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RM32.5mil annually to treat aids patients

KUALA LUMPUR: The government allocates RM32.5mil annually to provide antiretroviral (ARV) treatment to Aids patients, parliament heard yesterday.

Health Deputy Minister Datuk Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin told Dewan Rakyat the treatment was part of a strategy to reduce death from Aids.

"With treatment, the patients' lifespan can be extended and they enjoy better quality of life. They can also work like healthy people," she said in reply to a question by Gobind Singh Deo (DAP-Puchong).

The treatment began in 2004 when the government took initiative to provide cheaper and quality generic medicine to Aids/HIV patients.

"The three-in-one ARV treatment was implemented extensively in 2009 to about 10,000 patients. It led to a decline in death cases from Aids/HIV," she said.

Rosnah said 180 family specialist doctors and other disease specialists were trained last year to treat Aids/HIV patients.

"It is our policy to inform family members of the cause of death. Opening of caskets is not allowed to stop because of the disease," she said when replying to a question by Datuk Seri Mojilip Bumburing (BN-Tuaran).

She added the government had no plans to provide Aids treatment at 1Malaysia clinics. – **Bernama**