mental health issues.

"We would appreciate disaggregated data to see the index by social class, geographical location, ethnicity and gender," he said.

Of the domains, the worst scoring areas were "surrounding environment" (65.5), "healthy mind" (66.1) and "social support" (68.3), he noted.

"This data suggests that youth find the environment not very supportive, especially the physical environment and social expectations, are receiving inadequate

support from family, significant others and experts, and many are experiencing some degree of anxiety or depression," he added.

While acknowledging that there are good recommendations in the report, Dr Amar said to initiate a meaningful and real action plan, it is important to understand the reasons behind this global growing "psychosocial" pandemic.

"The reasons are complex and the action plan needs to call for long-term prevention via a transformation of cities and social life.

"We require meaningful connections and relationships that are not screen-based, and numerous city-based green lungs for families to hang out and find each other.

"We need to change the focus of society on what constitutes suc-

cess - relationships, and not achievements, acquisition, ability or fame.

"As we work on prevention, parents need to invest more time in listening to their children, and teachers must be aware of what is happening to the children they are teaching," he added.

Aside from that, Dr Amar said the government must invest in the expansion of psychosocial services for adolescents nationwide with targeted federal funding.

Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh, a health economics and public health specialist with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, said the study serves as a valuable early indication of potential mental health problems among Malaysian youth.

She pointed to another survey that was conducted in 2019 that had revealed that some 424,000

children in Malaysia had mental health problems, with one in eight adolescents aged 10 to 19 estimated to have a mental disorder.

"It's crucial to continue addressing mental health challenges and providing support to those in need and from low-income families with conflicts," she said.

However, Assoc Prof Dr Anasuya Jegathevi Jegathesan, dean of the Psychology and Social Sciences Faculty of University of Cyberjaya, said the research had not identified the actual groups where support was lacking and at actual risk.

"The report as a snapshot fails to show where effort should be put in, what groups would benefit from what kind of interventions and who are the most endangered," she said, adding that more clarity is needed on the data.

Tackling mental health crisis needs collective effort, says Yeoh

PUTRAJAYA: It takes ministries working together to tackle mental health issues among youth, says Hannah Yeoh.

With new research indicating that young Malaysians face potential mental health problems, the Youth and Sports Minister said they need more recreational activities to improve their mental wellbeing.

While the ministry's own Rakan Muda programme provides some respite for the youth, Yeoh said other ministries could use the latest findings to offer solutions.

"When you look at the coping mechanism point (from the report), there are four methods of how youth manage stress - leisure activities, spending time with family and friends, worship or spiritual activities and outdoor activities.



Minds matter: Yeoh giving her speech at the launching of Malaysian Youth Mental Health Index 2023 in Putrajaya. - FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

"I am happy that all this correlates with the 10 Rakan Muda activities that address the needs of today's youth such as Rakan Litar (racing) and Rakan Digital," she said during her speech at the launch of the Malaysian Youth Mental Health Index 2023 (MyMHI'23) report at a hotel

here yesterday.

Produced by the Institute for Youth Research Malaysia (Iyres) and United Nations Children's Fund, the report gave Malaysia a score of 71.91 - a moderately satisfactory level that serves as an early indication of potential mental health problems among

Malaysian youth.

The MyMHI'23, which involved 5,867 respondents, covered seven domains - lifestyle, surrounding environment, personal characteristics, life experiences, social support, coping mechanism, and healthy mind - and supported by 28 indicators.

Yeoh said MyMHI'23 will be presented to the Cabinet to ensure that more ministries are involved in tackling mental health issues among youth.

She said Orang Asli youth scored the lowest in the index, adding that it is pertinent for an engagement session with the related ministries to acknowledge such findings.

"We also need to engage with the National Unity Ministry for it to know what kind of engagement it can do.

"Also, the Housing Ministry (under the Local Government Development Ministry), for example, would know how to provide better space for recreational activities as some PPR (People's Housing Programme) projects lack such areas for the purpose," she added.

Yeoh also suggested that the Health Ministry's Mentari mental health outreach programme be made available at shopping malls instead of just hospitals to enable better access and to remove the stigma among youth of seeking help from experts and specialists.



Survey: Majority of Malaysian youth have got the blues

PETALING JAYA: Six in 10 Malaysian youth aged between 15 and 30 years had mild to severe depressive symptoms, the latest nationwide survey shows.

On the bright side, the results suggested that overall quality of life experiences among Malaysian youth was "satisfactory".

The research was part of the Malaysian Youth Mental Health Index 2023 (MyMHI'23), which was conducted by the Institute for Youth Research Malaysia (Iyres) and United Nations Children's Fund from October to November 2022 and March to April 2023, featuring 5,867 respondents.

It covered seven domains - lifestyle, surrounding environment, personal characteristics, life experiences, social support, coping mechanism and healthy mind - and supported by 28 indicators.

The findings also noted that three in 10 had moderate to severe anxiety symptoms while one in 10 suffered from high stress.

"A score of 71.91 indicates that the youth's mental health is rated as moderately satisfactory," the

report noted on the overall mental health score.

A moderately satisfactory mental health level could serve as a valuable early indication of potential mental health problems, it added.

It suggested that there were some stressors, especially those related to the domains of surrounding environment, social support and healthy mind.

"If left unaddressed, these could lead to more serious mental health concerns among Malaysian youth," it said.

The MyMHI'23 scoring ranged from 0 to 100, with the lowest possible being 0 and the highest possible 100. The higher the score, the lower the risk of youth facing mental health issues.

Conversely, the lower the score, the greater the risk of youth facing mental health issues.

On the lifestyle domain, the respondents registered a moderately satisfactory score of 71.44, whereby many youth were trying to maintain a relatively balanced lifestyle which benefited their mental health.

On the surrounding environment, they scored 65.46.

"It indicates that while there may be certain supportive aspects, there are also potential stressors and challenges that could impact the mental health and well-being of Malaysian youth," the report explained.

On the personal characteristics domain, these youth scored 71.65, suggesting that many Malaysian youth possessed valuable traits that enabled them to overcome multiple life challenges, thus boosting resilience and fostering positive mental health and well-being.

The youth surveyed scored 88.51 for life experiences.

"This suggests that overall quality of life experiences among Malaysian youth is deemed satisfactory.

"The majority of Malaysian youth are unlikely to experience negative events in their lives such as bullying and abuse," it said.

The young people, however, were receiving inadequate emotional, practical and informational support from family, friends,

significant others, and experts, thus scoring 68.29 on the social support domain, the report said.

The respondents also scored 71.92 for coping mechanism, with engaging in leisure activities (93.57%), spending time with family and friends (89.80%), engaging in worship or spiritual practices (87.01%), and spending time on outdoors activities (86.66%) being the top four stress management strategies.

As for healthy mind, the respondents scored 66.10, which indicated that youth in Malaysia were at moderate risk of facing emotional disturbance or disruptive feelings.

Of the youth surveyed, about 52.71% had mild anxiety; 30.99% minimal anxiety; 45.35% mild depression; and 14.37% minimal to no depression.

When it came to ethnicity, Orang Asli scored the lowest with 62.48, followed by Indians (70.05), others (70.99), bumiputra Sabah (71.04), Malay (71.84), Chinese (72.91) and bumiputra Sarawak (73.37).

The survey also stated that in 2020, one in 10 youth had report-

ed suicidal tendencies - in the form of thoughts, plans and attempts.

It added that 953 people had tendencies to commit suicide in 2019 and the number increased to 2,119 in 2020.

The report, launched by Youth and Sports Minister Hannah Yeoh in Putrajaya yesterday, also identified intervention measures to improve youth mental health.

It suggested creating less crowded living spaces with adequate basic facilities to promote a stress-free environment; increasing youth access to mental health services; and promoting a healthy lifestyle, including providing a healthy diet and physical regimen; among others.

The full MyMHI'23 report can be downloaded from <https://www.iyres.gov.my/penyelidikan/senarai-penyelidikan>.



AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 13
RUANGAN : NATION

Clearing the air on Cardiothoracic Parallel Pathway issues

PETALING JAYA: The cardiothoracic parallel pathway does not use the Joint Surgical Colleges Fellowship Examination (JSCFE) Cardiothoracic examination or the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS) international qualification, as quoted by some opponents, says the Malaysian Association for Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery (MATCVS). The association's executive council said in a statement yesterday that it uses "a totally unrelated and different examination and qualification".

Therefore, MATCVS has told opponents of the parallel pathway to quit public criticisms after two ministers announced plans to move forward with amendments to the Medical Act 1971.

The body, which has been at the forefront of pushing for recognition of the cardiothoracic surgery parallel pathway programme,

said it would abide by Higher Education Minister Zambry Abdul Kadir's call for a "ceasefire" in the parallel pathway conflict.

"We fully agree with this and humbly request all parties with constructive criticisms of the Cardiothoracic Parallel Pathway training to engage with us directly for further information, clarification and discussion, and avoid further unnecessary and often inaccurate and wrong negative public statements that are causing confusion to both the medical profession and the public.

"The Cardiothoracic Parallel Pathway training and curriculum are quality assured by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) and follow the same standards and requirements as the Malaysian National Postgraduate Medical Curriculum (NPMC) for Cardiothoracic Surgery and the UK Intercollegiate Surgical Curri-

culum for Cardiothoracic Surgery regulated by the UK General Medical Council (GMC).

"The exit examination is the RCSEd Joint Specialty Fellowship (JSF) examination in Cardiothoracic Surgery. This examination follows the same standards and format as the Intercollegiate Specialty Board examination conducted in the United Kingdom and regulated by the GMC.

"This is the same and the only Cardiothoracic exit examination and qualification used in Hong Kong and Singapore, fully recognised by both countries, and also in Brunei.

"The qualification awarded is the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (FRCS Ed) in Cardiothoracic Surgery and is recognised by the UK General Medical Council (GMC) and also by Singapore, Hong Kong and Brunei.

"Graduates of the Cardiothoracic Parallel Pathway training have received confirmation from the GMC that they are eligible for specialist registration in the United Kingdom with this qualification," the MATCVS said.

It added that the Health director-general must remain as the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) president.

The training of specialists through the parallel pathway is a government initiative set up by the Health Ministry in 2014, having received the approval of the then health minister and relevant competent authorities at the time, to increase the number of specialists in the country, especially in public hospitals.

The training and qualifications were approved and recognised by the government and are quality assured by the Royal Colleges.

Earlier this month, four gradu-

ates from the parallel pathway training with the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in cardiothoracic surgery took legal action against the MMC for refusing to register them on the National Specialist Register (NSR).

This was the third known lawsuit against the MMC's rejection of NSR specialist registration applications, in which judicial review applications were filed to legally challenge the independent regulatory body's recent non-recognition of certain specialist training programmes.

The other two lawsuits were filed by a neurosurgeon with FRCS Ireland in neurosurgery and six pathology graduates in medical genetics from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), a local university.

The High Court has granted leave for both judicial review applications.