

AKHBAR : THE STAR
TARIKH : 23 NOVEMBER 2024 (SABTU)
MUKA SURAT : 4
RUANGAN : NATION

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Union nursing concern over shifts

Nurses group wants flexibility in new workload amid ongoing staff shortage

By RAGANANTHINI
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PETALING JAYA: The new work shift schedule for nurses must ensure that their well-being and mental health are not affected, says the Malayan Nurses Union.

Its president Saaidah Athman said with the current shortage of nurses and the workload they bear, the 45 hours per week schedule may not be suitable for nurses doing shift duty.

Currently, the shifts are morning (7am-2pm), afternoon (2pm-9pm) and night (9pm-7.30am).

Nurses are required to do two night shifts a month, which would come up to 21 hours.

However, based on the availability of manpower and the ward's needs, some may have to take up to three night shifts a month.

Malaysia is already projecting a

60% shortage of nurses by 2030.

Saaidah said if the 45-hour work-week is implemented, some staff members will have to take up double duty due to the shortage of manpower.

Those who commute long distances may be even more tired and pressured as they would reach home late, while there is also concern of how nurses who are mothers will have to coordinate their schedule with daycare centres, she added.

She said the new shift hours could affect the allocation of rest days and work days.

"All this may exert excessive pressure and stress on the staff," she said.

The Public Service Department (PSD) has released a circular on streamlining the working hours of civil servants who do not work on fixed office hours with those who work on office hours.

This makes the working hours including rest days total 45 hours

a week.

Heads of departments are allowed to roster their staff's working hours to four to six days a week, with rest days ranging from one to three days a week.

If this is implemented, nurses will have three additional shift hours.

Despite the PSD circular, Saaidah said the Health Ministry and its nursing division have yet to release the guidelines or order on the new shifts.

The union is proposing that the additional work hours be counted as break hours.

This, said Saaidah, would alter the shift hours to 7am-3pm, 1pm-9pm and 9pm-7.30am for the three shifts.

"The union is requesting that the Health Ministry set hours that would be flexible for shift workers.

"At this juncture, the ministry's Human Resources Department has yet to release any directives

on shifts.

"I hope the new shift hours will not affect critical services such as nursing," she said, adding that she hopes the ministry will ensure that the hours will not affect the work-life balance of nurses.

On their shift work, Saaidah said the biggest challenge is at night, in particular when nurses have to stay awake to ensure that patients get continuous and quality care.

She promised that the union will continue to listen to the grievances of its members.

Opposing the directive, Hartal Doktor Kontrak said it fails to address the underlying issues faced by the nursing workforce, such as insufficient shift allowances, lack of work-life balance, and the immense physical and emotional toll of shift work.

"Comparing shift workers in healthcare to office-based civil servants demonstrates a lack of understanding of the unique chal-

lenges faced by healthcare providers.

"We urge the Health Ministry and PSD to revisit this decision immediately. Policies should prioritise the well-being of healthcare workers and foster a supportive environment that retains talent within Malaysia," it said in a statement on Wednesday.

On Thursday, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the adjustment of working hours to 45 hours a week for nurses from Dec 1 is reasonable, assuring them that their work-life balance and welfare would not be affected.

He said the current shift of 42 hours-per-week is not compliant with the directive.

"Implementing the 45-hour work week with flexibility would mean working four to six days a week, with one to three days off a week," he added.

The working hours will not exceed 12 hours a day.

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Wee: Overwhelming burden on already stressed nurses

By ALLISON LAI
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PETALING JAYA: The imposition of a 45-hour work week for nurses starting Dec 1 is an unacceptable escalation of their already overwhelming workload, says Datuk Seri Dr Wee Jeck Seng.

The MCA vice-president and Tanjung Piai MP said these extended hours could dramatically worsen the chronic issue of overworked nurses, severely jeopardising their well-being and efficiency.

"The demands of nursing are profoundly distinct from other civil service roles.

"Nurses confront patients and their families, who are often in distress, on a daily basis, subjecting them to immense mental stress that far surpasses that of typical job roles.

"For far too long, nurses in government hospitals have been grappling with severe staffing shortages, forcing many to shoulder workloads two to three times heavier than what's considered normal.

"Now, with an unjustifiable



addition of three more hours each week, this situation is like adding insult to injury," he said here yesterday.

According to the new directive, nurse shifts will change from the current schedule (7am-2pm, 2pm-9pm and 9pm-7am) to a new

one (7am-3pm, 3pm-10pm and 10pm-7am).

Wee said this adjustment disregarded the year-round demands of shift work and neglected nurses' physical and mental health during night shifts.

The schedule, he added, is more

suitable for office-based civil servants than for shift nurses.

"Night emergencies often deprive nurses of adequate rest, and the limited recovery time during the day is insufficient to counteract sleep deprivation.

"Furthermore, government

hospital nurses, unlike their private hospital counterparts, do not receive appropriate shift allowances, worsening their situation," he said.

Wee urged the government to seriously consider the pressures nurses face, especially with the persistent resource constraints in government hospitals that have forced nurses to endure high-intensity environments for years.

"The relevant departments should reassess this policy to prevent further deterioration of nurses' working conditions.

"Healthcare workers are the backbone of our public healthcare system.

"Providing them with reasonable working conditions and protection is essential to ensuring patients receive high-quality medical services," he said.

The Public Service Department has released a circular on streamlining the working hours of civil servants who do not work on fixed office hours with those who work on office hours. This would make the working hours including rest days total up to 45 hours a week.

More to bear:
The MCA vice-president said the extended hours could severely jeopardise the well-being of nurses.

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MOH to boost cardiothoracic care across the country

By HO JIA WEN
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KUALA LUMPUR: A paediatric cardiothoracic surgical centre is being planned for Penang while another new cardiothoracic centre will be available at Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun in Ipoh.

The surgical centre meant for paediatrics is sited at Hospital Seberang Jaya, Penang.

These are among the plans to strengthen cardiothoracic centres under the Health Ministry, says Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He added that a new surgical block with upgraded cardiothoracic services would also be con-

structed at Hospital Pulau Pinang.

Addressing the 32nd Association of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgeons of Asia Conference here yesterday, he said there are seven cardiothoracic centres in Malaysia under the ministry.

They are in Hospital Pulau Pinang, Hospital Raja Perempuan Zainab II (Kota Baru), Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan (Kuantan), Hospital Sultan Idris Shah (Serdang, Selangor), Hospital Sultanah Aminah (Johor Baru), Sarawak Heart Centre (Kuching), and Hospital Queen Elizabeth II (Kota Kinabalu).

Citing the National Heart Institute in Kuala Lumpur as a mature cardiac centre, he said the

ministry aimed to replicate its success and strengthen all the ministry's seven regional cardiothoracic centres.

Dzulkefly said the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) had set up its first international office at the Academy of Medicines of Malaysia's new campus in Putrajaya.

He said the parallel pathway cardiothoracic surgical training programme by the ministry, with quality assured by the RCSEd, remains the backbone of the cardiothoracic surgeons training.

"At the same time, the ministry is strengthening all cardiothoracic training programmes, which also includes our local university

master's programmes in the mix," said Dzulkefly.

He said cardiothoracic surgery remains a key component and focus of care for cardiovascular disease patients by the ministry.

"Training more cardiothoracic surgeons remains a top priority in order to achieve the ministry's objective of bringing cardiothoracic surgery care closer to the people," he said.

He said amendments to the Medical Act, which were passed July in Parliament, were the only sure way to address the acute shortage of cardiothoracic surgeons in Malaysia.

In June, Dzulkefly said there are only 17 cardiothoracic specialists

serving under the ministry. He had said then that 23 doctors are receiving training in the specialisation, of which 16 through parallel pathway training, while seven are taking up UiTM's medical master's programme.

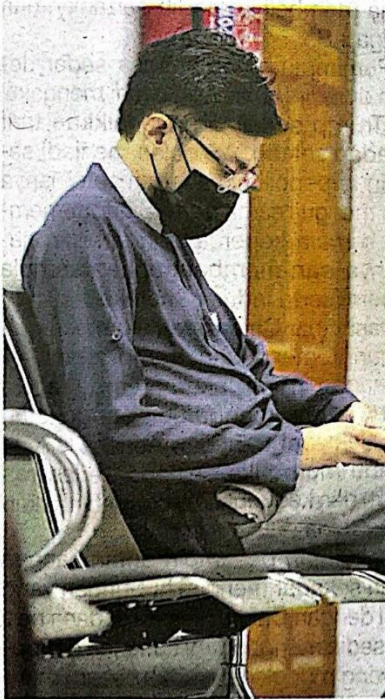
Yesterday, he pointed out that non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which include cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases as well as diabetes, were among the causes of 72% of all premature deaths.

"The three main NCD categories – cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer – are estimated to have cost the Malaysian economy RM12.88bil in terms of productivity losses," he said.

AKHBAR : SINAR HARIAN
TARIKH : 23 NOVEMBER 2024 (SABTU)
MUKA SURAT : 15
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

SINAR HARIAN MIS IS NASIONAL

Doktor dituduh rakam video punggung wanita



Amirul Haqim mengaku tidak bersalah di Mahkamah Majistret Teluk Intan pada Jumaat.

TELUK INTAN - Seorang doktor didakwa di Mahkamah Majistret Teluk Intan pada Jumaat atas pertuduhan mengaibkan kehormatan seorang wanita dengan merakam video punggung, Julai lalu.

Tertuduh, Amirul Haqim Ayub, 31, bagaimanapun mengaku tidak bersalah sebaik pertuduhan ke atasnya dibacakan di hadapan Majistret Naidatul Athirah Azman.

Mengikut pertuduhan, pegawai perubatan sebuah hospital yang sudah berkahwin itu didakwa dengan sengaja mengaibkan kesantunan seorang pekerja wanita berusia 27 tahun dengan merakam video punggung dan bahagian badan menggunakan telefon bimbit.

Kesalahan dilakukan di sebuah kedai penjagaan kecantikan dan kesihatan dalam sebuah pasar raya di Jalan Changkat Jong, Teluk Intan sekitar jam 6.30 petang pada 12 Julai 2024.

Tertuduh yang didakwa meng-

ikut Seksyen 509 Kanun Keseksaan berdepan hukuman penjara lima tahun atau denda atau kedua-duanya sekali, jika sabit kesalahan.

Pendakwaan dikendalikan Pegawai Pendakwa, Inspektor Nurul Farahdiana Md Saad manakala tertuduh diwakili Peguam Yayasan Bantuan Guaman Kebangsaan (YBGK), S Kumaresan.

Mahkamah membenarkan tertuduh diikat jamin sebanyak RM3,500 dengan seorang penjamin dan menetapkan 30 Disember depan sebagai tarikh sebutan semula kes.

Berdasarkan laporan polis dibuat, kejadian berlaku semasa mangsa sedang menyusun stok barang baharu di kedai berkenaan.

Pemeriksaan menerusi rakaman kamera litar tertutup (CCTV) mendapati tertuduh telah mendekati pekerja dan merakam video punggung mangsa.

AKHBAR : KOSMO
TARIKH : 23 NOVEMBER 2024 (SABTU)
MUKA SURAT : 12
RUANGAN : NEGARA

12 **Negara!**

Kosmo/ SABTU 23 NOVEMBER 2024

Kejadian berlaku ketika mangsa berusia 27 tahun sedang susun barang

Doktor dituduh rakam 'aset' wanita

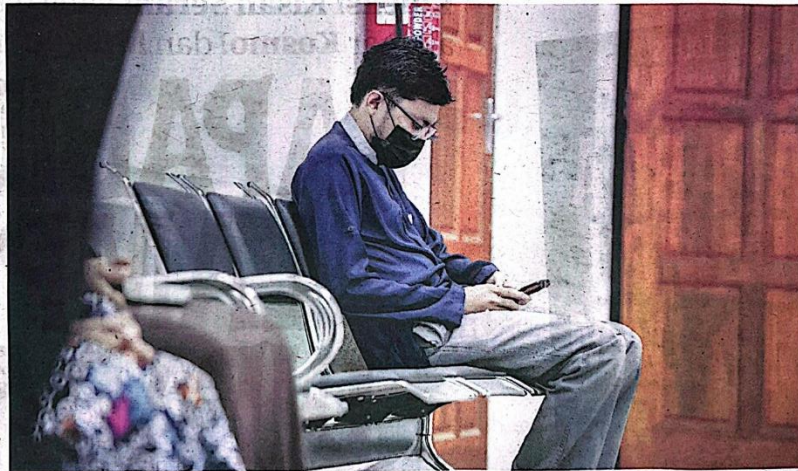
TELUK INTAN – Seorang doktor perubatan mengaku tidak bersalah di Mahkamah Majistret di sini semalam, atas pertuduhan merakam punggung wanita pada Julai lalu.

Tertuduh, Amirul Haqim Ayub, 31, membuat pengakuan itu di hadapan Majistret Naidatul Athirah Azman.

Penjawat awam itu didakwa dengan sengaja mengaibkan kesantunan pekerja kedai penjagaan kecantikan dan kesihatan berusia 27 tahun dengan cara merakam punggung dan badan mangsa menggunakan telefon bimbit.

Kesalahan dilakukan di premis mangsa bekerja dalam sebuah pasar raya di Jalan Changkat Jong di sini, pada pukul 6.30 petang, 12 Julai lalu.

Sabit kesalahan, Amirul boleh dihukum penjara maksimum lima tahun atau denda atau ke-



AMIRUL mengaku tidak bersalah atas pertuduhan mengaibkan kehormatan seorang wanita dengan merakam punggung wanita menggunakan telefon bimbit pada Julai lalu.

dua-duanya di bawah Seksyen 509 Kanun Keseksaan.

Pegawai Pendakwa, Inspektor Nurul Farahdiana Md. Saad menawarkan jaminan sebanyak RM8,000, namun peguam Yayasan Bantuan Guaman Kebangsaan, S. Kumaresan memohon mahkamah menetapkan satu jumlah yang minimum dengan alasan anak guamnya menanggung seorang isteri.

Majistret Naidatul Athirah membenarkan tertuduh diikat jamin RM3,500 dengan seorang penjamin dan menetapkan 30 Disember ini untuk sebutan semula kes.

Berdasarkan laporan polis, kejadian berlaku ketika mangsa sedang menyusun barang di tempat kerjanya. Pemeriksaan terhadap televisyen litar tertutup (CCTV) mendapati tertuduh mendekati sebelum merakam punggung mangsa.

AKHBAR : THE STAR
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MUKA SURAT : 8
RUANGAN : NATION

HIV self-test kits now available to the public

By ANNABELLE LAWRENCE
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TAIPING: Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) self-test kits are now available to the public, says Perak Health Department director Dr Feisul Idzwan Mustapha.

The kits can be purchased at selected pharmacies or through the Test Now website at testnow.com.my, he said.

"The self-test initiative is a collaboration between the Health Ministry, the Malaysian AIDS Foundation, the Malaysian AIDS Council, and the Global Fund.

"Our efforts to end AIDS within the next six years is not an easy task," Dr Feisul Idzwan said during the state-level World AIDS Day celebration here yesterday.

"However, I believe that with leadership, policies, commitment, collaboration and the determination shown by various parties, the dream of ending AIDS by 2030 can be achieved."

Dr Feisul also noted a significant decline in new HIV infections in the country.

In 2023, the infection rate was 9.7 per 100,000 people, a sharp drop from 28.5 in 2002.

Additionally, Malaysia successfully maintained the mother-to-child HIV transmission rate at 1.58%, below the target of less than 2% for HIV-positive mothers who do not breastfeed.

"For Perak, there have been no mother-to-child HIV transmission cases under the Elimination of Mother-To-Child Transmission Programme from 2019 to 2023," he added.

M/s 8 Nation