

Headline	Target to reduce HIV cases achievable, says Health D G		
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Target to reduce HIV cases achievable, says Health D-G

KUCHING: Health Director-General Datuk Seri Dr Hasan Abdul Rahman is optimistic about the country's target to reduce new HIV cases to 11 cases per population of 100,000 although there is just four years to go.

He said that the Government had set that target from 21.7 new cases per 100,000 in the year 2000.

"Although we have another four years to go, we are proud to say that this target may be achieved in a couple of years but our aim is to see a more significant decline in the near future," he said in his message in the souvenir programme for the Second International Conference on Addiction Medicine which starts

tomorrow.

In achieving the target, Dr Hasan said it was important that comprehensive packages on prevention, treatment, care and support towards HIV/AIDS including on drug addiction be in place through strong political will, comprehensive policies and the participation of the community.

He pointed out that in Malaysia, sharing of needles while injecting drugs was the main driver for HIV infection. The four-day conference which is held together with the Seventh National Conference on Addiction Medicine is themed, "Enhancing Evidence-based Treatment for Drug Addiction".

Organising chairman Dr Steven K W Chow said participants of the conference would be examining the science of what and why treatment works for addiction.

"You will be shown data that indicates that treatment has been effective in reducing drug-related crime, unemployment and has stymied the escalating source of HIV-related disease," he said.

A series of interesting papers and topics will be covered at the conference, among which are issues such as juvenile delinquency, sexually transmitted diseases in teenagers, crisis intervention and addiction in the young.