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Chua-Neonatal

MALAYSIA RECORDS DECLINE IN NEONATAL DEATHS

PORT DICKSON, July 31 (Bernama) -- Neonatal death in Malaysia involving infants under one year is on the decline following better health facilities and improved social condition among the people, said Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng today.

The rate declined to nine cases per 1,000 compared to 40 per 1,000 in 1970, almost equalled to seven per 1,000 in the United States and six per 1,000 in the United Kingdom, he told reporters after opening the 20th annual congress of the Malaysia Paediatric Association, here.

To further reduce the rate, Chua said the ministry had organised resuscitation course to save the life of infants in emergency situations like domestic accidents, breathing difficulties and drinking poison or kerosene by accident.

In his speech, he said the ministry had appointed 50 instructors to conduct the course for paediatricians and paramedics.

To-date 3,000 medical practitioners and paramedics from government hospitals had attended the course, he said.

Chua said that last month, the Kuala Lumpur Hospital's emergency unit provided life support system to 1,000 infants.

During the function, Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir who represented her mother Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd presented "Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali Research Award 1998" to Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Hospital's paediatrician Dr Hasniah Abdul Latif for her research on "Prevalence of Thalassaemia carrier among secondary school children in Kuala Lumpur."

Chua said the prestigious award hopefully would encourage more researches be carried out in the field.

-- BERNAMA

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