

RM9.9bil subsidy for gov't hospitals and clinics in 2009

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The government spent RM9.9 billion in subsidy for individuals' health care at all government hospitals and health clinics last year.

Deputy Health Minister Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin said 98 percent of the cost for medical and health services at the government facilities were subsidised by the government.

However, she said, the ministry did not have information on the amount of subsidy for the treatment of each patient at the 1Malaysia clinics, but 721,888 people had sought treatment at these clinics nationwide up to last Sunday.

She said out of this number, less than one per cent were foreign nationals.

"To ensure that only Malaysians enjoy the subsidy, they are only charged RM1 per treatment compared to RM15 for foreigners," she added in reply to a question from Senator Daljit Singh Dalliwal in the Dewan Rakyat today.

Rosnah said at the moment, the 1Malaysia clinics did not provide haemodialysis treatment for people with kidney problems

"Haemodialysis is provided at the government hospitals as the 1Malaysia clinics do not have suitable infrastructure nor the medical specialists to provide the treatment."

Rosnah said to date, there were 485 haemodialysis centres with 5,255 machines nationwide for 17,477 patients.

She said the haemodialysis centres were managed by the government, private sector and non-governmental organisations.

To a question from senator Nor Hayati Onn whether the ministry had contravened the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act by setting up the 1Malaysia clinics, Rosnah said it did not breach any Act or healthcare service regulations.

"The nurses and medical assistants at these clinics are capable and qualified to treat minor illnesses like cough, cold and fever.

"They do not have the medical expertise of doctors. So, they will refer the more serious cases to the government hospitals or health clinics," she said.

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