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Govt aims for zero AIDS deaths

KUALA LUMPUR: The government remains committed to pursuing zero AIDS-related deaths, including expanding screening to detect and provide early treatment for HIV cases, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam.

He said among the measures taken was addressing vertical transmission, comprising the implementation of HIV screening and antiretroviral treatment for pregnant mothers, with infant antiretroviral prophylaxis treatment for newborns. Prophylaxis treatment is also effective in preventing other infections, including tuberculosis and pneumocystis pneumonia.

“Since the programme was implemented, the rate of pregnant women diagnosed with HIV is very low at 0.02 to 0.07 per cent. Babies infected with HIV through vertical transmission is less than two per cent. With this treatment, we have seen a decrease in deaths over the last five years,” he said in conjunction with World AIDS Day 2013 today.

He said the government planned to reduce new cases of HIV, at a rate of 11 per every 100,000 of the population, by 2015. **Bernama**