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MRANTI Park's Integrated Healthcare Cluster to strengthen initiatives at five hospitals chosen as Health Technology Hubs



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PETALING JAYA, Sept 9 — Technological advancement for healthcare in Malaysia is set to flourish further with the selection of five hospitals as Health Technology Hubs.

The hubs are a part of the National Technology and Innovation Sandbox (NTIS) initiative.

All sites will be used for the testing of robotics, the internet of medical things (IoMT), while leveraging 4G/5G facilities.

They will also serve as one-stop centres for the health sector to meet the growing challenges in Malaysia.

The hubs will also be used to develop solutions that provide a quality healthcare experience for the country, backed by technology and innovation.

Among the hospitals chosen by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Mosti) Ministry and Health Ministry are Putrajaya Hospital, National Cancer Institute and KL's Hospital Tunku Azizah, the Women's and Children's Hospital.

The three hospitals were selected based on their technology infrastructure readiness, skilled human resources, and capability to integrate with current technologies such as internet and 5G and hardware.

The hospitals in Bera, Pahang and Rembau, Negeri Sembilan are the other two sites.

Changing lives

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Dr Seri Adham Baba said their vision was to change lives by providing affordable inclusive and sustainable medical and healthcare innovation.

"The NTIS Health Technology Hubs aim to test and eventually commercialise health technology innovation in a safe and regulated environment," he said.

He added that the NTIS Health Technology Hubs would accelerate the development, application and commercialisation of local technology and innovation in the health sector without affecting the duration of existing clinical trials.

The sites would 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.

He also announced that the hubs would be supported by the 10-acre MRANTI Integrated Healthcare Cluster, which will accelerate the exploration and development of healthcare and medical technology.

Capacity building programmes, laboratories and research facilities will be provided to enable innovators to stress test ideas, prototypes, applications and various related solutions.

The necessary technology, equipment and 4IR facilities in a LIVE environment will be used.

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

Dr Adham said in his speech at the launch recently that the hubs would be able to benefit consumers with quality and "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," he added.

Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said the hubs were based on IoMT, where medical equipment and applications form an interconnected ecosystem through computer networks.

These networks will improve the management, medication, diagnosis and treatment and monitoring of chronic diseases remotely.

Investments from private equity and venture capitalist firms in the health and well-being industry in Malaysia saw an increase of 18.4 per cent in 2020 compared to 2019.

This was largely due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

There was 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.

Khairy said that the hubs would facilitate regulatory issues including the Poisons Act 1952, the Telemedicine Act 1997 and the Medicines Act (Advertisement and Sales) 1956.