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Cheaper dialysis treatment in NS

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THE completion of the RM6 million Haemodialysis Centre along Rasah Road in Seremban is a dream come true for State Executive Councillor Dr Yeow Chai Thiam.

The majestic four-storey building located on a 0.6 hectare site close to the Seremban Hospital will be officially declared open by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Monday.

The idea to build the centre rated as the biggest in Asia was mooted by Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad.

"In an effort to help poor kidney patients, it was Mohamad Isa's idea to build this centre. I was appointed chairman and took it as a challenge to see that it become a reality," said Dr Yeow.

Patients seeking treatment at private clinics have to cough out at least RM150 per visit.

"The plight of poor kidney patients is understandable. Most of them are from the lower income group and cannot afford to visit private clinics regularly for treatment," he said.

"We had to get this centre opened because we care for the poor. At the centre, they only need to pay RM70 for each treatment.

"If they are still unable to pay we are prepared to subsidise the fee. No one will be turned away. We cannot allow the poor to suffer. As a responsible Government, we have to help everyone." He said it was the State Government's target to raise RM20 million to be put into a fixed deposit account. The interest earned will be used to subsidise the cost of treatment for poor patients.

"We want the patient's children to be involved. If they do well in their studies, patient will get a RM5 rebate," he said.

"If the patient has more children and if they all do well in school, the patient will pay very much less for treatment.

"This is to motivate and encourage the patient's children to be more concerned and caring about their parents."

For a start, 15 machines costing about RM1 million will be installed at the centre which will be manned by a doctor and four nurses.

"We are also making provisions for patients who work in the day to come for treatment at night. The poor really have to work but we do not want to deny them of treatment," said Dr Yeow.

"In time to come, we hope to open up a centre in all seven districts in the State. As some of them cannot travel to Seremban for treatment, we will bring medical care to them. We hope to install five machines at each centre."

He said regular visits would be made to schools to make the pupils aware of kidney disease.

"Most of children in urban and rural areas are totally ignorant of the disease. We have to educate them from young," he said.

To mark the official opening on Monday, a grand dinner at the NS padang has been planned.

The organising committee has sold 20,200 tickets and hope to raise RM10 million through the dinner.

"Those who donate for this good cause will get income tax exemption. We need about RM35,000 a month to manage this centre which is run on a non-profit basis," said Dr Yeow.

For Dr Yeow who has had sleepless nights thinking of ways to raise funds

to set up this centre, it is a dream come true which he will cherish for life.

"Much of the credit should go to Mohamad Isa. If not for his ideas and support, this dream would not have been realised. Those in my committee also played a role and the team effort paid off," said Dr Yeow.

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