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College

MELAKA-MANIPAL MEDICAL COLLEGE STUDENTS ALLOWED TO DO HOUSEMANSHIP

KUALA LUMPUR, July 3 (Bernama) -- The first batch of the Melaka-Manipal Medical College students have been allowed to register with the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC) and to do housemanship following a Cabinet decision.

Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng said today that the first batch of students had already completed their studies and their degree would also be recognised by the council.

He said the second batch of students, who are currently doing their internship, would also be allowed to register and do their housemanship.

However, if any of them were found to be lacking in clinical skills, they would be required to undergo another two months of clinical assessment under the supervision of specialists before being allowed to register and do housemanship, he told reporters after opening the national public health laboratory here.

He said that for the third batch of students, who are still studying, the college had been asked to change the course structure to five years, similar to other medical colleges in the country.

Chua said that currently, the college follows the Manipal Medical College system in India which is four-and-half-years of studies plus a one-year internship, followed by housemanship. The Malaysian system is five years' study, followed by housemanship.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad directed the Health Ministry to resolve amicably the problems faced by the college students over the new conditions set by the MMC.

Works Minister and MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu had earlier raised with the Cabinet the plight of the students, who are facing problems following the council's imposition of new conditions for the recognition of the Melaka-Manipal College degree.

The RM50 million Melaka-Manipal Medical College, which began operations in 1997 and was opened by Dr Mahathir in July 2001, offers an MBBS twinning programme in its two campuses in Melaka and Manipal. It is the first and only private college in Melaka to offer tertiary education in medicine.

"We recognised that the students and parents are not at fault. They followed all the conditions laid by the ministry. We have to look at the interests of the country, the quality of doctors and the students," said Chua.

-- BERNAMA

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