

Headline	More HIV cases now through sexual transmission/ says Heng	Language	English
Date	25 Nov 2010	Page No	11
MediaTitle	New Sarawak Tribune	Article Size	107 cm²
Section	News	Color	Black/white
Journalist	N/A	ADValue	289
Frequency	Daily	PRValue	866
Circ / Read	46,471 / 164,773		



More HIV cases now through sexual transmission, says Heng

KUALA LUMPUR: Deputy Women, Family and Community Development Minister Heng Seai Kie said yesterday more people, especially women and girls, in the country were getting infected with HIV through sexual transmission instead of through injection as was the case previously.

Even though the number of people reportedly infected with HIV each year was much less than what it was five years ago, people had to realise that the trend or epidemic was changing through the years, she said.

She said this in her speech before launching a roundtable discussion

on the state of the Malaysian HIV and Aids Epidemic 2010, here.

The text of her speech was read out by National Population and Family Development Board Director-General Datuk Aminah Abdul Rahman.

The roundtable discussion, organised by the United Nations in Malaysia and attended by 100 senior government and non-government officials, decision-makers, academicians and activists, is aimed at providing a neutral and impartial platform to discuss the development and progress of the Malaysian HIV epidemic.

Sadly, Heng said, most of the

women and girls in Asia were infected with the virus through their husband or boyfriend who were already HIV-infected.

"The 2008 Report of the Commission on Aids in Asia states that men who have been infected due to IDU (injecting drug users) and unprotected sexual intercourse with sex workers and men who had sex with men would increasingly infect more women in the future," she said, adding that ignorance and apathy were also putting people at risk without mercy.

As such, she said, the ministry was taking the initiative to introduce the Reproductive Health and Social Education syllabus next year to all secondary schools nationwide.

"It (the syllabus) will enable our youths to protect themselves better against unwanted pregnancies, sexual abuse, sexually transmitted infections and HIV, and ensure that they are knowledgeable of their roles and responsibilities as men and women, boys and girls," Heng said.

However, there was a huge need for the society to also respond better to these challenges and to ensure that those who needed help were not left out, she added.

- Bernama