

**Society Calls For More Details On Proposed TCM Act**  
**Bernama**  
**January 2, 2012**

SHAH ALAM, Jan 2 (Bernama) -- The Malaysian Society for Complementary Medicine (MSCM) has urged the Health Ministry to provide a clear explanation of the proposed Traditional and Complementary Medicine (TCM) Act to ensure that it will truly benefit more than 15,000 practitioners in the country.

Society president Lee Chee Pheng said many practitioners have voiced concern over the ambiguity of the act, saying it should not restrict and weaken TCM as an alternative medicine.

"The practitioners want to know whether specific rules will be created to ensure that the TCM remains competitive. Who's going to instruct and train new practitioners, or decide who's scientific and who's not?"

"These issues should be addressed in the act and must be explained continuously to the relevant stakeholders before it comes into force," he told Bernama.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said the ministry has submitted the TCM Bill to the Attorney-General, and hopes to table it in parliament early this year.

The main objective of the act is to provide guidelines to better regulate TCM practices in Malaysia. Once implemented, all TCM practitioners will have to register with the ministry before they can offer their services.

Lee said the government should not delay enforcing the TCM Act as it is necessary to instill confidence in traditional medicine among the public.

He said the ministry should assist practitioners in getting their practices documented before the act is enforced.

Lee pointed out that proper organisation is needed in TCM as it involves many different schools of thought, practice and belief.

"This is to ensure that any rules and guidelines set forth will not be seen as a burden to practitioners," Lee said.

Lee said the government should look into establishing Traditional Indian Medicine research centres in collaboration with local and foreign bodies, as well as such facilities for Traditional Chinese Medicine.

He said the government has accepted TCM as an alternative to conventional medicine, with more than 17 hospitals in Malaysia equipped with TCM facilities and practitioners.

Lee, who is chairman of the International, Scientific and Research Council for Complementary Medicine, also said that he is working hard to set up the council's head office in Malaysia this year.

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