

Government to reveal healthcare plans in roadshow
The Malaysian Insider
March 11 , 2012
By Lisa J. Ariffin

KUALA LUMPUR, March 11 — The government said today it will tour the country to explain and engage the public over healthcare plans after the opposition demanded it reveal details and the status of the controversial 1Care scheme.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai (picture) told reporters his ministry will take into account public feedback on how to improve health services in the country.

“MOH will conduct open dialogue with the public to engage and talk about strengthening healthcare in Malaysia.

“The (1 Care) model is not final. We are very open minded to suggestion and feedback from the public,” Liow said when asked if the government would make public details of plans to revamp the healthcare system.

The MCA deputy president said the roadshow will start at the “end of this month or next month” PKR yesterday urged Liow to reveal 1 Care’s current status, expressing doubt over the “value” of the health minister’s recent promise that the healthcare scheme would not be introduced if found unsuitable.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail questioned whether the MCA deputy president’s pledge had any meaning after his assurances over radioactive waste from the controversial Lynas rare earths plant appeared to be at odds with those of his Cabinet colleagues.

1 Care has come under fire from healthcare practitioners and the public, who claim that individuals and businesses will be forced to hand over 10 per cent of their earnings each month to the government-run insurance fund.

The scheme is expected to replace the current two-tier healthcare system with one that integrates both private and government hospitals in the hope of ensuring more equitable healthcare for Malaysians of all classes.

Under the present system, patients can choose to seek treatment at either private clinics or hospitals and pay out of their own pockets or opt for government clinics or hospitals instead, where they will pay a nominal fee for basic, federally subsidised healthcare.

The ministry has assured critics that the 1 Care scheme will not burden the public with undue costs, saying that talks on the financial arrangements that will be made available and their impact on the government and taxpayers were ongoing.

Liow stressed today the 1Care model “is not final” and the roadshow will help to find the best way to strengthen the Malaysian healthcare system.

"We are very open minded to suggestion and feedback from the public," he said, adding that 1 Care has been "totally taken out of context by irresponsible parties".

The Malaysian Insider

Copyright © 2012 The Malaysian Insider

Source: <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/government-to-reveal-healthcare-plans-in-roadshow/>