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Health

THREE CONSORTIA GET PRIVATISED HOSPITAL SERVICES

KUALA LUMPUR, April 22 (Bernama) -- Three consortia have been selected to manage five supporting services to be privatised in government hospitals by September this year.

Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng said the three consortia, awarded contracts of 15 years each, are led by Faber Bhd, Asia Lab Sdn Bhd and Tongkah Berhad and each would be allocated hospitals in certain states.

The consortia would be given five years to achieve the international standard of ISO 9002, Chua told reporters after he delivered a keynote address on "Privatisation In Healthcare -- Challenges and Opportunities" at the Malaysian Privatisation Summit here today.

The supporting services are clinical waste management, cleaning services, linen and laundry services, facility engineering maintenance services and biomedical engineering maintenance services.

Under the project, which is worth RM480 million annually, Faber Bhd would be responsible for hospitals in Perlis, Kedah, Pulau Pinang, Perak, Sabah and Sarawak; Asia Lab Sdn Bhd for hospitals in Federal Territory, Selangor, Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan while Tongkah Bhd will be responsible for those in Negeri Sembilan, Malacca and Johor.

Chua said the ministry will set up a special monitoring unit of eight engineers assisted by a private consultant to supervise the consortia.

Asked if the government would model its privatised health services after Singapore's, he said a study was being undertaken by consultants Rashid Hussein Bhd.

Some aspects would be copied from Singapore and some other countries apart from incorporating Malaysia's own experience, he said.

In his speech, Chua said in implementing the privatisation policy, the ministry would ensure that non-profitable but essential services would continue to be given attention.

The government, he said, would not shirk its responsibility to provide affordable health care to the poor and will continue to regulate the health care industry to safeguard the public interest.

For example, the government subsidised RM60 million for heart patients at the National Heart Institute last year, he said.

Also present at the ceremony were Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute President Mirzan Mahathir and Economic Planning Unit Director-General Tan Sri Ali Abul Hassan Sulaiman. -- BERNAMA

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