

Malaysia aims to become Hepatitis C treatment hub

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Malaysia is ready to become a hub for Hepatitis C treatment in the region by offering at affordable prices.

Being the first country in the world to be given conditional approval for combining ravidasvir with sofosbuvir to treat Hepatitis C, Malaysia is poised to offer access to an affordable and efficacious treatment solution for those infected with the virus. Speaking at the launch of Malaysia as the Hepatitis C Treatment Hub of Asia on Tuesday (November 16), health minister Khairy Jamaluddin said: “In response to the World Hepatitis Day 2021 theme, Hepatitis Can’t Wait, Malaysia is ready and raring to move forward with a treatment solution for those infected with the disease. “This is in line with WHO’s mission to reduce new viral hepatitis infections by 90 per cent and reduce deaths by viral hepatitis by 65 per cent by 2030. Malaysia is offering Hepatitis C patients a treatment with a cure rate of 97 per cent and cost reduction of 95 per cent.”

The Ministry of Health will identify hospitals to carry out the treatment, which will be marketed abroad to attract health travellers to Malaysia.

This year, the government is targeting RM520 million (US\$125 million) in revenue from health tourism, a huge drop from RM1.7 billion in 2019. For 2022, the target is RM800 million, and a recovery to pre-pandemic level is only expected in 2025.