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## Council: Decline in HIV cases in the country

**KOTA BARU:** The number of HIV cases in the country has drastically dropped since the Injection Tools and Needle exchange and the Methadone Replacement Therapy programmes were introduced in 2006.

Malaysian AIDS Council executive director Dr Ilias Adam Yee said the current rate of HIV infections was 11.69 per 100,000 people compared to 21.88 per 100,000 in 2006.

“When we introduced the programme, the number of new HIV cases dropped drastically since the highest number of HIV transmissions was through the sharing of injection tools and needles,” Dr Ilias said after attending a briefing in conjunction with the Harm Reduction International Media Field Trip here yesterday.

Dr Ilias said among the main objectives of the programme was

**We’ve distributed 5,153,578 needles to 83,608 clients registered with the association.**

Dr Ilias Adam Yee

to reduce the spread of HIV infections and other diseases through the blood, such as hepatitis.

“When we distribute the needles, we interact with the clients and build a rapport with them so that they can come back to seek treatment.

“We’ve distributed 5,153,578 needles to 83,608 clients registered with the association,” he added. — Bernama