

**Generic drugs policy at govt hospitals, says Liow  
Bernama  
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KOTA BARU (Aug 19, 2011): The Health Ministry has implemented a generic drugs policy as replacement for original medicine or patented drugs at government hospitals nationwide.

Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said intellectual rights for 10 original medicines will expire soon and the ministry planned to replace them with generic drugs from local manufacturers.

"It was implemented since the government introduced National Key Result Areas (NKRA) to promote the local medicine industry. The use of generic drugs were implemented by foreign countries as they are cheaper than patented drugs," he told reporters at Kelantan MCA Convention here today.

The convention, opened by MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek, was also attended by vice-president Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen.

Malaysia provides medical subsidies to 27 million people where a RM1 minimum fee is charged per treatment at government hospitals and clinics nationwide.

Liow said normally, patented drugs have patent rights of five to 20 years and the government use of generic drugs will help government save cost of medical supplies.

Generic drugs must undergo the "Bio-equivalent test" and use the products on humans in trial tests.

He said the ministry will also limit prescription to patients from three months to one month as a cost-cutting measure.

On another matter, Liow said another cardiologist and anesthetist will be posted to Raja Perempuan Zainab II Hospital (HRPZ) to ensure more effective treatment of heart diseases.

"HRPZ only has one cardiologist to serve the many patients waiting for treatment. For the long term, we will provide specialist and a cardiothoracic specialist on a permanent basis." – Bernama

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