

Medical centre revives hope for dialysis patients

Seremban facility reopens after new management takes over

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THE new management of Seremban's Mawar Medical Centre (MMC), which has just reopened for business after Health Ministry approved its licence application, has pledged to restore the facility to its former glory.

Recently-elected hospital chairman Datuk Lee Tian Hock, who invested more than RM6mil out of his own pocket to get the ball rolling, knocked on many doors to obtain a new licence for the centre.

MMC and its sister facility, Mawar Haemodialysis Centre — once reputed to be the country's largest non-profit haemodialysis centre — were ordered to shut down for violating certain health laws.

"We will now start small with 30 beds and 44 haemodialysis machines.

"My team will, however, apply to upgrade this licence condition to 97 beds and 68 machines within three months, like how it was previously," said Lee.

MMC was among various hospitals ordered to cease operations on Nov 5 last year following the resignation of almost all its medical specialists four days earlier.

The specialists claimed they had been left with no other option but to quit as they had not been paid their dues amounting to RM5.8mil.

Lee, who was also instrumental in reviving the 87-year-old Negri Sembilan Chinese Maternity Hospital now known as NSCMH Medical Centre, expressed his gratitude to the authorities for approving the application for a new licence within two months.

"This, to me, is nothing less than



Lee (standing right) and his team chatting with a dialysis patient on the first day of the reopening of MMC.

(Below) Mawar Medical Centre, ordered closed last November, has now reopened for business.



a miracle as two other teams who had done so before us failed in seven attempts," he said, adding that the previous applications failed as they did not meet some conditions pertaining to land lease.

Lee said he decided to help out in reviving MMC in April upon being told that the facility was facing liquidation due to debts.

"In June, my team decided to do something to help the old manage-

ment and we agreed to move Mawar's 11 haemodialysis centres located in other parts of the country to come under NSCMH.

"Under the arrangement, NSCMH will subsidise some RM200,000 a month to ensure these centres can continue to operate," he said, adding that the move was also to reduce the financial burden on MMC then.

Lee, who was also NSCMH chairman, said MMC's former haemodialysis patients who were forced to get treatment elsewhere after the centre's licence was revoked, were now free to return here.

"We apologise for the troubles they had to go through when we were forced to close.

"I was told that some of them had to go to places as far as Port Dickson and some even had to get

dialysis at midnight just because there were not enough machines at some of the centres they were sent to," he said.

The MMC has re-opened with eight specialists including a resident cardiologist, nephrologist, orthopaedist, anaesthesiologist and ENT (ear, nose and throat) specialist.

Lee, who also gave an advance of some RM17mil as well as a donation of RM4mil to help revive NSCMH previously, hoped MMC would break even within six months.

"When we wanted to revive NSCMH, we were hoping to break even quickly but it took us three years.

He added it was his hope MMC could pay off its debts amounting to more than RM30mil in five years.

Lee said with the licence issue now settled, he would monitor developments at MMC to ensure all plans were executed well.

"I can do that because the Matrix board knows we have a very able and experienced team to run the day-to-day operations of the medical centre.

He thanked the government including Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun and Transport Minister and Seremban MP Anthony Loke Siew Fook for his assistance in securing the licence for MMC.

Lee said that up to RM100,000 would be set aside every month for poor patients who could not afford treatment.

He also said the new management would apply to have the land lease for MMC extended by another 30 years.

The first 30-year lease will expire on Dec 31, 2026.

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