

Headline	Push for ARV treatment for HIV patients in KK		
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# Push for ARV treatment for HIV patients in KK

**KOTA KINABALU:** The Kota Kinabalu Health Office is pushing for anti-retroviral (ARV) drug treatment for people living with HIV (PLHIV) and AIDS here.

District Health Officer Dr Jiloris @Julian Frederick Dony said the treatment controls HIV from becoming AIDS and is important as Kota Kinabalu has become the district with the highest record of HIV (93) as well as AIDS (37) statewide in 2015.

In addition, he said 12 people with AIDS died within the same year.

“We have cases of HIV becoming AIDS, with regular treatment and persistent intake of medication among other things, it will revert back to HIV,” explained Jiloris after the closing of the Kota Kinabalu District Level World AIDS Day 2016 celebration here yesterday.

“This medication will be able to control the severity of the disease with regular medication intake at the set time of the day, and advice of the doctors,” he added.

Jiloris urged for people suspected of having HIV and AIDS to step forward and ‘have trust in the medication’ as the drug has

thus far seen 100% efficacy.

He added that the district is targeting but not restricted to eligible individuals in the high risk groups such as sex workers and those engaging with them, which consist of both locals and foreigners.

“That is beyond our control but the important thing is that we ensure that they are offered opportunities of prevention,” said Jiloris.

“We have an outreach group with our NGO Kasih. At the same time, our staff, every once a week especially on Friday night will offer them prevention, kita jalan pergi buat offer for them for pencegahan, (health) test and if found positive, we offer treatment,” he added.

Jiloris reaffirmed that the Health District Office’s objective does not include operations to actively go out and identify high risk individuals, but to offer the treatment and ways of protection to those in high risk areas such as massage parlors.

“At least we are giving the opportunity to those in these communities so they are safe and

have the knowledge to protect themselves,” said Jiloris.

“So far, I would say 80% of them will cooperate and volunteer to come into counselling. For those who do not, we have to persistently make the effort to ensure they will come and get the opportunity of receiving counselling,” he emphasized.

Malaysia has implemented ARV since 2001 and KKM statistics revealed that 2,281 people have been infected with HIV and 868 are with AIDS in Sabah between 1991 to 2015.

According to the Health District Officer, up to mid-2016 in Kota Kinabalu, 1,455 PLHIV have received and are in the midst of treatment.

Sabah Welfare Services Department director Mohd Noor Wahab, who represented Community Development and Consumer Affairs minister Datuk Jainab Ahmad Ayid, officiated at the closing ceremony for the event. Kolej Sains Bersekutu Kota Kinabalu director Chin Siew Kiaw and City Hall director general’s representative, Dennis John, were among those at the ceremony.

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Mohd Noor (third left) launches the Kota Kinabalu District Level World AIDS Day 2016 Celebration as Jiloris (left) applauds at Kolej Sains Bersekutu Kota Kinabalu yesterday.