

3 reasons behind Kelantan's low vaccination rate for kids

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KOTA BARU: The Kelantan Health Department said there were three reasons behind the record low vaccination rate for children aged 5 to 11 in the state.

Its director, Datuk Dr Zaini Hussin, said the first was due to the fact that the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme for Children (PICKids) was not compulsory.

"Many parents in Kelantan saw that the programme was voluntary and, therefore, it was unnecessary for them to get their children aged 5 to 11 vaccinated.

"Apart from that, they felt more secure if their children do not take the Covid-19 jab as coronavirus cases involving children were low.

"Another reason behind the low turnout for PICKids is the low rate of severe cases among children in Kelantan.

"All these reasons have caused parents in Kelantan to not allow their children to get their first and second doses," he said.

Dr Zaini said despite the government not continuing with the programme, parents who were interested in vaccinating their children could do so.

"They can go to any health clinic or private health facility if they want their children to be inoculated."

Only 8.6 per cent of the state's children aged 5 to 11 completed the Covid-19 vaccination course.

"The figure is much lower com-

pared with the 115,000 children who are eligible (in Kelantan) for vaccination," said Dr Zaini.

It was reported yesterday that the Covid-19 vaccination rate in Terengganu and Kelantan remained below the 10 per cent mark at 9.9 per cent and 7.3 per cent, respectively.

Labuan had the highest child

vaccination rate in the country at 21.8 per cent, while at least 20 per cent of the children in Sarawak and Melaka had been vaccinated.

A total of 1,180,415 children aged 5 to 11, or 33.2 per cent of those in the age group, had been fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

Data from the Health Ministry's CovidNow portal showed that in Kelantan on Wednesday, 2,067 children received their second dose and 364 received their first dose.

More than 48 per cent of the children in the state have received at least one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine.



A mother consoling her son, who is receiving a dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, in Kuala Nerus, Terengganu, on Tuesday. BERNAMA PIC