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Hospital Pantai sets timeframe for telemedicine

Ariff Awang

HOSPITAL Pantai Bhd has set a timeframe of three months, beginning today, to implement the telemedicine services in all five of its hospitals in the country.

The five hospitals are Pantai Medical Centre Sdn Bhd, Cheras Medical Centre Sdn Bhd, Pantai Klang Specialist Medical Centre Sdn Bhd, Paloh Medical Centre Sdn Bhd and its latest branch in Penang, Pantai Mutiara Medical Centre Sdn Bhd.

Its chairman Mokhzani Mahathir said at present Hospital Pantai is running the testing stage of operations for the telemedicine service at Pantai Medical Centre and Pantai Klang Specialist Medical Centre.

He said at this stage, Tongkah Information Resource Sdn Bhd and the joint-venture company, Worldcare Health (M) Sdn Bhd, will concentrate on training the hospital staff and medical personnel to get used to the application of the service system.

He was speaking to reporters after a briefing on the telemedicine service by Worldcare managing director for Asia, Rajiv Ramaprasad, at the Pantai Medical Centre in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

In 1997, Tongkah Holdings Bhd teamed up with the US-based Worldcare Ltd to form Worldcare Health for the purpose of running the telemedicine service within the Hospital Pantai chain and also to set up eight major nodes nationwide in which RM15 million would be invested in the venture, over the next two years.

Worldcare Health's paid-up capital at this stage of the telemedicine service operations is RM200,000, said Mokhzani, who is also Tongkah Holdings executive chairman.

"We started off the service in Pantai Medical and Pantai Klang Specialist first before extending it to our hospital chain and other hospitals as we familiarise the staff and the doctors with the system," he said.

At a later stage, he said, Hospital Pantai will offer the service to other hospitals and clinics, including those in remote areas, whereby they can subscribe to the service.

By subscribing to the service, Mokhzani said, doctors in the clinics can send cases for diagnosis and get second opinions on treatment through the telemedicine or teleconsultation service.

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