



ENHANCING ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE IN HEALTHCARE

Roszaman Ramli^a, Wan Muhamad Salahudin Wan Salleh^b, Nor Azillah Abdul Aziz^c

^a Department of Clinical, Faculty of Medicine and Defence Health, National Defence University of Malaysia, Sg. Besi Camp, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

^b Kuliyah of Medicine, International Islamic University of Malaysia, Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, Bandar Indera Mahkota, 25200 Kuantan, Pahang, Malaysia

^c Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (O&G), Hospital Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah, Jalan Maran, 28000 Temerloh, Pahang, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This workshop focuses on the integration of Islamic perspectives within the realms of family planning, abortion, and menstrual suppression in healthcare settings. Through a series of keynote speeches, panel discussions, and interactive sessions, the forum provided an in-depth exploration of these topics, fostering a deeper understanding among participants.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Forum Mesra Ibadah Peringkat Kebangsaan hosted by Hospital Sultan Ahmad Shah Temerloh, emerged as a beneficial platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange, bringing together healthcare professionals and religious scholars from across Malaysia. Its objective was to harmonize religious guidance with contemporary healthcare practices, emphasizing the essential role of Islamic principles in enhancing patient care. The forum's agenda was designed to address some of the most important common issues at the intersection of Islam and healthcare, including the ethical and religious considerations surrounding contraception in particular permanent sterilization, abortion, and the practice of menstrual suppression.

Prof Dr Roszaman bin Ramli, a consultant in Reproductive Medicine and Advanced Gynaecologic Laparoscopic Surgery. He has great experience in the field of obstetrics and gynaecology (O&G) and has shared his view on the topics of ethics and Islamic perspective in reproductive medicine. Ustaz Nor Hamizi bin Jamaluddin (PU Mizi), a well-known public speaker. He brings a wealth of knowledge on the ethical dimensions of medical practices, contributing to a nuanced understanding of health care within the Islamic framework. Ustazah Nazirah binti Abu Bakar, with her expertise in Arabic Language and Literature, and Islamic Studies, she works with (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia) JAKIM offers invaluable insights into the religious aspects of healthcare.

2.0 FAMILY PLANNING AND STERILIZATION

The forum dedicated a significant portion of its agenda to studying the complexities of family planning and sterilization within an Islamic context. It emphasized that family planning, distinct from abortion, is a proactive approach to managing the well-being of the family unit, especially in circumstances where

pregnancy could pose health risks to the mother or exacerbate existing medical conditions. The discussions explored various methods of contraception, from natural and barrier methods to hormonal interventions (such as pills, injections, and implants), intrauterine devices (IUCDs), and permanent solutions like bilateral tubal ligation (BTL) and vasectomy.

The permissibility of BTL, particularly in cases where future pregnancies could endanger maternal health, was discussed in detail. The panellists emphasised that such decisions should be made with careful consideration of Islamic principles, which prioritize the preservation of life (maqasid shariah). The ethical implications of choosing permanent sterilization were weighed against the potential health risks of future pregnancies, emphasizing the importance of informed consent and the need for healthcare providers to offer comprehensive counselling to couples considering these options.

2.1 Abortion (Termination of Pregnancy)

Abortion was approached with sensitivity and depth, acknowledging the ethical dilemmas and emotional weight of such decisions. The forum explored the Islamic ethical framework that permits abortion under specific conditions, such as when the mother's life is at risk. The scholars delved into the intricate debate on when life begins (ensoulment) and the varying perspectives within Islamic jurisprudence, ranging from 40 to 120 days after conception. This discussion was crucial for understanding the conditions under which abortion may be considered permissible, and it highlighted the need for healthcare professionals to navigate these decisions with compassion, knowledge, and respect for Islamic teachings [2-3].

Panellists also discussed the Ministry of Health Malaysia (KKM) guidelines for abortion, emphasizing the importance of following legal and ethical protocols in clinical practice. The guidelines serve as a vital resource for healthcare providers, ensuring that decisions around abortion are made with consideration of both medical and religious principles.

2.2 Menstrual Suppression

The topic of menstrual suppression, particularly in the context of religious observances like Ramadan and Umrah, sparked engaging discussions. The forum addressed the growing interest in using hormonal treatments to suppress menstruation, allowing women to participate fully in fasting and pilgrimage activities. Panellists presented a balanced view, acknowledging the convenience such practices offer while also cautioning against unnecessary interference with natural bodily processes. The discussions advocated for a measured approach, where menstrual suppression is considered based on individual health needs for instance in severe cases of menorrhagia, which could lead to anaemia, rather than for convenience alone [4-6].

The forum urges healthcare professionals to provide guidance based on both medical insight and Islamic ethical considerations. This approach ensures that women are fully informed of the implications of menstrual suppression and can make decisions that align with their health, faith, and personal circumstances.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Forum Mesra Ibadah Kebangsaan marked a significant step forward in the integration of Islamic perspectives into healthcare. It showcased the critical need for a holistic approach to patient care that equally values physical health and spiritual well-being. The forum encourages future discourse, urging a collaborative effort between medical and religious communities to foster compassionate and ethically sound healthcare practices.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Forum Mesra Ibadah Kebangsaan marked a significant step forward in the integration of Islamic perspectives into healthcare. It showcased the critical need for a holistic approach to patient care that equally values physical health and spiritual well-being. The forum encourages future discourse, urging a collaborative effort between medical and religious communities to foster compassionate and ethically sound healthcare practices.

5.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

6.0 AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

Ramli, R. (Conceptualization; Methodology; Formal analysis)

Wan Salleh, W. M. S. (Resources; Software; Data curation; Writing - original draft; Resources)

Abdul Aziz, N. A. (Writing - original draft; Project administration; Supervision)

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