

Drug rehabilitation treatment in Malaysia among the best in Asean nations

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KUALA LUMPUR: The drug addiction prevention programme and rehabilitation treatment in Malaysia is among the best among Asean member countries, Deputy Home Minister Datuk Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar said.

He said the voluntary rehabilitation treatment carried in many drug rehabilitation centres in the country had also shown positive results.

“Individuals involved in drug abuse should not be considered as criminals, but should be treated as patients.

“They are more comfortable in getting treatment voluntarily, as practised by most rehabilitation centres in the country,” he told Bernama recently.

He said facilities such as Cure and Care Rehabilitation Centres (CCRC) and the 1Malaysia Cure and Care Clinics (C&C) in the country were more advanced compared to that in other countries.

This was because they also adopted the concept of education to provide business and skills trainings to the patients, he said.

Wan Junaidi said the training programme implemented by the Pengasih Association of Malaysia (Pengasih), a private rehabilitation centre and a therapeutic community, had even received international recognition for providing effective treatment.

Meanwhile, Pengasih founder Datuk Yunus Pathi said the programme, which uses peer approach, had been recognised as successful in assisting its clients to free themselves from drugs and practise a healthy lifestyle after two years of treatment.

“Our clients are not detainees, but they came voluntarily with their families, wives and even employers. Over the past 20 years, our open concept of un gated and unguarded have made them feel at home here.

“We also hold spiritual activities and prayers here, and we prepare them to be able to mingle so that they will not have a culture shock when they step out of our home and return to their respective communities,” he said.

Yunus, who had won his own battle against drug addiction, said there were many challenges to be faced by drug addicts seeking treatment, such as peer pressure, family rejection and community acceptance.

Therefore, he said he hoped the people and all the relevant quarters would not marginalise these addicts, but to support and join hands in helping them to rehabilitate.

Pengasih is not only popular as drug addicts rehabilitation centre, but also as a drug rehabilitation training and prevention institution, to countries such as Indonesia, Maldives, Philippine, Pakistan, Iran and now Oman.

As such, Yunus also expressed hope that the dream of making Malaysia as Asia's reference destination for drug addiction prevention and rehabilitation could be realised.

Established in 1987, Pengasih had so far treated more than 6,000 clients, 70 per cent of whom have maintained a healthy lifestyle after coming out of the rehabilitation centre. — Bernama