

## Mobile treatment service to be expanded

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**KAJANG:** The new National Anti-Drug Agency (AADK) Mobile Recovery Treatment (MRT) service will be expanded nationwide, said Home Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin.

Under the first phase, he said, the service had two teams consisting of eight officers.

"We aim to expand it further. We have identified 110 officers who will be placed in the AADK MRT teams at state headquarters nationwide," he said after launching the

service yesterday.

Hamzah said this will also enable the agency to provide its service in the outskirts.

The pilot project for the new service was conducted last year in prisons and got a good response, he added.

He said the service will also be used by clients at AADK institutions who need special intervention.

Hamzah said these included cases involving attempted suicide as well as those reluctant to get treatment.

He also said that based on this year's Drug Addiction Prevalence

Study, for every drug user or addict known to authorities – four others remained undetected.

"Some 123,139 drug users and addicts were detected last year, thus based on the ratio, at least 492,556 others are still not receiving treatment.

"We believe drug abuse has shifted from organic to synthetic drugs.

"A total of 69.8% of the drug users are on synthetic drugs. It is even more worrying that 66% of total drug users are those aged between 19 and 39," he noted.

Last year, the AADK had 73,113 community clients and 7,133 clients

in institutions.

"On average, about 15,000 clients completed their treatment. However, some 65% relapsed.

"Among the factors identified are lack of family support, society's negative perception, the addict's attitude and peer pressure," he said.

Hamzah also called on the police to cooperate more with the AADK in combating the drug menace.

"New methods can be achieved through cooperation among the relevant agencies. We must focus on reducing the number of addicts and strike those who are involved in drug trafficking," he said.