

**Misteri suri rumah hidapi AIDS**

Title: Mystery of housewife inflicted with AIDS

Quote: "From where she got infected is still a mystery...however her husband nurses her devotedly."

Usually a husband will be suspicious of his wife, a housewife infected with Aids. The situation is further worsened if the husband is certified to be not the carrier.

That is exactly the first reaction of Mr Kamal (not his real name), 45 years old, when told by the doctor that his wife has Aids. His wife, Madam Maria (also not her real name), 38 years old, was diagnosed with Aids about five years ago.

"When I was informed of the illness, questions plagued me. I was very disappointed upon hearing the news. Disappointed because I started doubting my wife's integrity, especially since as a housewife, she was alone at home when I went out to work. I questioned my wife if she had an affair while I was not at home," said Mr Kamal, an employee at a warehouse, who at the time had not undergone a blood test.

However, his wife denied the accusation, maintaining that she was steadfastly loyal to him while he was out of the house. Instead, she accused him of infecting her with the illness.

"She said that it might be me who infected her but I was confident of my innocence," he said.

Before long, Mr Kamal underwent the blood test to confirm whether he was a carrier. "The results from the test proved that I was not a carrier. This made me more suspicious of my wife. As a result, we quarrelled more often," he stated.

Mr Kamal and his wife are blessed with two children, one aged 14 and the other 11. As his family experienced a shortage of money, Madam Maria agreed to stop at two children and made the decision to abort her third child. She had the procedure just months before she was diagnosed with Aids.

Mr Kamal told the story: "She had the procedure in a clinic nearby. At the time, I thought that the illness might have been due to the surgical instruments used by the clinic. However, it was not probable because of the high and tightly controlled hygiene level here and also the duration between the procedure and the diagnosis was too short. So, till today, I don't really know the source of my wife's illness. It is difficult to accuse anyone in this case. For me, it is fate."

After living under a roof with his wife for five years, Mr Kamal said that all his suspicions are gone. Now, he is more focused on taking care of his wife and children.

"The important thing now is for me to ensure that my children have a good education and my wife has the medicine that she needs," said Mr Kamal, now closer to his wife more than ever.

According to him, he had never kept his daily life separate from her. "In fact, I still sleep and eat with her, advising her to look after her health and family," he added.

Mr Kamal estimated that he had to put aside about \$100 per month for his wife's medicine. "This is not inclusive of the appointment with the doctor which would cost about \$250 every three to four months," he added further.

He earns about \$1800 per month but now lives in a four room flat with his family in the eastern part of Singapore. They never needed help from the government because, according to Mr Kamal, he never subscribed to the culture of asking for help.

"Thanks to God, for now I can still afford the household expenditure including my wife's medical needs. If I start asking for help, especially from my siblings, they will ask why. For now, no one knows about my wife's fate. Not even the children – only me," he explained.

**Berita Minggu, 12 April 09 Pg 6**

**Anak-anak semakin saying, rapat dengan ibu yang dikesan hidapi HIV**

**Children become more loving, closer towards mother who is HIV positive**

The three teenagers cried non-stop when they found out that their mother had cancer.

But what they did not know was that their 40-year old mother not only had cancer of the nose, but was also found to be HIV positive.

And just a day before Muslims around the world celebrated the arrival of Syawal last year, the actual state of health of the single mother was revealed.

The youngest child of the unfortunate mother, Zila (not her real name), 17, said: "I had just come back from school.

"At that moment, I saw one of my brothers sobbing in his room."

"I asked him why, but he just kept on crying."

"I started to shiver with fear."

"Only after a few minutes later did he tell me that our mother had cancer", she added.

However, their mother, Ms Zaiton (not her real name), had not revealed the other condition that she is suffering from. According to Ms Zaiton, she had kept it a secret for a few weeks before deciding to tell her teenage children.

"Actually I was worried about telling my three children about my actual condition."

"The reason is that before this, I had a skewed perception of HIV and people who are HIV positive."

"I thought that they only have themselves to blame for being HIV positive."

"So when I was found to be HIV positive, I felt confused. Confused and worried."

"I didn't know how I became a victim of HIV and how my children would react to me when they find out that I'm HIV positive."

But on the last day of Ramadan, she strengthened her resolve to reveal the matter to her children.

Her thoughts turned out to be wrong.

Her three children not only still loved her, but they became closer to her.

According to Ms Zaiton, her children would often remind her of her appointments with the doctor, accompany her to wherever she goes and they would also share towels and their beds with her.

Zamil (not his real name), her eldest son, said that his mother's HIV positive status has not affected the relationships among members of the family who now live together in the central part of Singapore.

"We have no problems sitting and eating together. In fact, I now spend more time with her."

"No matter what, she's still our mother", he added.

Relating how the first time the doctor told her about her being infected with HIV, Ms Zaiton said:

"Initially I thought the doctor called me for an appointment because of my asthma. But when he revealed that I was HIV positive, I was silent for a moment before screaming and fainting in front of him."

"A few social workers then advised me and gave me guidance on how to reduce the stress that I was having."

Asked how she was infected, Ms Zaiton answered that initially she thought her ex-husband had infected her.

"When he was still a bachelor, he was a seaman who often fooled around with women at every port of call. But after I met him, and told him about my problem, he denied everything."

"In fact, he claimed that he had undergone health checkups every year and there were no signs of him having HIV or AIDS", said Ms Zaiton, who divorced her husband around three years ago.

Till today, she has not ascertained how she was infected with HIV. Because she was afraid of being ostracised, Ms Zaiton did not tell her employer about her being HIV positive.

Ms Zaiton, who works in the trading line, said:

"I still need to work because two of my children are still in school. So I'm afraid that if I tell my employer about my condition, I would lose my job."

"And I also need money to pay for the monthly medication that cost around \$500 or more a month – that is only for the cancer and asthma medication."

"For now, I still do not need to take any drugs for the HIV infection."

**CHILDREN BECOMING MORE LOVING, CLOSER:** Ms Zaiton (right) has received unwavering support from her grown up children, even though she is HIV positive.– **Photo: TAUFIK A.KADER.**

