

Govt mulling over providing on-demand healthcare services

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PETALING JAYA: The government is mulling over providing on-demand healthcare services to decongest public hospitals and clinics, says Datuk Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah.

The Health director-general said among the services that could be offered under the "uberisation" of healthcare was collecting blood samples at patients' homes.

"Blood samples are usually taken about two weeks before the appointment to see the doctor.

"Instead of making two trips to the hospital, patients can opt to have their blood samples taken at home and only visit the doctor after the laboratory reports are ready," he said at the International Nurses Day celebration at Malaysians Agro Exposition Park yesterday.

Dr Noor Hisham said about 50 million people do blood tests annually and if only 10% request for samples to be collected at their homes, the nurses could collectively earn RM50mil.

He said nurses could earn extra income but the government had yet to decide on the rate.

"But if the patients are willing to

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pay, say, RM10 per trip, then this could be done.

"Already the people are willing to pay RM6 for courier service to have their medicines delivered at the doorstep.

"The demand is growing. There are more than 50 million prescriptions a year and the people find it more convenient to have the medicines delivered to their homes," he said.

Dr Noor Hisham also said for 60 years, nurses had been going to patients' homes to provide postnatal care and the government could expand the service to mobilise doctors to treat elderly and stroke patients at homes.

"Chemotherapy and palliative care could also be carried out at patients' homes.

"Even circumcisions could be done at community centres," he said, adding that patients' medical records would be stored on i-cloud and they would have access to them, including scanned images.



Proud moment: Dr Wan Azizah talking to award recipients Boey (second from left) and Emmalice at the International Nurses Day celebration in Serdang. With them are Health Minister Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (left) and Dr Noor Hisham (right).

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail who opened the event paid tribute to nurses, describing them as her right hand, especially during surgeries and consultations.

"I would not have been able to perform my job to the best of my ability without the assistance of the skillful nurses.

"The nurses made my life so much easier when I was serving as a houseman.

"Nurses often 'rescue' doctors from tight situations. That is why I came to honour the nurses," she said.

About 3,000 nurses from all over Malaysia except Sabah attended the event organised by the Malaysian

Nurses Association (MNA). Sabah Nurses Association is not an affiliate of MNA.

This year's Tokoh Jururawat recipients were Perak-born octogenarian Boey Swee Kam who was selected for her achievement in education, and Sarawakian Emmallice Jaboh who was honoured for her sterling service.