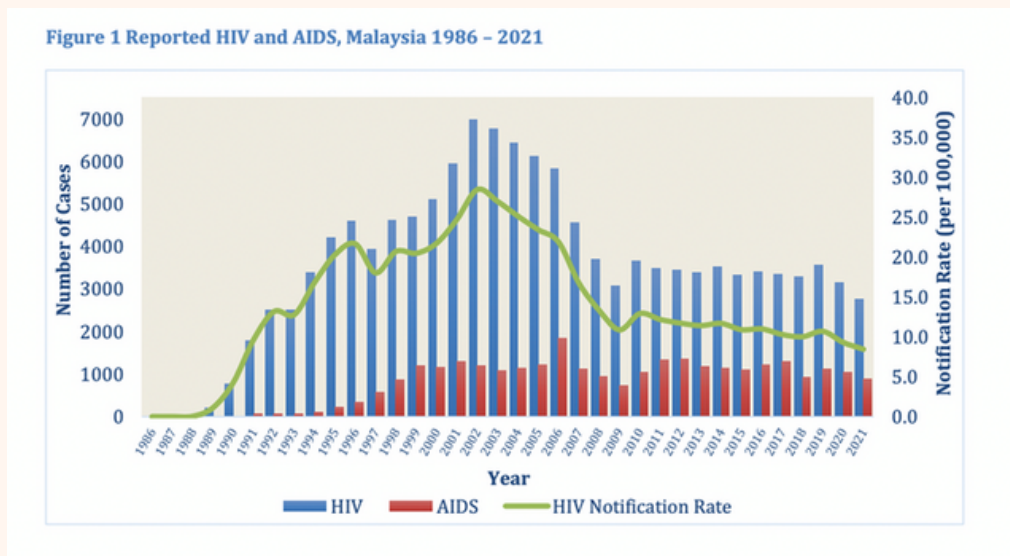


WORLD AIDS DAY 2023

The human immunodeficiency virus or HIV infection, the precursor to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), remains a major global public health menace. According to the United Nations Secretary General António Guterres, despite a reduction by 70% the number of deaths attributed to the syndrome, AIDS still 'takes a life every minute'.

In Malaysia, since the virus was first detected in 1986 till 2021 the number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) was 81,942. From this number 67,822 (83%) were aware of their status and had been notified through the national surveillance system (Figure 1).



As of December 2021, 66% of the reported PLHIV were on antiretroviral treatment (ART). Greater availability and accessibility of ART to all PLHIVs and better patient compliance had contributed to steady decline in AIDS mortality from 12.27 per 100,000 population in 2010 to 4.82 per 100,000 population in 2021. With this positive development, HIV is expected to transition from an epidemic to an endemic in many countries. In this situation, the public health approach needs to be modified to an integrated health system response, and to involve the community more actively. Hence, World AIDS Day 2023 is aptly themed 'Let Communities Lead'.

Let the public take the lead in our effort to trigger the HIV-AIDS endgame.

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