

**Need For Ethical And Legal Standards For Medical Field - Raja Nazrin  
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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 16 (Bernama) -- A more up-to-date set of ethical and legal standards are needed in the medical fields especially with the modern advancements in science, said the Raja Muda of Perak, Raja Dr Nazrin Shah.

Thus, he said there was need for the medical fraternity to engage with representatives from the legal fraternity, policy-makers, civil society and the community in order to bring about the articulation of a more up-to-date set of ethical and legal standards.

"If high standards are maintained at all times, there would be greater trust in the medical profession, better doctor-patient relationships.

"Less ambiguity and feelings of guilt in the face of thorny ethical dilemmas and a lesser need for bitter and costly legal action," he said at the Medico-Legal Society of Malaysia conference on "Conflicts and Controversies in Medicine, Ethics and the Law" here, Wednesday.

He said many believed a review of current laws was necessary, with some arguing that legislation was the most effective means of subjecting scientists and doctors to the values subscribed by the community.

"Yet, it would also seem that no sooner have lawmakers drafted a piece of legislation on a particular medical practice, that law would be outmoded by newer techniques and discoveries," he said.

Raja Nazrin said there were also limitations in the law, as it applied to the practice of medicine which the evident of the law alone was not equipped to resolve medicine's difficult moral issues.

"For me where the law ends, I believe that good ethics should step in. In other way, it can be said that the moral conscience was a precursor to the development of legal rules for social order," he said.

He added the lawmakers relied on formal statements of ethics when crafting laws and this would affect the medical profession.

"The healthcare providers may greatly influence legal standards by their own work in elucidating and continuously updating medical ethical standards to reflect contemporary challenges. And as we all know, continuous research goes into medicine and law," he added.

The conference featured 18 speakers from the medical and legal fraternities including University of Malaya's Dean of Medical Centre Professor Dr Adeeba Kamrulzaman, the founder of the Asian Pacific Research and Resource Centre for Women, Rashidah Abdullah and the President of the Malaysian Society of Transplantation, Datuk Dr Harjit Singh.

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