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Chua-Telemedicine

LIABILITY ISSUES MUST RESOLVE BEFORE USING TELEMEDICINE

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 18 (Bernama) -- The issue of liability of those involved in telemedicine should be resolved before the practice can be adopted worldwide, Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng said today.

He said telemedicine included teleconsultation between individuals or institutions in different countries and therefore liability was an important issue.

"How can we determine the party that should hold the responsibility in cases where the patients and the doctors are not in the same country," he told reporters after chairing a panel discussion on telemedicine at the Multimedia Asia '97 conference and exhibition here.

Chua said he will meet his Australian counterpart this Saturday to discuss the matter and find a common policy pertaining to the issue. He will discuss the matter with Japan, the United States and Canada.

Under the Telemedicine Act, medical practitioners and institutions wishing to offer their services to Malaysians through telemedicine should register with the Malaysian Medical Council. This is to ensure that they will take the responsibility for what they offered.

On the progress of the telemedicine project, Chua said 51 local and foreign companies had bought the Concept Request For Proposals (CRFPs) for the four pilot projects namely Lifetime Health Plan, Tele-consultation, Continuing Medical Education and Mass Customised/Personalised Health Information and Education.

"A total of 4,239 CRFP documents had also been downloaded from the Multimedia Development Corporation website. It is very encouraging to note that both local and multinational web shaper companies have shown keen interest in this project" he said.

The responding organisations, he said were given until the end of October to submit their proposals.

Telemedicine or 'medicine at a distance' is one of the seven flagship applications for the MSC apart from Smart Schools, Multipurpose Card, Electronic Government, Research and Development Cluster, Worldwide Manufacturing Web and Borderless Marketing.

The CRFPs, or proposal for the pilot projects, for Telemedicine, Electronic Government, Smart Schools and the Multipurpose Card were launched by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on July 26.

-- BERNAMA

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