

# Experts to advise government on booster shots next week



By MARTIN CARVALHO, RAHIMY RAHIM, TARRENCE TAN and CLARISSA CHUNG

**NATION**

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KUALA LUMPUR: Recommendations by health experts on whether booster doses are needed, along with the mixing of vaccines, will be given next week, says Khairy Jamaluddin.

The Science, Technology and Innovation Minister said they were still waiting for recommendations by a group of health experts led by Institute for Clinical Research director Dr Kalaivasan Periasamy.

"The recommendations will not just cover whether we need a booster dose but will also look into whether we should do heterologous vaccination," he said, referring to the administration of a different vaccine for the booster shot.

In his briefing session in Parliament yesterday, Khairy, who is the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme coordinating minister, also said Malaysia had started discussions with vaccine manufacturers on possibly securing Covid-19 booster shots and vaccines for children in the year 2022.

"I have listened to feedback from MPs that we should make better and faster preparations (to secure the vaccines) in the years to come.

"There are some countries that have booked the vaccines for year 2022, there may be a need for a third dose or a second booster shot, and a

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“We have a special focus on Pfizer’s new products, which are specifically for booster shots and children,” he said.

As of now, he stressed, Malaysia is only extending vaccination to children with chronic health conditions.

This is due to concerns surrounding reports of a rare side effect of myocarditis or heart inflammation among adolescents who received the Pfizer vaccine.

To a query by Dr Kelvin Yii (PH-Bandar Kuching), Khairy said antibody testing to assess a person’s immunity after vaccination is not currently recommended by the US Food and Drug Administration.

He, however, said that guidelines concerning it may be drawn up in the future.

To another query by Datuk Darell Leiking (Warisan-Penampang), Khairy said those who have gotten their jabs outside of Malaysia and have returned to the country will have a special feature on MySejahtera to show their vaccination status.

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