

# Dialysis patients grateful for centre

**TELUK INTAN:** For the past two years, Chai Sen, 60, has been coming to the MAA Medicare charity dialysis centre in Changkat Jong here for treatment.

Chai, a former lorry driver, used to seek treatment in Ipoh, which is more than an hour's drive from here.

He said the drive to Ipoh was tiring and he often had to wait for hours before he got to undergo dialysis.

"My friend told me about this centre and I decided to give it a try. I feel more relaxed here, as I get attended to in a short time.

"Moreover, the cost of treatment is only a fraction of what I used to pay," he told the *New Straits Times* at the centre yesterday.

Chai is one of 70 patients seeking treatment at the centre since its inception in 1997.

The person behind the centre is Datuk Mah Siew Keong, the Barisan Nasional candidate for the Teluk Intan by-election.

Every month, Mah sets aside RM6,000 to help patients from the lower-income group.

Chai said he was grateful to Mah for being instrumental in assisting the centre.

"There is nothing much for me to say, except to thank Mah for his ef-



*Patients undergoing dialysis treatment at the MAA Medicare charity dialysis centre in Teluk Intan yesterday. Pic by Abdullah Yusof*

forts. It is because of him that I need not worry about having to pay exorbitant costs for my treatment.

"And, I get to do it near my house."

Sharing Chai's sentiment is K. Mariaii, 62, who has been seeking dialysis treatment at the centre for the past five years.

"Everyone here knows that Mah is behind the centre.

"We are grateful to him. Despite losing in the past two elections, he continues to help us in whatever way he can. He is a good man."

Seen at the centre yesterday was Mohamad Fairus Abd Ghani, 27, who was accompanying his mother, Za-

leha Mohamad, 57, for the four-hour treatment.

Zaleha has been going to the centre for the past seven years.

"It is convenient and the centre is comfortable, especially since it moved to its new location in November last year," said Fairus.

Mah said a fundraising event would be held next month to raise money for the centre.

"We hope to raise RM500,000 to buy more dialysis machines, so that more people can come here for treatment."

He said the idea for the centre came about following complaints from patients, who had had to travel to Kuala Lumpur or Ipoh for treatment.

"We understand the hardship faced by patients, especially those from the lower-income group.

"I am happy that many people have benefited from the affordable treatment at the centre.

"We hope more patients will get to undergo treatment at the centre in the future."

There are 12 dialysis machines at the centre — 10 for normal dialysis patients and one each for those with Hepatitis B and C.

The centre is open daily, except on Sundays, from 6.30am to 10pm.