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Infant-Death

FOCUS ON PREGNANT MOTHERS TO REDUCE NEONATAL DEATHS

ALOR GAJAH, Aug 7 (Bernama) -- The Health Ministry will focus on the healthcare of pregnant mothers in its public awareness campaign to reduce the number of neonatal deaths in the country.

Health Deputy Director-General Datuk Dr Ahmad Tajudin Jaafar said health awareness among pregnant mothers had improved as they now frequently visited clinics for medical consultation and check-ups.

"The rise in neonatal deaths does not mean that the health standard has dipped, instead the awareness among pregnant mothers now is very good," he said after opening the Alor Gajah Hospital maternity ward here today.

Dr Ahmad Tajudin was asked to comment on Melaka Chief Minister Datuk Wira Mohd Ali Rustam's statement yesterday which said the neonatal deaths in the state was on the rise.

He said the government had improved the medical care and facilities for pregnant mothers in public hospitals.

Dr Ahmad Tajudin said the neonatal mortality rate in Melaka was 5.87 per cent for every 1,000 births last year as against 3.4 per cent in 1999.

On hospitals which used the paperless concept, he said so far there were two in the country -- Selayang Hospital and Putrajaya Hospital -- and the public response towards these two hospitals was very encouraging.

"Apart from using sophisticated equipment, these hospitals also have medical specialists to give the best treatment available to patients," he said.

Yesterday Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, when opening the Lumut naval hospital, said the government would build seven more hospitals which will use the information technology and telemedicine concept in processing medical data.

-- BERNAMA

SBS ZUL