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Hospital Pantai's new service officially launched

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HOSPITAL Pantai Bhd's Stereotatic Radiosurgery and Radiotherapy Service was officially launched by Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng yesterday.

The service, set up at a cost of RM2 million, has been in used since December year and 15 cases have been treated to date, said Hospital Pantai executive chairman Mokhzani Mahathir.

The service relates to a treatment which is a non-invasive alternative to open surgery for certain brain tumours and brain lesions with minimal risk of haemorrhage or infection.

Called the X-Knife Linac (linear accelerator) System, an "invisible blade" of radiation instead of a scalpel is used during the surgery.

With this service, Mokhzani said, Malaysians no longer need to seek treatment overseas. The hospital, he added, plans to market this system in neighbouring countries where it is not available.

"We are looking at Indonesia especially. At present, they (the Indonesians) come here for treatment," he told Business Times yesterday.

"We have taken pains to ensure that our service is of the highest standard of international care. Our staff have been trained in the best hospitals in this region, such as The Prince of Wales Hospital in Sydney and the Christian Medical College in Vellore, South India," Mokhzani said.

The Hospital Pantai group owns and manages five hospitals with a total of 1,100 beds and more than 170 specialists.

The hospital houses the Worldcare Health Telemedicine hub linked to the Johns Hopkins Medical Centre, Duke University Hospital, Cleveland Clinic and the Massachusetts General Hospital in the US.

On another development, Mokhzani said Hospital Pantai associate company Tongkah Holdings' proposal to buy MGI Securities Sdn Bhd (MGIS) is still on, contrary to market talk that said otherwise.

Mokhzani is also executive chairman of Tongkah.

"The proposal is still there ... we have to wait for MGIC (holding company of MGIS) to complete its restructuring scheme which will probably take some eight months," he said.

Both parties, he added, are "still looking at the numbers".

Tongkah is said to offer between RM60 million and RM70 million to MGIC to buy MGIS' licence, an offer one source said is below what MGIC is asking for.

"MGIC is asking for more," said the source.

According to Mokhzani, securing a stockbroking licence for a branch in Kuala Lumpur is a good opportunity as Tongkah does not have to pay a high premium for it.

MGIC has filed for a restraining order under Section 176 against its creditors. It is expected to take care of all its debts and liabilities before selling MGIS to Tongkah.

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