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5 minute read

WHO selection of Malaysia to research efficacy of antiviral drug a huge recognition



FILE PIX: Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) President, Dr. N.Ganabaskaran. -- Pix: NSTP

By Nor Ain Mohamed Radhi (/authors/nor-ain-mohamed-radhi) March 28, 2020 @ 4:45pm



KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia selected to be among several countries to carry out clinical trials on the use of the novel antiviral drug Remdesivir by the World Health Organisation (WHO) is testament to the country's healthcare system.

Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr N Ganabaskaran said it was a great honour bestowed on Malaysia by the world's highest health body.

"It reflects and speaks of the efficiency and reliability of our Malaysian health personnel as well as our scientists on whom we place great trust.

"We wish all those who are involved in this exercise the very best and hope the tests will be a great success as we are all looking forward to more good news," he said when contacted.

A similar view was echoed by Malaysian Public Health Medicine Specialist Association president Datuk Dr Zainal Ariffin Omar, who said the selection was proof that the country has the ability to conduct tests and a good medical system, to be involved in the joint research to test drugs for Covid-19.

"It is a noble approach that can contribute something to the global community, other than being among the earliest countries to receive this promising treatment for Covid-19," he said when contacted.

Dr Zainal Ariffin said as the number of positive cases keeps increasing, the sooner a cure is found, the better.

He said looking at the profile of fatalities due to Covid-19 in Malaysia, most of them were either the elderly or those with several chronic diseases.

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"Hence, we hope this clinical trial will bring good news."

Yesterday, Health director-general Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah said Malaysia was among several countries selected by WHO to carry out clinical trials on the use of the novel antiviral medicine, Remdesivir, on Covid-19 patients.

Dr Noor Hisham said the focus will be on patients at Sungai Buloh Hospital and other hospitals identified as "Covid-19 hospitals", and the ministry will monitor the side effects.

Dr Noor Hisham said a special committee was set up to carry out audits on fatalities due to Covid-19.

The establishment of a special committee, known as the National Covid-19 Mortality Review Committee was decided after a meeting by the National Crisis Preparedness Centre (CPRC) yesterday.

Dr Noor Hisham said the committee will be headed by former deputy Health director-general (research and technical support) Datuk Dr Christopher Lee.

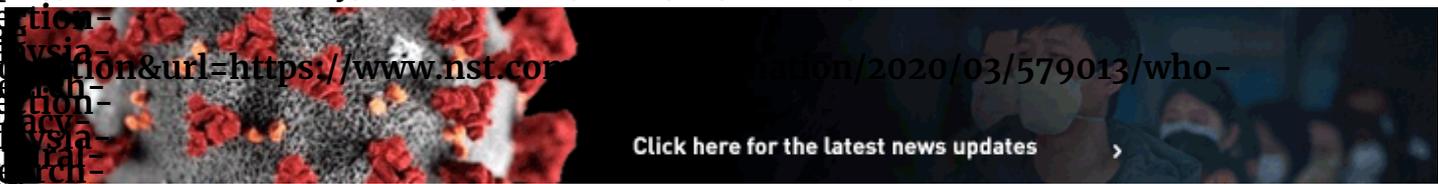
Dr Lee, who is also an infectious disease consultant, will be assisted by specialists in various related disciplines.

Dr Noor Hisham said the Medical Care Quality Section of the Medical Development Division will serve as the technical secretariat for the committee.

Under this committee, all information on management and treatment given to Covid-19 patients that died will be examined by the specialists.

"I am pleased that the result analysis could help with the management of Covid-19 patients," he said in a post on his Facebook page.

The post was posted on the website of the Ministry of Health on March 29, 2020.



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