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'Villagers need more knowledge on health care'

BENTONG, Sat. - People living in rural areas must be given more exposure to health care as this still rates very low in their lives as opposed to those in urban areas.

Menteri Besar Datuk Adnan Yaakob said it was important for villagers to have knowledge on health care as it would enable them to take precautions to avoid serious illness.

"Most of the people in rural areas are not aware that prevention is better than cure, they only go to the hospital whenever they get sick.

"It would be better for the villagers to visit the hospital at least once in every one or two months and get their sugar, cholesterol and blood checked," he said.

Adnan said this after launching the Telemedicine and Prevention of Heart Disease Programme which connects the Pelangai district here on line via Internet to Institut Jantung Negara in Kuala Lumpur.

The programme is organised by Prosakti Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of The New Straits Times Press (M) Bhd.

This is the first such programme involving Prosakti and the people in rural areas.

"The Telemedicine programme is one of the most effective ways which can help create awareness and expose villagers to the importance of health care.

"Furthermore, this programme also enables villagers to get an insight into medical advancement in the country."

Adnan, who is also State Assemblyman for Pelangai, said with the programme villagers did not have to travel to the hospital.

"In the future, Telemedicine would be available in every house and village similar to radio and television.

"The cost of setting up the Telemedicine facility might be high now but when the demand is high the cost can be reduced, thus enabling everyone to have access to this service," he said.

Adnan also added that the programme was in line with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's vision.

Meanwhile, Prosakti's managing director Dr Azimah Pilus said the aim of the programme was to give medical service to people, especially those in rural areas.

"The programme would help the villagers to be aware of the importance of health care. They too would be able to benefit from the current medical advancement."

"At this stage, the Telemedicine service only concentrates on certain illnesses such as diabetes and high blood pressure," Dr Azimah said.

To access the Telemedicine service people have to pay only RM45 to Prosakti compared to RM80 at other centres.

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