MOSTI-MOH announce 5 hospitals as Health Technology Hubs under Malaysia's NTIS

Dr Adham Baba, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation (left) and Khairy Jamaluddin (right) launched the Health Technology Hubs by demonstrating a visit to the GP in virtual reality.

The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) and the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) today announced that five hospitals have been identified as Health Technology Hubs under the National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS) initiative.

Three of these NTIS Health Technology Hubs will be located within the city, namely Putrajaya Hospital and National Cancer Institute and Tunku Hospital Azizah, the Women's and Children's Hospital in Kuala Lumpur. These three locations are selected based on their technology infrastructure readiness, skilled human resources, and capability to integrate with current technologies such as internet and 5G, hardware and more. The fourth and fifth location are Bera Hospital in Pahang and Hospital Besar Rembau in Negeri Sembilan.

All five sites will be used for the testing of robotics, the internet of medical things (IMOT), while leveraging 4G/5G facilities. They will serve as one-stop centres for the health sector to meet

the growing challenges in Malaysia, and to develop solutions that provide a quality healthcare experience for the country, backed by technology and innovation.

"Our vision is to transform lives by providing affordable, inclusive and sustainable medical and healthcare innovation. The NTIS Health Technology Hubs aim to test and eventually commercialize health technology innovation in a safe and regulated environment," said Dr Adham Baba, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation.

According to Adham, MOSTI is committed to developing innovative technologies that can further strengthen the healthcare system.

"The establishment of the NTIS Health Technology Hubs will accelerate the development, application and commercialisation of local technology and innovation in the health sector without affecting the duration of existing clinical trials," he said.

These five Health Technology Hubs will have access to test sites, funding and regulatory facilitation support in what is an open innovation ecosystem where the public, private sector and government collaborate to accelerate commercialisation rates.

Indirectly, these hubs can benefit consumers with quality and affordable healthcare. In terms of public health, technology also plays an important role to support the prevention of transmissible diseases by vectors such as insects and pests," said Adham in his speech.

"Therefore, these hubs are based on the Internet of Medical Things (IoMT), where medical equipment and applications form an interconnected ecosystem through computer networks used to improve the management, medication, diagnosis and treatment and monitoring of chronic diseases remotely," said Khairy Jamaluddin, Minister of Health.

In 2020, largely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, investments from private equity and venture capitalist firms in the health and well-being industry in Malaysia saw an increase of 18.4% compared to 2019. There is also an increased focus on physical and mental health, alongside a shift in consumer focus on products and health solutions. Malaysia's healthcare industry is expected to contribute RM154 billion to economic growth by 2027.

He also explained that the Hubs will facilitate regulatory issues including the Poisons Act 1952, the Telemedicine Act 1997 and the Medicines Act (Advertisement and Sales) 1956.

Adham also announced that the Hub will be supported by the 10-acre MRANTI Integrated Healthcare Cluster which will accelerate the exploration and development of healthcare and

medical technology. Here, capacity building programs, laboratories and research facilities will be provided to enable innovators to stress test ideas, prototypes, applications and various related solutions through the use of technology, equipment and 4IR facilities in a live environment.

The NTIS Health Technology Hubs, is an initiative of MOSTI, with Malaysian Research Accelerator for Technology and Innovation (MRANTI) as the lead Secretariat.