

Covid oral antiviral treatment soon

Hope for Covid-19 patients as M'sia to take delivery of Paxlovid touted to be able to cure Covid infection

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia is expected to receive its first shipment of the Covid-19 oral antiviral treatment, Paxlovid by Pfizer, in two weeks, said Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin.

He said for the first phase of the procurement, Malaysia had purchased 110,000 patient-courses (for 110,000 patients) to be given to high-risk individuals.

"If we find the use of the drug as effective as (stated in) the information we have received, we will increase the purchase of the drug, Paxlovid from Pfizer.

"There are two more (drugs) that we will buy (namely) Molnupiravir, and another is from AstraZeneca, but it has not been finalised," he told reporters after launching the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) 16th Annual Dialysis Conference here yesterday.

Meanwhile, in his speech earlier, Khairy suggested a new feature in the MySejahtera application which allows the public to pledge to become organ donors.

He said the move was necessary with the increase in chronic kidney disease patients in the country, while the number of individuals who pledged to be organ donors was declining.

In fact, Malaysia is among the countries with the lowest organ donors, he added.

"I am going to do my best to push for pledges and make it easier for people to pledge their organs ... I'm trying to get the MySejahtera to be added with a button so you can just press the button and pledge to be donor organs," he said.

According to Khairy, more than 40,000 chronic kidney patients relied on dialysis treatment in 2016 and based on projections, if the trend is not reduced, the number of patients is expected to increase to 100,000 people.

He said measures for the



Khairy delivering a keynote address at the National Kidney Foundation 16th Annual Dialysis Conference. — Bernama photo

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prevention and detection of chronic diseases through health screening should also be promoted, whereby the government had implemented the Health Care Scheme for the B40 (PeKa B40) to help the group undergo health screening for free.

However, he said, of the 5 million individuals who were eligible to undergo health screening under PeKa B40, less than 12 per cent of them went for the health screening.

— Bernama