

Headline	Methadone replacement therapy reduces drug addiction cases		
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# Methadone replacement therapy reduces drug addiction cases

THE methadone replacement therapy has managed to reduce the number of drug addiction cases, including for heroin, from 21,981 in 2005 to 7,180 in 2012.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Hilmi Yahaya said the treatment had also resulted in reduced HIV infections through intravenous drug use from 66 per cent in 2005 to 29.5 per cent in 2012.

“Following the effectiveness of this programme, the ministry plans to continue with it and increase the number of treatment centres nationwide from time to time.

“There are now 333 methadone therapy clinics throughout the country, with 221 of them under the ministry, 44 under the National Anti-Drug Agency, 18 under the prison authorities

while the rest are private clinics,” he said in reply to a question from Senator Dr Syed Husin Ali in the Dewan Negara, here, yesterday.

Dr Hilmi said so far, there had been no reported death caused by methadone replacement therapy among heroin addicts in the country as assumed by some people.

He said the therapy had also not caused addiction to the substance (methadone); instead it helped addicts recover from heroin addiction.

“If there were, such cases were due to the action of addicts who thought they were ‘so smart’ by mixing methadone with other substances. This could affect their health and might even cause death,” he said.

— Bernama