

21/07/1997

Private sector can develop four areas

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The Health Ministry will propose four areas of applications to help the private sector develop pilot projects for the Multimedia Super Corridor's telemedicine flagship.

The four areas are:

- * Life-time Health Plan: An ambitious and complex proposal to enable medical practitioners to formulate personalised health plans for individuals;
- * Teleconsultation: Distance healthcare consultation services with the aid of appropriate multimedia information technology solutions;
- * Continuing Medical Education: An infrastructure project to build human resources to enable practitioners to continuously upgrade knowledge and skills; and,
- * Mass Customised/Personalised Health Information and Education: Providing information and education on health care to the masses and specific communities.

The Health Ministry's director-general Tan Sri Dr Abu Bakar Suleiman said today the proposals were developed by the Telemedicine Task Force, comprising 16 international web companies, officials from the Multimedia Development Corporation and the ministry.

The proposals, called the Concept Request for Proposals (CRFPs), would be launched by the month's end by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad together with the CRFPs of three other flagships - electronic government, the multipurpose card and Smart schools.

"The pilot projects to be selected in the telemedicine flagship application are targeted at keeping the people well," he said after launching a one-day seminar on telemedicine at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital.

The seminar was organised by the Malaysian Medical Association.

The launch of the CRFPs are to enable the private sector to give feedback and submit proposals for the development and implementation of applications of the flagships.

Dr Abu Bakar said the private sector had three months to come up with their proposals and by the end of the year, the successful consortia would be awarded the project.

On the Health Ministry's proposal, Dr Abu Bakar said the Life-time Health Plan was aimed at keeping people in the "wellness paradigm as long as possible".

"Multimedia solutions will be provided for practitioners to (formulate) personalised health plans for the specific needs of individuals not only when they are ill but even when they are well."

To facilitate this, health data of every individual, from birth to death, must be systematically recorded and made available to practitioners through the national telemedicine network.

Interactive knowledge databases will be created for people to access from their homes, public kiosks or even work places.

Dr Abu Bakar said Teleconsultation would provide specialist service in terms of diagnosis, treatment and care management in remote areas where medical practitioners could consult each other interactively.

The Continuing Medical Education area will upgrade quality of care to world-class standards besides reducing professional isolation among practitioners in remote areas.

"It will also ensure practitioners constantly keep abreast with the

latest development in medical science and practice," said Dr Abu Bakar.

He said the four proposals encompassed all aspects of healthcare and a comprehensive development and implementation plan was being put in place.

"New processes, systems, structures and training to develop new skills and shared values are in the pipeline," he said. "Once these early pilot projects are implemented successfully, more will be undertaken."

(END)