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Chua: Health shops to be set up in all hospitals

MUAR, Sat. - The Health Ministry has proposed that "health shops" be set up in all government hospitals within a year, its Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng said.

These shops would be run by the hospital's sports clubs or welfare bodies.

He said he had directed State health directors to look into the set-up, adding that private hospitals which had no such facility were encouraged to do so.

"This concept was mooted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad recently," Chua told reporters after launching the country's first such shop at the Muar Hospital today.

The Minister said profits from the shops could be channelled into sponsoring health and welfare activities for the hospital staff, families and patients.

"These shops will allow patients, their families and visitors to buy goods which are relevant to healthy living and lifestyle.

"Visitors can also buy flowers and other gifts for their relatives and friends there."

Chua said these shops would also sell fitness gadgets and other health-related products, adding that the prices would be kept competitive.

He said the shops would be environmental-friendly and no plastic bags would be used.

They will also distribute free pamphlets for a healthy lifestyle.

Chua praised Muar Hospital director Dr Arbain Lani for implementing the concept at the hospital swiftly.

On the shortage of dental surgeons in the country, Chua said his Ministry had held discussions with the Public Service Department on employing foreign dental surgeons on a contract basis.

"This is aimed at overcoming the shortage speedily. Although we are conducting specific training to produce dental surgeons, we are not producing fast enough to meet the country's demand," he said.

Chua, opening the Muar Hospital's Family and Open Day earlier, called on hospital staff to inject and strengthen the corporate culture in the hospital's administration, by stressing a caring attitude, teamwork, accountability and professionalism.

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