

## **GST on medicines will hurt patients, says MP**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**Nov 27, 2014**

Kampar MP Ko Chung Sen, who is a surgeon by training, has lamented that imposing the goods and services tax (GST) on certain medicines could potentially affect the welfare of patients.

This, he said, is because patients and doctors may pick and choose medication that are zero-rated for GST over those that are imposed with GST.

"We as doctors and pharmacists, when treating patients, we don't want tax issues to cloud our judgment when choosing medicines.

"We just want to concentrate on treating our patients, not be influenced by this GST," he told a press conference at the Parliament lobby this afternoon.

Ko (left), together with Lanang MP Alice Lau and Sibu MP Oscar Ling, who are pharmacists by training, had earlier declared support for the Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society's petition.

The petition urges that all medicines, including controlled medicines under Schedule Poison B and C, to be zero-rated.

For now, the government only plans for essential medicines to be zero-rated.

However, Ko said the essential medicine list has not been properly updated and contained old medicine and those no longer used.

In contrast, he said modern medicine which are critical to certain patients are not on the list.

For example, he said a recent cancer drug costs RM300 per tablet and needs to be taken daily.

"That is RM9,000 a month, imagine how much it will be if you add six percent GST to that," he said.

Meanwhile, Lau said 85 out of 88 Pakatan MPs have signed the petition for all medicine to be zero-rated.

She also urged the public to support the petition.

Source <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/281776>