

Traditional medicine: what's the health DG's stand?

Malaysiakini.com

Apr 24, 2008

Dr Hj Mohd Ebrahim Sulaiman

It is clearly written in the Health Ministry guidelines that Integrated Medicine is allowed in our healthcare system. I quote:
MCPX

'The Ministry of Health Malaysia in 2001 defined T/CM (Traditional/Complementary Medicine) as practices other than that of Medicine or Surgery, by registered medical practitioners as defined in the Medical Act 1971.' - Malaysian Medical Council, Ministry of Health Malaysia (2001).

I understand that the above official guideline permits registered medical practitioners to practice T/CM integrated with the conventional medicine provided they are properly trained in that specialty.

That matter was clarified by Dr Sulaiman Mohamed, the previous deputy health minister of health as well as MS Pillay, the ministry's deputy director-general and Dr Ramli Abd Gani who is the head of the ministry's TCM Division in that registered practitioners are allowed to practice T/CM as under the Medical Act 1971 and we were encouraged to go ahead with our integrative practice.

As a chapter leader of the Medical Practitioners for Complementary Therapies (MSCT), I have conveyed this message to our members and they are very happy. And trusting this information and by referring to the MOH website, many doctors started investing heavily in their practice set-up.

But on April 19, at a symposium on evidence-based complementary medicine by the Malaysian Medical Association, the Health Director-General said something quite different and shocking. He explained that registered medical practitioners are not allowed to practice T/CM and that they must choose one type of practice - either T/CM or conventional therapy!

Such a statement is against the above 1971 Medical Act and the Health Ministry's own national policy and not to say, is misleading to all of us. Further, Dr Ismail Merican ridiculed T/CM.

It would seem that the DG is biased against T/CM and does not seem to have taken into account guidelines which have been institutionalised. As such there is a lot of anger, confusion and worry amongst our members.

I believe that in this politically-stable and law-abiding country, all government officers should follow, respect and abide existing law such as the 1971 Medical Act quoted above.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.

Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news//81873>