

Teaching hospitals offer to administer vaccines

PETALING JAYA: A total of eight teaching hospitals and their clinical staff are ready to assist with the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme, says Datuk Dr Noraini Ahmad.

The Higher Education Minister said that seven of these hospitals were prepared to act as Covid-19 vaccine storage centres.

These are University Malaya Medical Centre, Hospital Canselor Tuanku Muhriz Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia Hospital, Universiti Teknologi Mara Hospital, International Islamic University Malaysia Medical Centre, Hospital Pengajar Universiti Putra Malaysia and Hospital Universiti Malaysia Sabah.

Meanwhile in Kuala Lumpur, the Health Ministry's Pharmacy Practice and Development Division director A'tia Hashim said the sup-

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ply of vaccines would be distributed to each Vaccine Administration Centre (VAC) in stages according to the number of vaccine recipients and based on the suitability of time.

She said the procedure was to ensure and maintain the quality of the Comirnaty vaccine produced by Pfizer-BioNTech which is temperature sensitive.

She said the Comirnaty vaccine should be stored in an ultra-low temperature freezer (ULTF) with a temperature range from -90°C to -60°C.

“When sent or picked up by VAC, the vaccine will be transferred to a cold box with a storage temperature of 2°C to 8°C and then placed in a top-loading freezer with the same storage temperature upon arrival at the centre.

“Comirnaty vaccine stored in a cold box at 2°C to 8°C has a shelf life of up to five days or 120 hours,” she said when contacted.

A'tia said the process of sending the vaccine to a VAC only involved the use of cold boxes because ULTF

was static and was only placed in the designated vaccine storage centres.

She said the movement of the vaccine supply was according to the plan or schedule of each VAC apart from using the vehicles provided by the respective VAC.

A'tia said the same distribution procedure also applied to the supply of vaccines to rural or remote areas.

“If there is a need for vaccine delivery using vehicles other than land transport (for rural areas), the VAC will plan (for helicopter service),” she said.

On the latest status of the Sinovac vaccine which is expected to arrive on Feb 27, she said the vaccine was still in the process of being evaluated by the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency. — Bernama