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# Fewer cases of HIV/AIDS

**THE** number of HIV/AIDS cases dropped to 17% for every 100,000 Malaysians last year compared with 27% in 2005, said Deputy Health Minister **Datuk Dr Abdul Latiff Ahmad (BN-Mersing)**.

Replying to **Datuk Kamarul Baharin Abbas (PKR Telok Kemang)** on steps taken to check the projected rise in AIDS/HIV patients from 80,000 last year to 300,000 by 2015, as reported by the Malaysian AIDS Council, Abdul Latiff said:

"There is a correction to the report. 2002 had 6,978 cases. However, in the following year, the number of cases reported shrunk, and in 2008, 3,692 HIV cases were registered.

"If this trend continues, it is estimated that there will only be 110,000 HIV cases in 2015 and Malaysia will achieve its target set in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) to reduce HIV infections to 11 cases for every 100,000 Malaysians before 2015," said

Abdul Latiff.

Under the MDG, the ministry has set strategic plans to be carried out from 2006 to 2010. There have been programmes for prevention, support, control and treatment for HIV/AIDS patients.

Kamarul, in his supplementary question, asked how much was allocated to reduce the number of HIV/AIDS cases in Malaysia.

Abdul Latiff said many programmes were carried out under the Harm Reduction Programme. From 2006 to 2010, half a billion ringgit was allocated to raise awareness.

"We also have other programmes, such as 'Needle Exchange Programme' implemented by non-governmental organisations as well as reducing addicts' dependence on drugs with the substitution of methadone," he added.

To date, there are 7,000 patients using the methadone and the ministry is targeting 20,000 patients in 2010.