TAPAH: The Health Ministry will collaborate with 22 public and private institutions of higher learning to allow their consultant physicians to provide specialist service in selected district hospitals which are without such service.

Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai said the collaboration was to strengthen the provision of specialist services to the people particularly in such fields as internal medicine, general surgery, paediatric, obstetrics and gynaecology, orthopaedic, and anaesthesiology.

"Prior to this, district hospitals have been relying on bigger hospitals to provide such service. Through this collaboration, the service can be given continuously in these hospitals," he said.

Earlier he witnessed the signing of the collaborative agreement involving nine of the 22 institutions, and declared open the Tapah Hospital carnival. It was a win-win collaboration, Liow said. "People will get the specialist service while these consultant physicians will benefit in terms of continuous application of their skills."

Liow said the universities would determine the schedule for these specialists in hospitals and they would also receive, on-call allowance.

He said the ministry was committed to upgrading all district hospitals as well as other hospitals in line with the vision to continuously improve the country’s health facilities.

Among the universities and district hospitals involved are University of Malaya (Banting Hospital), Universiti Teknologi Mara (Sabak Bernam Hospital), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (Slim River Hospital), Universiti Sains Malaysia (Pasir Mas Hospital), Management and Science University (Kuala Kubu Baru Hospital) and Universiti Kuala Lumpur Royal College of Medicine Perak (Kuala Kangsar Hospital).

Earlier in his speech, Liow said the government took serious attention to issues regarding access to health facilities among the people particularly specialist service. - Bernama