

24 August 2007

### **PRESS REPORT**

The Malaysian Medical Association welcomes the announcement by Minister of Health that the **PATHOLOGY ACT** will be implemented early 2008. For the last 20 years the College of Pathologist and MMA have been requesting the Ministry to implement this Act. Currently, anyone can open lab and conduct tests without any quality control, accreditation and rules and regulations to adhere to. With the implementation of the Act, only registered Pathologists can run big labs and Medical Officer or Scientist can run small laboratories. The Act will ensure that unqualified staff would not accept 'walk in' patients and conduct tests. Nowadays, vouchers are given in supermarkets and conferences to perform blood and urine tests for a special offer price. After conducting these tests or profiles, interpretation is done by a Form 5 qualified reception. This unethical practice is going on for ages and the Ministry should put a stop to it.

The Act should ensure that only qualified laboratory technicians should be employed and supervised by Pathologists or Scientists. Annual quality control should be done and all labs should have accreditation certificates from the **STANDARD ACCREDITATION BOARD**, Ministry of Science and Technology.

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There is lot of undercutting of prices of Laboratory tests and Ministry should introduce a Fees schedule and have a standard price throughout the country. All private hospitals should have a qualified Pathologist to manage their lab and they too, maintain an uniform Laboratory Fees Schedule recommended by College of Pathologists and MMA.

Beauty Saloons, Sinsehs, Bomohs and all those practicing traditional medicine should not be allowed to order tests since they are in no position to interpret the results. For example, in the case of dengue, a low platelet count is indicative of dengue or dengue like virus. In addition, the dengue antibodies IgM and IgG will be present after 5-7 days of the onset of fever. Hence a doctor is needed to interpret the results and repeat the results as required.

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