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Govt confident of reducing HIV cases: DG

GEORGE TOWN: The Government is confident of reducing incidence of HIV infections to 11 cases per 100,000 population before 2015, said Health director-general Datuk Dr Hasan Abdul Rahman.

He noted that beginning 2003, there was a consistent reduction of new HIV cases until it reached 12.8 cases per 100,000 population last year.

He said 1,570 new HIV cases were reported during the first six months of this year, which is

expected to reach 3,140 by year-end.

"This will bring the ratio to 11 cases per 100,000 population," added Dr Hasan.

The text of his speech was delivered by state health director Datuk Dr Teh Lei Choo at the Second National AIDS Conference here Monday.

Dr Hasan said nationwide, up till last year, 91,362 people were reported as HIV-positive, with 16,532 succumbing to the AIDS

stage, resulting in 14,298 deaths.

"This means there were 77,064 people still living with HIV at the end of 2010," he said, urging the public, especially those in high-risk groups, to undergo screening to reduce the spread of infections.

He said early detection had a positive impact in ensuring timely treatment, adding that preventive steps among couples and abstaining from high-risk behaviour would help reduce the cases, as well. - Bernama