

Headline	China orders hospitals to treat HIV AIDS patients		
MediaTitle	Daily Express (KK)		
Date	25 Nov 2012	Color	Black/white
Section	World	Circulation	30,557
Page No	16	Readership	97,836
Language	English	ArticleSize	142 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 293
Frequency	Daily (EM)	PR Value	RM 879



China orders hospitals to treat HIV/AIDS patients

BEIJING: China has banned health institutions from withholding care to people with HIV/AIDS after an outcry over a cancer patient with the disease who was denied treatment, state media reported.

The Ministry of Health issued a memo Friday ordering authorities to take steps to guarantee the right to medical treatment for people with the disease, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

Xinhua said the memo warned that violators will face harsh punishment, without elaborating.

The move comes after a 25-year-old lung cancer patient in Tianjin, a major port city southeast of Beijing, was recently denied care after his status as an HIV/AIDS was detected, Xinhua said.

The patient, identified by the pseudonym Xiaofeng, was later able to get surgery at another location after concealing his condition, the state-run China Daily reported.

The man's plight caused Vice Premier Li Keqiang—who last week took over the number two position in the ruling Communist Party's top decision-making body, and is tipped to become premier in March—to speak out on the issue.

Li on Wednesday called for proper medical treatment for people with the disease after he learned of the man's plight, China Daily said Friday.

Meng Lih, a Beijing AIDS patient, was quoted by the newspaper as saying he was rejected repeatedly when he sought treatment for kidney problems.

He said he had hidden his condition from doctors in order to receive treatment. "I have no way out," he told the paper. "Lie or die."

There were an estimated 780,000 people with HIV/AIDS in China at the end of last year, according to the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, out of the country's total population of about 1.3 billion. Chinese authorities have been credited with increasing access to HIV/AIDS drugs for patients, though widespread discrimination is still a problem. —AFP