

# 'Local medical services good, affordable'

**KUALA LUMPUR, Wed:** Medical services in Malaysia not only have good facilities but are available at affordable cost and are internationally-recognised, Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng said today.

The expertise available should not be questioned.

"We have progressed and are capable of attracting patients from overseas, for example Brunei, which at one time sent all their heart pa-

tients to Singapore," he said at his ministry here.

"After a VIP from Brunei went to our National Heart Institute and found our facilities just as good with high expertise but at a much lower cost, they started sending all their heart patients here."

Chua was asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday on the special treatment Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim received

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for his spinal injury.

Chua said he was surprised by Anwar's decision not to trust local surgeons and instead seek help from a doctor in Germany.

He recently received a report from a spine specialist attached to a private medical centre in Penang who had been asked to examine Anwar in February.

According to the report, he said, there are three ways to treat a backbone injury -

by laser surgery, endoscopic approach and microsurgery.

In the doctor's opinion, the first two methods are unsuitable in Anwar's case but microsurgery by the Kuala Lumpur Hospital specialist, as recommended by the government, is the best approach, he added.

Chua echoed Mahathir's statement that the criticism over Anwar's case were not based on medical grounds but politically-motivated.