

The Star: Rules needed for cosmetic operations

Written by Administrator

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Opinion

THE Consumers Association of Penang (CAP) views with concern the recent case where the wife of a Member of Parliament fell into a coma after visiting a private clinic for treatment that reportedly involved eye bag surgery and a tummy tuck. The Deputy Health Minister was quoted as saying that the ministry was not investigating the matter as the clinic was registered, and that if there was an element of medical negligence, the victim could pursue legal action. CAP believes that the Health Ministry should not wash its hands of the matter so easily. CAP has been calling for better regulation of beauty centres for some time now whether they are situated in clinics or not. Not only are locals at risk, but also foreign patients who come into the country seeking similar treatments. The wisdom of continuing health tourism promotions inviting foreigners into the country for so-called beauty treatments should be questioned. Measures must be in place to ensure that any beauty procedure and operation is approved, and that the doctor or therapist is, in fact, trained and proficient to carry out such work. There should also be avenues for redress made available to a patient or the next of kin in the case of any adverse event or death as a result of such treatments. Rather than merely expecting a victim's family to take up a court case to prove medical negligence, the Malaysian Medical Council (MMC), which is one of the disciplinary arms of the Health Ministry, should be given more powers to deal with medical negligence. The Medical Act should be amended to protect the welfare of patients. Where such cases are filed in court, the MMC can also initiate investigations on the circumstances surrounding the case, after the court has given its decision. In the event that medical negligence matters are settled out of court, the MMC could still continue conducting investigations and be able to take deterrent action based on the findings.

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