Mobile tests for women in rural areas

Mammogram clinics mooted for breast cancer awareness

KUALA LUMPUR: “If the trip to do a mammogram test is too far, we will try to bring it to you,” said Women, Family and Community Development minister Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim.

Rohani suggested the formation of mobile mammogram clinics using mini buses to reach out to the women in the rural areas.

“In my own constituency in Sarawak, I have to bring the women using a boat and on land to Kuching for them to do a mammogram test,” she said of the varying landscape in the country.

Having heard of the idea at the 13th Asian Association of Breast Diseases teaching course, Rohani said the Taiwanese concept of having mini bus mobile clinic could be implemented here.

She said this would require a collaboration with the Health Ministry.

At the moment, the National Population and Family Development Board conducts free mammogram tests for women aged 40 and above with a family income of RM10,000 and below.

However, Rohani pointed out the waiting list for a mammogram test is too long with 8,348 cases on this list as of yesterday.

“We don’t have enough facilities and it is important to detect breast cancer early,” said Rohani at a press conference after launching the event.

The free mammogram test programme implemented since May 2007 has seen 244,407 women screened and 471 were diagnosed with breast cancer.

Rohani said the awareness on early detection of breast cancer among women is still low in Malaysia.