

Headline	HIV workers still losing jobs despite code of practice		
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HIV workers still losing jobs despite code of practice

KUALA LUMPUR: The Code of Practice on Prevention and Management of HIV/AIDS was introduced in 2001, but people suffering from the disease are still being discriminated against.

Many have lost their jobs when their ailment was discovered, according to a Malaysian Aids Council report.

“Stigmatisation of the disease overpowers the code of practice,” said MAC president Bakhtiar Talhah at a press conference to reveal contents of the report based on complaints the council had received which it investigated.

Discrimination at the workplace made up one-third of the 15 complaints documented in the HIV and Human Rights Mitigation Report 2015, he said, adding that he believed a lot more patients were suffering in silence.

Bakhtiar urged businesses and corporations to adopt the Code of Practice, saying: “Every single person living with HIV has a right to health and freedom from discrimination or any form of inhumane or degrading treatment.”

He called on HIV patients who had been discriminated against

to report their experience to MAC.

Bakhtiar said that some of the complaints received were from employees in the tourism, hospitality and entertainment industry who had their work terminated or were forced to resign or were demoted once they were known to have AIDS.

MAC policy manager Fifa Rahman said that some employees living with HIV/AIDS who had their work terminated in five-star hotels got their jobs back when their case was brought to the top management.

“Five-star hotels have strong anti-discrimination laws to protect their employees. So, those who had their work terminated got their jobs back when we took up their case,” she said.

Fifa said MAC was handling the case of a government doctor whose work was terminated after he was found to be HIV positive.

She said the Malaysian Medical Council has guidelines which allow HIV positive doctors to continue working as long as they take their medication and adhere to safety precautions when dealing with patients. - Bernama