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HIV/AIDS couples 'can marry'

But must heed Jakim advice

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KOTA BARU: Couples who test positive for HIV/AIDS can still get married as long as they follow procedures set by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (Jakim) including undergoing counselling with religious officials.

"We do not prohibit couples with HIV/AIDS from getting married but they must make sure they follow all the advice given by the health and religious officials," Jakim director-general Othman Mustapha said yesterday.

"This is important so that they will know the risks involved and what they might face in the future when they mar-

ry a person having such an illness."

He was speaking at a press conference after launching the state-level HIV manual facilitator training workshop here.

Othman said the Kelantan workshop was the third after those in Negri Sembilan and Labuan. The programme started last year with the help of the Health Ministry and the Malaysian AIDS Council.

"Since last year, we have distributed more than 10,000 sets of the workshop's manuals to several groups especially imam.

"These books, among others, contain guidelines and counselling instructions on how to handle and manage HIV/AIDS carriers."