

UMS hospital getting ready as vaccination centre

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KOTA KINABALU: Hospital Universiti Malaysia Sabah (HUMS) has made thorough preparations to become one of the vaccination centers (PPV) for Sabah, especially for the people around Kota Kinabalu.

Vice Chancellor of UMS, Professor Datuk Dr Taufiq Yap Yun Hin, said this is as an effort by UMS to assist the staff of the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) and ensuring the success of the National Covid-19 Immunization Program (PICK).

According to him, the preparations made include forming a PPV committee to ensure the implementation of the vaccination process run smoothly.

He said that HUMS is having ongoing discussions with the Sabah State Health Department (JKNS) to cooperate on any vaccination-related program.

"In addition, several HUMS staff who will be involved in the vaccination process also visited the PPV at the Sabah Federal Government Administrative Complex to see for themselves the vaccination process, and this visit will indirectly train them on the vaccination process later.

"Discussions are also actively carried out with public universities' partners who are also involved as PPV," he said during an interview with Sabah FM.

Taufiq said that UMS is proud to be involved as one of the PPVs in the state.

"This will allow UMS to help speed up the delivery of the vaccines to citizens around Kota Kinabalu and help the state achieve the 80 per cent target of

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Professor Datuk Dr Taufiq Yap Yun Hin



population being vaccinated to create herd immunity," he said.

"We are aware that the vaccination rate in Sabah is the lowest in Malaysia, hence the role of UMS as a PPV can contribute to increasing the vaccination rate," he said.

"The PICK preparation does not require specialised expertise in the giving of vaccine. It only requires adequate number of health workers who are skilled in the aspects of emergency and family health so that they can assess pre and post vaccination, and for this, HUMS has enough employees to help the Health Ministry to ensure the success of the vaccination programme," he said.

Taufiq also informed that HUMS is a Category 5 PPV which can give up to 1,000 vaccine doses daily.

"Initially, we are targeting at least 500 doses of vaccine daily and will continue to increase this number until we attain the maximum of 1,000 doses per day, depending on the amount of vaccines allocated.

"UMS also plans to provide a drive-through vaccination," he said.

He also urged the community to not hesitate to receive the vaccine and to register themselves as recipients

because it has been proven that places with high percentage of vaccination are showing significant changes in positive case reduction and the rate of infectivity in that community.

"But what is more important is that the rate of deaths in those countries have shown a downward trend and this proves the efficacy of the vaccination program to control the spread of the pandemic," he said.

"We need to understand that the vaccination does not make us impregnable but at least, the vaccine can reduce the probably of people being infected with Covid-19 and reduce the probability of serious implications if they are infected.

"This is proven by countries with high vaccination rate. They have shown a reduction in serious cases and reduction in the use of oxygen for Covid-19 patients," he said.

Taufiq stressed that the vaccination programme is an opportunity for the community to restore life to what was the norm before this.

"If the PICK is not held on a large scale, the risk to the people is that they would have to undergo various phases of the Movement Control Order and this is not the best solution to control the spread of the

pandemic, holistically and comprehensively.

"If this happens, the community will not be able to enjoy a more peaceful life and will face difficulties in moving due to various cross-district and state restrictions, as well as face difficulties in carrying out social and economic activities," he said.

In another development, Taufiq said HUMS is currently under construction, and is expected to be completed by the end of 2022 and is expected to start operations by early 2023.

He also said that HUMS has played an important role in curbing the spread of Covid-19 on campus since January 2020 through the establishment of the Covid-19 Preparedness and Action Center which also involves staff from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (FPSK) as a preparation as UMS has many international students from China.

"UMS also assisted JKNS in conducting the Covid-19 screening test and until June 7, 2021, a total of 38,945 test samples were conducted.

He also said that HUMS had prepared volunteer specialist doctors and nurses to work in MOH hospitals to reduce the burden of 'burnout' among frontline workers.