



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

檳城消費人協會 பிளாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

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Press Statement / Letter to the Editor

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SELF-TEST KITS SHOULD BE AUTHORISED

The rapid spread of the Omicron variant has caused a spike in demand for COVID-19 self-test kits. Such demand has encouraged some people to sell fake or unapproved test kits that the Consumers Association of Penang (CAP) is very concerned about.

In a recent survey by CAP covering pharmacies, 7 Eleven, B Mart, sundry shops, and petrol stations, it was found that COVID-19 self-test kits were being sold at these places. With their widespread sale, we want to know if they have been authorized by Medical Device Authority (MDA).

Although MDA has identified a list of 12 companies and their products that it had approved, it is a very inconvenient method for consumers to verify at the point-of-purchase.

CAP urges the government to restrict the sale of COVID 19 self-test kits to be restricted to pharmacies and certified retail outlets. Expanding their availability to supermarkets, convenience stores and petrol stations will make monitoring of MDA more difficult.

There is also the concern that there are irresponsible people may sell fake or unapproved Covid-19 self-test kits online. Has the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia regulated or ban the sale of self-test kits on online platforms?

False-negative test results can lull a person into complacency which can then help in the spread of the virus and also deprive the person of early medical intervention.

To facilitate consumers' ease of identifying an MDA approved device, why doesn't it create a common logo combined with a QR code that consumers can easily identify and, if they want, scan the QR code for details of the product? The current system of carrying MDA's serial number is not really helpful as it takes time to search the packaging for it as compared to a prominent logo.

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