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I never gave permission!

JONATHAN (not his real name) thought it was a routine blood test. Being a diabetic, he realised the importance of having a good blood glucose reading to reduce the risks of the surgery he was undergoing.

"Nevertheless, I did ask the nurse what the test was for. She said it was just to test my blood sugar," he recalls of the test carried out before the procedure was done.

However, the 45-year old had a niggling feeling that something was not quite right when he saw he had been tested for HIV.

"I wondered, of course, why did they test me for it. But because I was more worried about the operation, it slipped my mind," he adds.

Jonathan says that the matter of the test did not occur again until a chat with a doctor friend recently made him realise that it was not right for the hospital to carry out the test without informing him.

"I feel so violated now. What right had they to carry out the test? What if the results had come back positive?" he questions.

Malaysian AIDS Council president Prof Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman says that hospitals have been known to do such testing without informing their patients.

"It is a breach of confidentiality. Besides, the patient has not been prepared by undergoing counselling," she says.

"There are 3Cs for HIV testing, which are



Malaysian AIDS Council president Prof Dr Adeeba Kamarulzaman ... There are the 3Cs for HIV testing, which are consent, confidentiality, and counselling.

consent, confidentiality, and counselling. What happens if a person is positive? Where would they go for treatment? Strictly speaking, permission has to be sought."

She says that the topic has been broached with medical lawyers, who have said that action can be taken against such hospitals.