



Fatimah distributes an application form for the special assistance to a patient at the dialysis centre. Looking on at right is Dr Wong. — Photo by Chimon Upon

Apply for special aid for treatment, kidney patients in state told

Jacqueline David

KUCHING: Kidney patients in the state who are not receiving any treatment-related assistance or subsidy have been encouraged to apply for special assistance from the Sarawak government.

Minister of Welfare, Community Well Being, Women, Family and Childhood Development Dato Sri Fatimah Abdullah said the special aid is to ease the financial burden of kidney patients undergoing treatment including haemodialysis.

She revealed the Sarawak government has approved a budget of RM4.7 million for

this purpose this year, with the amount allocated to be reviewed annually.

“Those who are eligible to apply for the special assistance are those who fall under the B40 or M40 group with per capita income of not more than RM1,020 a month, or at the current poverty line level,” she said at a press conference during a working visit to the National Kidney Foundation-Kidney Association of Sarawak/Rotary dialysis centre, here yesterday.

Fatimah explained that among the eligibility criteria is that applicants must be a Sarawakian residing in the state, and not part of the civil service.

Civil servants, pensioners

and Socso contributors are not eligible, but their family members can apply for the assistance provided they themselves are not in the civil service or a pensioner, she said, adding that no age limit has been set.

“Another criterion is that the applicant is not already receiving subsidies for treatment and transportation assistance from any government, private or non-governmental agencies.

“Those who are receiving assistance but who still need support such as transportation assistance will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.”

Fatimah also said kidney patients who need to undergo transplant in Kuala Lumpur

– based on recommendation and referral from government nephrology specialists – will be given a one-off RM5,000 assistance.

The payment, as well as other financial assistance under the initiative, will be made direct to the treatment centre or agency that provides such services to the patient, she said.

Application for this assistance can be made at any divisional welfare office, Resident’s and district office, hospitals and government clinics, while forms can be downloaded from the state Welfare Department website.

> Turn to Page 4, Col 3



Fatimah addresses the press conference, flanked by (from left) Dr Wong, Chua, Harden and Fong. — Photo by Chimon Upon

Completed forms must be returned to divisional welfare offices — Fatimah

> From Page 1

“All completed forms must be returned to the divisional welfare offices throughout the state and those eligible for the special assistance will be notified in due course,” Fatimah said.

On the number of kidney

patients in Sarawak, she said Health Department statistics show that at least 250 new cases are recorded each year.

She said 3,317 kidney patients were recorded in the state last year, of which 2,970 were undergoing haemodialysis treatment, 275 undergoing continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis, and 72

undergoing kidney transplant.

Among those present with Fatimah at the press conference were her assistant minister Datuk Francis Harden Hollis, National Kidney Foundation chief executive officer Chua Hong Wee, Kidney Association of Sarawak president Dato Sri JC Fong and deputy president Dr Simon Wong.