



UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
MARA

NO.3/2023

MED BULL'

FACULTY OF MEDICINE UiTM



eISSN 2805-4628



9 7 7 2 8 0 5 4 6 2 0 0 0

Menyerlahkan Potensi
Membentuk Masa Hadapan



DISTINCT ROLE OF THE PORT KLANG HEALTH OFFICE AS A CROSS-BORDER GATEKEEPER IN THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

By: Dr. Chen Xin Wee & Dr. Zahir Izuan Azhar
Department of Public Health Medicine



International ports of entry, known as 'Pintu Masuk Antarabangsa (PMA),' have a distinct responsibility in facilitating the international trade service. Their role includes receiving and handling merchandise, clearance of travellers, collection of duties, and enforcement of import regulations. One of the most important fundamental functions of PMAs is their contribution to public health through effectively controlling the international spread of communicable diseases. At PMAs, disease surveillance, control, and integral activities include the evaluation of travellers, assurance of staff and infrastructure capabilities, coordination

of public health surveillance with national health surveillance systems, and compliance with international health regulations.

In light of this, the Department of Public Health Medicine has arranged an educational visit to the Port Klang Health Office (PKHO), or 'Pejabat Kesihatan Pelabuhan Klang' with the intention of gaining an insight into the functions, responsibilities, workflow, and coordination with other relevant authorities in disease surveillance, control, and prevention as an international marine-based PMA. Specifically, it aims to understand the

Specifically, it aims to understand the role of PKHO in implementing public health measures at PMA by preventing the spread of infectious diseases from other countries and managing food imports while adhering to Malaysia and international regulations (including the International Health Regulations of 2005). There was a total of 21 Master of Public Health students and two lecturers who conducted the visit on 4th July 2023.

Port Klang is the first marine-based PMA in Malaysia to obtain ISO certification. Among the key performance indicators to be achieved by the PKHO are related to ensuring food safety and quality and effectively preventing the transmission of infectious diseases (for example, Yellow Fever, Plague, Zika, and COVID-19 infections) at the port, either preventing their entry to Malaysia or controlling the exit to foreign locations. Their duties consist of a 100% evaluation of food customs and consignment inspection, label checks on packaged food and finished products, sampling 1% consignments for food analysis, issuance of ship sanitation certificates -Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate (SSCEC) and Ship Sanitation Control Certificate (SSCC). PKHO collaborates with multiple organizations to ensure the effective implementation of health and safety measures within the port area, such as the Port Authority Klang (Lembaga Pelabuhan Klang), Maritime Department (Jabatan Laut),

Royal Malaysian Customs (Kastam Diraja Malaysia) and Department of Veterinary Services (Jabatan Haiwan) and others.



Services and efforts provided by PKHO are undeniably crucial to the health of the public. The disease prevention and control activities carried out at marine-based PMAs must be executed with utmost diligence to safeguard the nation's health. Their efforts to enforce health regulations to preserve public health by safeguarding the PMA against potential international health threats are highly respected.

