

PKR: Public engagement on 1Care only afterthought
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PKR has slammed the Health Ministry for engaging the public on the controversial 1Care health insurance system only after receiving severe opposition to the plan.

"It is surprising that (Health Minister Liow Tiong Lai) is only talking about explaining and engaging with the public now, after 1Care has attracted a lot of opposition from the rakyat.

NONE"Like other BN pronouncements such as the SBPA, it seems consultation is only an after-thought.

"We have received complaints from doctors involved in previous consultations on 1Care that there was no true engagement and dialogue involved.

"(Yet) the government is set to continue with 1Care," said PKR chief Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail in a statement today.

The wife of de facto PKR chief Anwar Ibrahim noted that Liow had now said the blueprint for the mandatory health insurance system will only be done in two years, promising nationwide roadshows to explain and engage with the public.

She said introducing the 1Care system would not solve the country's healthcare problems if the ministry did not address immediate problems first.

"As mentioned in my earlier statement, our government expenditure at 2.2 percent for health as a percentage to GDP in Malaysia in 2008 is still lower than the WHO recommendation of 5 to 6 percent.

"WHO has also estimated that 20 to 40 percent of government expenditure in health is wasted on inefficiencies including corruption.

"Thus introducing 1Care without overcoming the existing inefficiencies will increase the opportunity for corruption which would be truly tragic for the country's health care system.

"This is similar to the privatisation of various sectors of the country's healthcare system over the past two decades which were supposed to increase efficiency yet only resulted in more leakages," said Wan Azizah.

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