

Liow: Still Premature For Public To Discuss Anything About 1Care
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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 11 (Bernama) -- Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai stressed today that the proposed 1Care health system, which is meant to upgrade the current national health policy, is still at the discussion stage.

As such, he said it was premature for the public to debate about it now.

"I like to emphasise that it is just at the discussion level. We will definitely extend the widest consultation possible involving the public, NGOs and professionals.

"We are not making any decision at all. It's not even at the policy level. It's premature to discuss it now," he told reporters after opening a health campaign in Gombak, near here.

He said the 1Care working committee had been given two years until end of 2013 to come up with a concept and had started to get feedback from the relevant bodies.

"We will have until end of 2013 to come of with a concept, if the people don't like it, we can scrap it," he added.

He also refuted claims that the scheme, which will be compulsory for Malaysians when implemented, required employees to contribute 10 per cent of their salaries, adding that the government and employers would also share the cost.

"The public wants information, but we can't give any because we don't have it. So only when the committee finishes the discussions, will the matter be open to the public," he said.

Liow also said the current system would not be changed and that 1Care was to upgrade it

"1Care will not replace the current national health policy but the increasing demand for health services and the changing pattern of diseases requires the government to improve the country's health system.

"The burden on health is higher. The government is looking at ways and means to improve the healthcare system," he said, adding that the government had allocated RM16 billion for healthcare services this year.

Meanwhile, he said the acute gastroenteritis (AGE) outbreak in Batang Padang and Hilir Perak in Perak was under control and there were no new cases reported.

He also dismissed the theory that a water plant nearby had been contaminated as there were were only two districts affected by the outbreak.

"Maybe the water distribution channels to the two districts were contaminated. We are still investigating and will know the result soon," he added.

Rotavirus, a water-borne virus, is the most common cause of severe diarrhoea among

infants and young children.

The outbreak since late last month has caused two deaths and over 2,200 children to fall sick.

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