

Headline	Sabah records 191 new HIV cases in first nine months		
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Sabah records 191 new HIV cases in first nine months

Larry Ralon

KOTA KINABALU: Some 191 new cases of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection were reported in Sabah in the first nine months this year.

Based on this, it is projected that there would be 255 new cases of HIV infection until the end of this year, or 7.32 new cases per 100,000 population of the State.

These are among altogether 1,982 HIV cases, 734 AIDS and 291 deaths reported in Sabah from 1991 when the first case was reported to September this year. Currently 1,691 people are living with HIV.

This was disclosed during the two-in-one Sabah State-level World AIDS Day 2014 and Kota Kinabalu City Getting to Zero HIV 2020, organised by the Health Ministry, at the Federal Administrative Complex here, Tuesday.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman, in officiating at the event, believed that World AIDS Day will not only be able to nurture awareness on this pandemic caused by HIV but also help to rally more support to the effort to fight and prevent it from spreading further.

"The Government indeed has given its full commitment and support in the effort to ensure the preventive efforts implemented covers all walks of the community by providing various facilities like detection scope, infection prevention, treatment and support," he said, in a speech read by Rural Development Minister Datuk Radin Malleh.

At the same time, the Chief Minister said the Government has also provided free screening tests including for those planning to marry, pregnant, HIV

patients and so on at all the government hospitals and health clinics.

"I urge all the people especially those who are exposed or at risk of HIV infection to go for the free screening test. Those who are tested positive should get the free treatment provided at any of the government hospitals and health clinics," said Musa.

He also hoped the Kota Kinabalu City Getting to Zero HIV project, which is headed by Mayor Datuk Abidin Madingkir and State Health Director Dr Christina Rundi, can be implemented smoothly according to the prepared plan and achieves its desired objectives in an integrated and efficient manner.

"On the part of the State Government, we always provide full support and assistance to this effort," he said, adding the full collaboration and commitment of all are vital in achieving the aspiration of a nation free of HIV virus.

Getting to Zero is the theme of World AIDS Day, as set by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) for a five-year period from 2011 to 2015. Malaysia's theme for this event is "Getting to Zero - Shared Responsibility".

Radin also represented the Chief Minister to present letters of appointment to 26 government agencies which have become members of the KK City Getting to Zero HIV 2014-2020 main committee.

Federal State Secretary Datuk Abu Bakar Hassan, Mayor Datuk Abidin Madingkir, State Health Director Dr Christina Rundi and other heads of Federal and State agencies were also present.

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Radin (seated, centre) with Abidin, Dr Christina and heads of government agencies which became members of KK City Getting to Zero HIV 2020.