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Telemedicine service by end of year

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The Government hopes to implement all telemedicine projects by the end of the year or early next year, Director-General of Health Tan Sri Dr Abu Bakar Suleiman said today.

The Health Ministry would send the final report to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in June, he said after attending a demonstration on "Telemedicine in Obstetrics" programme.

The implementation would depend on the equipment and the facilities available, he said, adding that two important elements of the application were video conferencing and tele-radiology.

Telemedicine enables the exchange of information on health and health services the world over.

Dr Abu Bakar said the ministry would use the models of several developed countries in the implementation of telemedicine, including the costs which had to be borne by the patients.

He added in the United States, hospitals practising telemedicine claimed the costs from the patients and insurance companies but in Australia, the costs were difficult to ascertain because they varied according to the areas or States.

Earlier, he opened the Kuala Lumpur Hospital's day-care obstetrics unit and obstetrics and gynaecology training centre. - Bernama

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