

Public health response to restore polio free status in Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Malaysia started the polio immunization programme since 1972 and achieved polio-free certification in 2000. After 27 years from the last reported polio case in 1992, on 8 December 2019, the Ministry of Health Malaysia announced the return of polio into the country when the first polio case detected in Sabah involving a 3-month-old male child (Abdullah, N.H., 2019). The child confirmed to be infected with vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1 (VDPV1) which later classified as a circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1 (cVDPV1). Further test confirmed that the virus is genetically linked to poliovirus (PHL-NCR-2) circulating in the southern Philippines (Alleman, M.M. et al., 2020). To date, a total of four polio cases were confirmed in Sabah of which due to vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1 (VDPV1). The vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2 (VDPV2) was also detected from environmental samples taken from various locations in Sabah.