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Minister of Health Opens Umbilical Cord Blood Bank Cordlife Indonesia

05 Oct 2007

Minister of health, Dr. dr. Siti Fadilah Supari, Sp. JP (K), on September 30, 2007 at Jakarta, opened the first Umbilical Cord Blood Bank in Indonesia. It is the first and only facility of processing and storage of umbilical cord blood in Indonesia. The laboratory located at Jl. Ahmad Yani No. 2, Polumas, Jakarta, is owned by CordLife Indonesia, a joint venture company of CordLife Ltd Singapore and PT Kalbe Farma Tbk.

The opening was attended by Ashok Kumar Mirpuri- Singapore Ambassador to Indonesia, Johannes Setijono - Kalbe Farma CEO and Steven Fang - Group Cordlife CEO.

Minister of health, in her speech, said that currently one of advance technology in Indonesia is stem cell therapy, which is a response to global stem cell technology. Stem cell has been developing as one alternative therapy, such as thalassaemia, diabetes mellitus, stroke, myocardium infarct and diabetes gangrene. Those genetic diseases are believed could be cured with this stem cell therapy. "The mother cell can be as medicine and a solution when there is incurable disease in a family", said her.

Now, some health service facilities, especially educational hospital, such as Cipto Mangunkusumo Hospital and Dharmais Cancer Hospital, provide stem cell therapy service. It covers preparation process of donor candidate, stem cell transplantation from umbilical cord, spinal cord and other organs blood, storage and utilization of stem cell.

Protecting community safety, government needs to prepare each service and its utilization according to standard of Evidence Based Medicine and regulation of each policy, so that people are not in harm position. The storage, therapy and transplantation even include some aspects, such as ethicolegal, social, economic, etc.

She expects each unit which provide umbilical cord blood bank must have agreement with referred local educational hospital in order to keep safe service for developing health status and better stem cell therapy.

In the same occasion, Sie Djohan, Vice President Director CordLife Indonesia mentioned that the storage at Umbilical Cord Blood Bank of Cordlife Indonesia is relatively cheaper than at other countries, such as Malaysia and Singapore. "Cost of transplantation, processing and store during the first year is Rp 9.5 million and of storage for the next years is Rp 1.25 million per year. In Singapore, storage costs 2,000 dollar Singapore (Rp 12 million) in the first year and 250 dollar Singapore (Rp 1.5 million) per year for the next".

CordLife Indonesia Facility is able to cover 30,000 units of umbilical cord blood and will join International Cordlife Laboratory Network in Hong Kong, Singapore, Sydney and Australia. Blood cells are protected with sophisticated technology, which has high operational and security procedures. It includes protection from flood and blackout. The blood is kept in temperature of minus 162 Celsius degree; therefore, it will resist for a very long time.

In Singapore, mother blood cells which are kept reach about 12% of birth rate. Indonesia has big market potential for its birth rate of 5 million per year, said Sie Djohan.

"Parents can keep their child's umbilical cord blood as biological investment which in the future can be used as medicine for any diseases with mothe cell therapy," Johannes Setijono, President Director of PT Kalbe Farma, added.

This information is published by Center for Public Communication, Secretariat General MOHRI. For further information, please call 021-5223002 and 52960661, or send e-mail to: puskom.publik@yahoo.co.id .

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