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Malaysia targets to further reduce new HIV cases

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia targets to reduce new HIV infections from 21.7 cases for every 100,000 of the population in year 2000 to 11 cases per 100,000 people by the end of 2015.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr S. Subramaniam said this was in line with the current trend of declining HIV cases.

“Between January and September this year, 2,525 new HIV cases were reported. It is projected that by the year-end, there will be 3,367 new cases with the rate of infection at 11.2 for every 100,000 of the population.

“The rate shows a drop compared to the highest rate at 28.5 cases per 100,000 of the population in 2002,” he said at the National-Level World Aids Day 2014 commemoration, here, yes-

terday.

His speech text was read out by the Health Ministry’s Disease Control deputy director and HIV/AIDS Sector head, Dr Ashaari Ngadiman.

Dr Subramaniam said that up to September this year, 104,197 HIV infection cases, 21,111 AIDS cases and 16,918 deaths from the disease were reported, bringing the number of people living with HIV to 87,279.

He said the government would continue to ensure access to prevention measures, treatment, care and support services given in a fair and comprehensive manner, besides protection of the individuals’ rights in accordance with Malaysian norms and culture, as well as continuity of the agenda of combating HIV/AIDS.

“Among the efforts that we have done is expanding screening covering various categories for early HIV detection and early treatment,” he said.

The minister also noted that among the big-impact activities was tackling vertical transmission of HIV involving pregnant mothers.

He said the government had also initiated a programme of giving free milk for two years to mothers confirmed to be HIV positive to prevent infection to their babies.

With the implementation of this programme, the vertical transmission rate had been reduced to less than two per cent compared to between 30 and 45 per cent if without any intervention measure. – Bernama