



PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • 22 JULY 2020

Remain Vigilant to Avoid Second Wave and Another Lockdown

The Malaysian Health Coalition (MHC) echoes the Prime Minister in urging the Rakyat to stay vigilant and abide by precautions and standard operating procedures (SOP) to prevent a second wave of Covid-19 in Malaysia. We also support the government's decision to revert to mandatory quarantine in quarantine centres for returnees, announced on [21 July 2020](#).

The growing number of clusters and double-digit daily infections are a cause for concern. To avoid a second wave, we urge the following:

1. Enforce wearing of face masks in public

We support the mandatory masking policy that is being considered by the government (announced by the Prime Minister on [20 July 2020](#)). This will indicate the seriousness of the situation and avoid complacency following [reports](#) of lax behaviour. However, there must also be a plan to make face masks accessible to all, as in Hong Kong and Singapore, while making any penalties reasonable and proportional. The government must consider the implications of mandatory masking for households whose incomes have been impacted by the MCO, and lead by example by wearing face masks while carrying out their duties.

2. Increase transparency for Covid-19 data

We laud the government's success in providing the Rakyat with regular updates and information on infection rates and SOPs. We reiterate our call for transparency of health data (issued on [3 July 2020](#)). Specifically, transparency for Covid-19 testing data could help researchers better understand the pandemic's spread in Malaysia. Successful Covid-19 management in Malaysia depends on greater access to Covid-related data, to allow for better informed decision-making across all sectors.

3. Review policy on social gatherings

We urge the government to review its decision to remove the 250-person limit for social gatherings (announced on [10 July 2020](#)) as it would be difficult to monitor and maintain physical distancing at all times for a large crowd. If in-person gatherings are unavoidable, organisers must be encouraged to implement staggered attendance and sanitise the area in between. It is important to ensure that a strict and realistic social gatherings policy is in place before Hari Raya Haji celebrations begin on 31 July 2020.

4. Remain vigilant

The Rakyat are the frontliners now and it is our collective responsibility to keep one another safe. We must protect the gains that we have earned from the hardship of the MCO since 18 March 2020. As we reunite with loved ones, we must wear face masks, keep physical distancing, maintain good hand hygiene, and accurately fill-in contact tracing forms. This includes avoiding handshakes, or *salam*, and hugging even with extended family.

While we have made great progress in curbing the spread so far, the pandemic is not over yet. We must not let our guard down until a vaccine becomes available.

BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA.

Malaysian Health Coalition

48 Member Societies & 19 Individuals

Full Signature List on myhealthcoalition.org.

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