

Get H1N1 jabs, high-risk group urged

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PETALING JAYA: Only 10,000 people from the high-risk group have been vaccinated against Influenza A(H1N1).

This is despite the Health Ministry ordering some 400,000 doses of the vaccine and making it available at 104 of its facilities nationwide.

Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said 100,000 doses had been set aside for the frontliners while the remainder were for people considered to be in the high-risk group, including those with chronic diseases, pregnant women and the obese.

They (high-risk group) are taking a wait and see attitude because they think H1N1 is not deadly, he said yesterday.

Although the death rate is only 0.04%, the transmission rate is so fast. Please do not take things for granted. Those who are in the high-risk category need to quickly get themselves vaccinated.

Liow added that the vaccination was done on a first come, first served basis.

He said the ministry would finish its remaining stock before deciding on future purchases.

The vaccine was made available from February.

Liow reiterated the importance of people being on high alert against the disease as the latest death of a lawyer in Johor Baru showed it was still in the community.

The number of deaths shows that the virus is very lethal, he said.

For information on which healthcare facility is providing the vaccination, go to <http://h1n1.moh.gov.my/>

Meanwhile, in Kuantan later, Liow said it was circumstantial evidence that led the ministry to infer that the death of a four-year-old girl on April 3 was due to complications from A(H1N1).

Liow, who was there to meet state MCA leaders, said the girl could not be classified as an A(H1N1) victim as no post-mortem was done.

The reports I received inferred that she was most probably a victim, based on circumstantial evidence, as her younger sister was confirmed to be infected.

As such, we have decided to set up a team to investigate the case further, he added.

Source: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/4/14/nation/6049552&sec=nation>