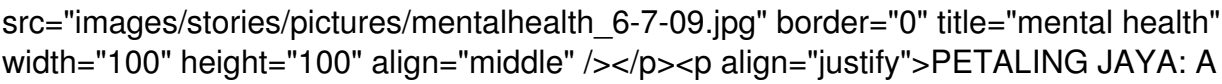


Monday July 6, 2009



PETALING JAYA: A comprehensive programme involving the government, non-governmental organisations and the community must be created to promote mental health among Malaysians.

National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (Niosh) chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye said it would also provide help to the depressed. He said the programme was necessary in view of the Health Ministry's latest findings that mental illnesses was on the rise in the country. According to ministry statistics, there is an increase of 15.6% of mental patients seeking treatment in government hospitals. A total of 400,227 patients sought treatment last year compared to 346,196 in 2007.

Lee said increase in stress levels and complex social responsibilities were among the factors that contributed to more people suffering mental disorders.

For example, work stress should not be taken lightly, he said in a statement yesterday.

Such stress affects our physical and emotional health which will in turn affect others at home. The consequences are many.

Lee added that there were many forms of mental illnesses that differed in severity, duration and degree but most were treatable.

Source: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/7/6/nation/4261445&sec=nation>