

Employers willing to buy vaccines for staff members

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PETALING JAYA: Most employers are willing to buy Covid-19 vaccines to inoculate their workers, especially for those in the non-essential sectors.

Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) president Datuk Dr Syed Hussain Syed Husman said this was because workers can return to work safely when the industries are allowed to resume operations.

“The cost of managing Covid-19 workplace infections can be expensive as it involves screening and quarantine of workers, temporary closure and workplace sanitisation.

“Most employers are willing to bear the cost and buy the vaccines to vaccinate their workers.

“Once the workers complete the vaccinations, they will be allowed to return and work, especially for those in the non-essential sectors that are still not allowed to resume operations,” he said here yesterday.

He was commenting on the Selangor government’s announcement last month of its own vaccination programme called Selangor Vaccination Industry Programme (Selvax), with the main target of inoculating one million industrial employees in the state against Covid-19.

However, Syed Hussain noted that some employers were confused over the many programmes to help industries vaccinate their employees, following a gap between the announcement to the actual rollout.

He said this was because there were many vaccination programmes such as Public-Private Partnership Covid-19 Industry Immunisation Programme (Pikas), Selvax and through MySejahtera app.

He added that industry members couldn’t get a quick response from the authorities who wanted to pay for their workers’ vaccination.

Syed Hussain said the MEF was calling for the setting up of a national level one-stop centre to address issues facing employers in procuring vaccines for their employees.

President of the Klang Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tan Sri Lim Kuang Sia also said that most employers were willing to pay and vaccinate their staff as soon as possible.

“There was some scepticism earlier of the effectiveness of the vaccines.

“We must realise the vaccination is the only way out for us. We can see this in the West that when a majority of the population has been inoculated, incidences of serious cases dropped significantly.

“So it has been proven that the vaccines are effective,” he added.

He said that companies in the non-essential sector that managed to vaccinate their staff early would benefit if the government allows those having vaccinated workforce to resume operations at full capacity later.

“This should encourage more people to get vaccinated. This will benefit the community, society and our economic recovery,” he added.

Lim, who is also Kossan Rubber Industries managing director and chief executive officer, said he had so far spent about RM3mil to vaccinate over 7,000 staff, including foreigners.

“We started the process months ago and have managed to have the vaccination drive in batches on our factory grounds.

“Many of them will be getting their second dose next week, where over 90% of the entire workforce would have been vaccinated,” he said.

Lim noted that it was “worth it without waiting for the normal vaccination rollout” as it ensures that the workplace is safe for everyone.