

Don't rest on laurels, healthcare providers told

KUALA LUMPUR: Healthcare in Malaysia can be used as a benchmark for developing nations, said Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

This, he said, was because people had access to comprehensive public healthcare with or without payments, and there was a significant reduction in mortality rate and increase in life expectancy.

He said the fact that healthcare was not one of six main National Key Result Areas (NKRAs) was a good indicator that it was on the right track.

"But this does not mean there is no room for immediate improvement in healthcare.

"It also does not mean that Malaysians should not step out of their comfort zones and do better,"

he said.

Muhyiddin was speaking at the opening ceremony of the 67th Malaysian Dental Association/World Dental Federation International Scientific Convention and Trade Exhibition here yesterday.

As of last year, there were 4,781 dentists registered with the Malaysian Dental Council, bringing the ratio of dentist to population to

1:7,822.

"The ratio for a developed nation is 1:4,000. For Malaysia, this ratio can be achieved by 2015."

He added that private dental practitioners should play an active role to ensure that Malaysia reached its goal of becoming a developed nation by 2020.

More than 2,000 dentists and healthcare industry representatives

from 31 countries, including Australia, Germany, Hong Kong, Sweden and Thailand, attended the convention, themed "New Trend, New Technology, New Impact in Dentistry".

The three-day event, which ends today, featured a keynote lecture, a round-table clinic, a hands-on workshop, a corporate symposium, an oral research competition and a dental student seminar.