

# Cost of treating end-stage chronic kidney disease sees sharp surge

SHAH ALAM: The cost of treating end-stage chronic kidney disease (CKD) in Malaysia has surged sharply from RM572 million in 2020 to RM3.3 billion annually at present, following a steady rise in cases each year.



Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (pic) said the situation reflects a growing financial burden on the country, in addition to having a significant impact on patients' lives.

"In 2010, Malaysia spent RM572 million on treating end-stage CKD, but today the figure has risen to RM3.3 billion annually.

"This burden not only affects patients' quality of life, but also places a very heavy financial strain on our country," he said when officiating the National World Kidney Day 2026 observance at Wisma Majlis Bandaraya Shah Alam (MBSA) here, Sunday.

He added that the prevalence of CKD in Malaysia has also recorded a worrying increase, rising from nine per cent in 2011 to 15.5 per cent last year.

Elaborating further, he said that on average, 28 Malaysians are diagnosed with kidney failure each day and are forced to begin dialysis treatment to survive.

"More than five million Malaysians are currently living with CKD, but only five per cent are aware of it. If we fail to act decisively today, more than 106,000 Malaysians are expected to require dialysis treatment by 2040, a highly alarming figure," he said.

In this regard, Dzulkefly said the government is also emphasising the importance of prevention to reduce the burden of the disease.

The main cause of kidney failure in Malaysia is complications from diabetes mellitus, and patients cannot rely solely on dialysis to overcome the crisis without addressing its root causes.

"The government has increased the sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) tax to 90 sen per litre effective Jan 1, 2025, as a measure to curb the main cause of the disease.

"Revenue from the excise duty on SSB in 2025 reached RM54.9 million, with RM21 million channelled back to the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH)," he said.

At the same time, he said that the funds are being used to finance treatment with Sodium-Glucose Cotransporter-2 (SGLT2) inhibitors, which can reduce the risk of CKD complications.

Earlier, Dzulkefly officiated the national-level World Kidney Day 2026 observance, organised by the National Kidney Foundation (NKF), which was also attended by Selangor Public Health and Environment Committee chairman Jamaliah Jamaluddin.