

14/09/2003

MMA happy hospitals can set up business wing

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The Malaysian Medical Association thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for approving private commercial wings in government hospitals under Budget 2004.

MMA president-elect Dr Teoh Siang Chin said in a statement this would provide patients with more options, including private healthcare services.

"The private and public mix healthcare service is welcomed as it will cross-subsidise some of the services for the poor in public hospitals.

"However, we must be careful that guidelines and safeguards are in place to ensure that all receive quality care," he said.

"With this, more government healthcare staff will have additional income," he added.

Meanwhile, Life Insurance Association of Malaysia (LIAM) said Budget 2004 showed the Government's interest in encouraging more people to take up medical and health insurance.

"As good corporate citizens, insurers will ensure premiums are affordable," it said.

"The premiums for medical insurance products are priced according to claims and also medical charges imposed by doctors and hospitals."

At present, only 35 per cent of Malaysians have insurance cover.

LIAM hoped the Government would consider its proposal to increase the personal tax relief for life insurance premiums to RM5,000.

The current tax relief for education and medical policies is RM3,000.