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Indonesian housewives now most at risk of contracting HIV

JAKARTA: Housewives and children are now most at risk of contracting HIV in Indonesia, as compared to sex workers, local HIV/AIDS activists said.

Surabaya Aids Prevention Commission found that in the past two years there had been a growing trend in the number of housewives with HIV/AIDS.

To check the problem, Dr.Kartika of Surabaya Health Agency proposed the use of score cards to be distributed to pregnant mothers at community health centres, as a way to detect HIV/AIDS among housewives.

“For instance, (the score card includes) questions about their sexual behavior and their husbands’ job.

“If for example, the husband works as a inter-province driver and rarely comes home, we could consider them as potential. From there we will assess and give them counselling so that they will take a HIV/AIDS test,” Kartika was quoted as saying by English daily the Jakarta Globe, Saturday.

The report said the 2012 data showed that 1,542 people in Bogor were living with HIV and 949 were AIDS positive. The city recorded 65 deaths from the disease this year.

“Out of the total number of HIV and AIDS patients, 60 percent are housewives,” Edgar Suratman, head of the Bogor Regional HIV/AIDS Control Agency (BPAD) said.

Bogor chief counsellor on HIV/AIDS, Yusniar Ritonga meanwhile said although the city was conducting blood tests on pregnant women, many housewives refused the test because they consider it as taboo.

“The number who complied is less than 10 percent. Those who tested positive became hysterical and immediately pointed their fingers at their husbands,” Yusniar said. - Bernama