

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

BH MIS 9 NASIONAL 13/2/2025 (KHAMIS)

Pendengaran awam PAC bantu tambah baik sistem kesihatan negara

Kuala Lumpur: Pendengaran awam oleh Jawatankuasa Kira-Kira Wang Negara (PAC) bagi prosiding isu peningkatan bayaran premium insurans kesihatan dan caj hospital swasta dapat membantu penyelesaian isu kesesakan pesakit di hospital kerajaan.

Ahli PAC yang juga Ahli Parlimen Bayan Baru, Sim Tze Tzin, berkata pembabitan ramai ahli masyarakat, termasuk wakil pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO) akan memberi input kepada petugas agensi bertanggungjawab membuat penambahbaikan terhadap sistem kesihatan negara.

“Cadangan kenaikan harga insurans dan caj hospital swasta mendapat reaksi sangat meluas daripada rakyat. Ini menjadi cetus kepada kami membuka prosiding berkaitan isu ini. PAC dan Parlimen berhasrat merakamkan Parlimen.

“Ta julung kali dilaksanakan untuk mendapatkan maklum balas masyarakat. Dahulu mereka boleh berkongsi di media sosial. Kini mereka boleh tampil ke depan sebab prosiding ini terbuka kepada semua. Mereka ada hak dan boleh memberi cadangan bernas untuk memperbaharui sistem kesihatan swasta kita.

“Biarpun kita mahu reformasi sistem kesihatan swasta, ini akan memberi kebaikan juga kepada hospital kerajaan, khususnya dalam mengatasi masalah kesesakan pesakit di hospital kerajaan,” katanya pada sidang media di

Parlimen semalam.

Yang turut hadir, Pengerusi PAC, Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin.

PAC dalam kenyataan minggu lalu memaklumkan sesi pendengaran awam pertama itu akan diadakan di Bukit Jambul, Pulau Pinang, antara jam 9 pagi hingga 12 tengah hari pada 14 Februari ini.

Sesi kedua akan diadakan di Blok Utama Parlimen di ibu negara dari jam 9 pagi hingga 12 tengah hari, pada 21 Februari.

Sementara itu, Mas Ermieyati berkata, hasil prosiding itu akan dimuatkan dalam laporan PAC.

“Apa juga maklum balas, akan kita masukkan dalam laporan PAC dan kita mahu ia dijadikan rujukan. Wakil kementerian dan agensi juga akan hadir untuk mendapatkan maklum balas semua,” katanya.

Pada Disember tahun lalu, Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) meminta se-

mula syarikat insurans dan takaful yang menawarkan produk insurans/takaful perubatan dan kesihatan melaksanakan pelarasan premium secara pengagihan sekurang-kurangnya tiga tahun berkuat kuasa hingga akhir 2026, bagi mengurangkan beban pemegang polisi yang mengalami peningkatan kenaikan premium.

Bulan lalu, Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, menegaskan kerajaan tidak akan bertolak ansur sekiranya premium insurans kesihatan dinaikkan tanpa alasan munasabah.



Sim Tze Tzin

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
MUKA SURAT : 9
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

SINAR HARIAN MIS 9 NASIONAL 13/2/2025 (KHAMIS)

Sesi pendengaran awam pertama PAC

Kumpul maklum balas awam isu peningkatan bayaran premium insurans kesihatan, caj hospital swasta

Oleh **NURUL HUDA HUSAIN**
KUALA LUMPUR

Prosiding Peningkatan Bayaran Premium Insurans Kesihatan dan Takaful, Caj Hospital Swasta dan Impak Kepada Kesihatan Awam di bawah Kementerian Kewangan, Kementerian Kesihatan dan Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) merupakan sesi pendengaran awam pertama dilaksanakan Jawatankuasa Kira-Kira Wang Negara (PAC).

Pengerusi PAC, Datuk Mas

Ermieyati Samsudin berkata, sesi yang diadakan di dua lokasi dan tarikh berbeza itu akan turut disertai oleh Kementerian dan agensi yang berkaitan.

"Ini adalah kali pertama dan tidak pernah dibuat pendengaran awam. Jadi apa sahaja maklum balas yang kita dapat dalam pendengaran ini akan dimasukkan dalam sebahagian daripada laporan PAC dan dijadikan sebagai rujukan.

"Sesi pendengaran awam ini akan dikendalikan oleh Ahli Parlimen Bayan Baru, Sim Tze Tzin sebagai moderator. Sejak pendaftaran sesi ini dibuka minggu lalu, seramai 243 responden telah mendaftar," katanya dalam sidang akhbar di Parlimen pada Rabu.

PAC dalam kenyataan sebelum ini memaklumkan sesi pertama akan diadakan di AC Marriott Hotel, Bukit Jambul Pulau Pinang pada 14 Februari bermula jam 9 pagi hingga 12 tengah hari manakala sesi kedua dijadualkan di Dewan Banquet,



Mas Ermieyati (empat dari kiri) ketika sidang akhbar di Parlimen pada Rabu.

Blok Utama Parlimen Malaysia di ibu negara pada 21 Februari depan bermula jam 9 pagi hingga 12 tengah hari.

Sementara itu, Tze Tzin berkata, pendengaran awam itu dibuat susulan isu berkenaan mendapat reaksi meluas masyarakat.

"Selepas ini mereka yang se-

ring membuat aduan di media sosial boleh tampil ke depan untuk ceritakan sendiri dan sesi pendengaran awam ini terbuka kepada semua," jelasnya.

Pada Disember lepas, BNM meminta semua syarikat insurans dan takaful yang menawarkan produk insurans, takaful perubatan dan kesihatan (MHIT)

melaksanakan pelarasan premium secara pengagihan sekurang-kurangnya selama tiga tahun sehingga akhir 2026.

Bulan lalu, Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim menegaskan kerajaan tidak akan bertolak ansur sekiranya premium insurans kesihatan dinaikkan tanpa alasan munasabah.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA

MUKA SURAT : 4

RUANGAN : D/NEGERI

UTUSAN MALAYSIA MIS 4 D/NEGERI 13/2/2025 (KHAMIS)

PAC adakan sesi pendengaran awam isu insurans kesihatan, caj perubatan

KUALA LUMPUR: Jawatankuasa Kira-Kira Wang Negara (PAC) akan mengadakan sesi pendengaran awam buat pertama kali bagi membincangkan isu peningkatan kadar premium insurans kesihatan, takaful, serta caj perubatan hospital swasta dan kerajaan.

Pengerusinya, Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin berkata, sesi itu akan dikendalikan oleh Ahli Parlimen Bayan Baru, Sim Tze

Tzin dan semua maklum balas serta perbincangan yang diterima akan dimasukkan ke dalam laporan PAC sebelum dibentangkan di Parlimen.

“PAC bersikap terbuka mendengar pandangan daripada semua pihak, termasuk wakil pengguna, agensi swasta dan persatuan yang terlibat dalam sektor kesihatan dan insurans,” katanya dalam sidang akhbar di

Parlimen, semalam.

Menurut Mas Ermieyati, sesi pendengaran awam tersebut diadakan secara tertutup pada 14 Februari di Pulau Pinang dan 21 Februari di Dewan Banquet Parlimen.

“Kita hanya bantu kerajaan, maka itu kita adakan sesi pendengaran ini, dan kumpulkan segala maklum balas untuk dibentangkan nanti ke Parlimen,” katanya.

AKHBAR : THE STAR
MUKA SURAT : 6
RUANGAN : NATION

6 Nation

THE STAR PG 6 13/2/2025 (THURSDAY)

THE STAR, THURSDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2025

Reports by GERARD GIMINO, HO JIA WEN, RAGANANTHINI VETHASALAM and EMALIN ZALANI

SARMs – a dangerous path to fitness

Claimed to be 'less harmful' than steroids, its use increases risk of heart attack

PETALING JAYA: It's two months into the new year and many are continuing to pursue their fitness goals to improve their health and bulk-up their physiques.

The process, which can be challenging and time-consuming, however, has tempted some to cut corners with some gym rats turning to Selective Androgen Receptor Modulators, otherwise known as SARMs.

Often marketed by sellers as a "less harmful" alternative compared to anabolic steroids, experts, however, warn that the product is far from harmless.

Checks on several social media and e-commerce platforms found SARMs marketed and sold openly.

They are available in capsule form, with sellers even giving instructions on how it should be consumed and promoting it as "necessary" to bulk up.

Sellers also claim the product "increases muscle mass, helps in weight gain and promotes strength for heavy workout, an appetite stimulant and fastens the recovery process".

The bottles and packets containing the capsules are sold from RM130 to RM300, depending on the type of drug and quantity.

Checks on the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency website found that variants of the

What are Selective Androgen Receptor Modulators (SARMs)?

- > Substances that are ingested like pills to stimulate specific tissue growth like muscle and bone.
- > Not approved for human use.
- > Prohibited at all times both in and out of competition under the 2025 Prohibited List World Anti-Doping Code.

Side effects

- Liver toxicity
- Hair loss and acne
- Affect heart health
- Increase the risk of heart attack and stroke
- Long-term effects still unknown

Source: US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) and the World Anti-Doping Agency

The Star graphics

product are unregistered, making them illegal to buy and sell.

SARMs are also listed as a banned substance under the Anti-Doping Agency Malaysia (Adamas) and the World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) prohibition list.

Consultant sports medicine physician Dr Arvin Raj Goonasegaran likened the use of SARMs

and other performance enhancing drugs (PED) to a "get rich quick" scheme.

"Being on a prolonged well planned diet with proper exercise programming is hard, hence using performance enhancers is a sought-after way to get to that end goal much quicker and easier, with a possible health trade-off,"

he said.

Among the common side effects of its usage are Hepatotoxicity (liver injury), yellow vision, spontaneous tendon ruptures and even cardiac ailments, Dr Arvin Raj said, referencing a 2023 systematic review on the recreational use of SARMs among healthy adults.

He expressed concern over the purity of the products, citing a 2017 study which found only 41% of SARMs sold online actually contained what was on the label.

"Is there a safe way to consume them? No, unless it is a medical necessity to take any of these hormones."

"Clinical treatment for hypogonadism is also different as these patients are treated for the lack of such hormones, and the sole aim of the treatment is to restore their physiological levels," he said.

Dr Arvin Raj said SARMs is a relatively newcomer to the scene and commonly marketed to have all the benefits as PEDs with minimal to no side effects.

"Hence, those wanting to try PEDs with 'minimal side effects' will fall for the SARMs trap."

"Not only is it used among competitive physique athletes but also recreationally by regular gym-goers looking to achieve a more muscular and leaner look," he

said, reiterating that SARMs is a PED.

Other PEDs include anabolic steroids that are a controlled substance and could only be purchased with a medical prescription.

He expressed further concerns over the sale of these products online.

"Even more worrying is how they can be purchased on e-commerce platforms easily," he said.

When contacted, a Health Ministry senior official said they will look into the matter.

Earlier this year, the Perak Health Department together with the Health Ministry's Pharmacy Enforcement division confiscated over RM2mil in unregistered bodybuilding supplements and cosmetics in a coordinated effort.

The operation, named Ops Pharma 2.0 and Ops Gudang, targeted the sale of unregistered body stimulants containing anabolic steroids and non-notified cosmetics sold online.

In March last year, the Selangor Health Department seized more than RM220,000 worth of bodybuilding products containing anabolic steroids.

In July last year, the Johor Health Department seized RM2.3mil worth of unregistered anabolic steroids in Ops Gym.

Fitness enthusiasts recall scary moments after taking SARMs

PETALING JAYA: Aaron (not his real name) had the ambitious goal of achieving a muscular physique during his university days and was willing to do "whatever it takes" to reach this.

After training for about three years, he felt disappointed about the slow progression and through research, found out about Selective Androgen Receptor Modulator (SARMs).

"I came across some videos online where SARMs supposedly gave the same results as steroids, minus the side effects. The offer was too tempting and I purchased it online," he said.

After about a week of consumption, however, Aaron woke up to

a shock one morning – he temporarily lost his eyesight.

"I was panicking as I could not see anything for about 15 minutes, but things went back to normal after that."

"I also experienced yellow vision before I had the eyesight scare," he said, recalling the incident about three years back.

"That was enough to stop me from using SARMs or any other substances. After the 'experiment', I learned a valuable lesson that the best way for progress is always naturally," he said.

A gym-goer who wanted to be known as Charlie also experienced a yellow tint in his vision after regularly consuming SARMs

for about eight weeks.

"Towards the end of this period, my vision was off and everything seemed yellow."

"After I stopped consuming it, everything went back to normal," he said, adding that the product was "promoted" to him by a fellow gym-goer who sold it in person.

Meanwhile, fitness enthusiast F. Hairul, 27, said performance-enhancing drug usage was the common chatter among his circle of gym buddies.

"It's a rather taboo topic and sellers only 'promote' it to those extremely close to them or want to get bigger quickly," he said.

Rachel Gan, honorary secretary of the Malaysian Community

Pharmacy Guild (MCPG) said e-commerce platforms should clamp down on the sale of SARMs and similar products.

She added that anabolic steroids are sold over the counter at some places although they are not allowed to.

Misuse could lead to increased risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis and more, she added.

Gan said some gym-goers tend to misuse anabolic steroids to get their ideal shape, but with their health at stake.

"Perhaps they are unsure of the side effects and the risk involved, and prioritise external looks instead," she said.

A pharmacist who spoke on condition of anonymity said these items are sometimes siphoned in from overseas when the sellers travel abroad.

It is then sold without approval from the Health Ministry's National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA).

"Some even go to the extent of faking the NPRA approval number or the items are not marketed as steroids to avoid any attention from authorities."

"Those who know what they are will buy it."

"If it is not online, they sell it in person at gyms," he said, adding that most consume it for vanity purposes.

AKHBAR : THE SUN DAILY
MUKA SURAT : 3
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

THE SUN DAILY M/S 3 NATIONAL 13/2/2025 (KHAMIS)

Rich foods feed obesity spike

BY DEEPALAKSHMI MANICKAM
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Famous for its delicious foods and desserts, Penang has gained a new name as Malaysia's "fat" state due to its obesity rate of 56.5%, which is above the national average of 54.4% as recently announced by Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

The state also recorded higher-than-average rates of high cholesterol (37.4%), high blood pressure (35.4%) and diabetes (20.5%), which reflects a growing number of non-communicable disease (NCD) cases as highlighted in the National Health and Morbidity Survey 2023.

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu Food Technology Programme lecturer Assoc Prof Dr Mohamad Khairi Mohd Zainol said Penang's famous *char kway teow*, *nasi kandar* and deep-fried street snacks are often calorie-dense and high in fat, sugar and salt.

"These dishes, typically prepared with refined carbohydrates and coconut milk (could) lead to excessive calorie intake and poor metabolic health.

"Reducing the oil and sugar content, opting for grilling over deep frying and incorporating more vegetables can make a big difference," he said, adding that healthier options do not have to

compromise on taste.

He also said vendors and home cooks can adopt alternative methods, such as steaming or air frying, while still preserving the distinct flavours that Penang is known for.

Mohamad Khairi said limited access to healthy food options in some areas, particularly among lower income groups, worsens the problem.

He suggested promoting affordable, nutritious meals at hawker centres and introducing government incentives for businesses offering healthier options.

"Food reformulation, such as using healthier oils or reducing portion sizes, can also cater to health conscious consumers."

He recommended introducing nutrition education in schools and communities through cooking workshops and awareness campaigns that highlight the benefits of balanced diets and stressed that the perception of healthy food being tasteless or expensive must be addressed to shift public habits.

Mohamad Khairi said preserving Penang's culinary heritage while promoting healthier lifestyles require collective action from residents, food vendors and policymakers so that future generations can still enjoy Penang's treasures while safeguarding their health.

Meanwhile, Malaysian Diabetes Educators Society president and Subang Jaya Medical Centre senior diabetes educator Yong Lai Mee said Penang's serious diabetes rate is closely linked to obesity.

She said excess fat, particularly visceral fat, plays a critical role in developing insulin resistance, which is a condition in which the body becomes less responsive to the biologic.

"This forces the pancreas to work harder to produce more insulin, eventually leading to pancreatic dysfunction, higher blood sugar levels and diabetes."

Yong emphasised that Penang's reputation as a food haven, coupled with sedentary lifestyles, significantly contribute to health issues.

An International Medical University study in 2021 showed food accessibility influences dietary patterns, leading to increased calorie intake from sugar and animal products.

"About 50% of Malaysians live sedentary lifestyles, further risking obesity and diabetes."

She said a lack of awareness is another pressing issue, with nearly 8% of diabetics in Penang unaware of their condition due to insufficient education on risks and symptoms.

"Some individuals do not experience symptoms, while others may avoid screening due to social stigma surrounding diabetes," she said, while recommending expansion of community-based health screenings to debunk misconceptions about the disease.

Yong said effective diabetes management requires empowering patients with knowledge as it is a serious condition in which self-management plays a crucial role, adding that Malaysia faces a shortage of trained diabetes educators, with only 2,000 of them catering to 3.9 million sufferers.

She called for a body to monitor and standardise credentials and qualifications to ensure high-quality education for patients, adding that as Malaysia is projected to be an aged nation by 2035, poorly controlled diabetes could pose a significant healthcare burden.

► Street fare with excessive coconut milk, sugar and carbohydrates leads to poor metabolic health, says expert