

**RM150m  
a year  
to fight  
No. 2  
killer  
disease**

By Lydia Gomez  
legomez@nsl.com.my

**KUALA LUMPUR:** From next year, all schoolgirls in Form One will receive vaccination against cervical cancer, a move which will cost the government M150 million annually.

About 300,000 13-year-olds in public and private schools will get free doses of the vaccine against the cervical cancer-causing human papillomavirus (HPV) within a period of one year.

With this move, Malaysia joins Australia, Italy, France and Taiwan, which have begun vaccination programmes for girls as young as

Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Jong Lai said the vaccines would



## Most cases involve Chinese

□ FROM PAGE 1

at 16.4.  
Malay women have the lowest rate at 8.7

This rate was also higher than Indian and Chinese women in Singapore, Liew said.

"Among the cancers, cervical cancer is the second highest cause of death among

Health Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai and Wanita MCA chief Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun (on his right) speaking to visitors to the mobile clinic, set up as part of the Cervical Cancer and Health Awareness Campaign, in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. The clinic, which can attend to 200 people a day, will visit rural areas to create awareness of cervical cancer.

most likely be administered in schools

"The girls need to be vaccinated in three doses, so it is better for us to go into schools. If we use clinics, some may not show up and drop out of the programme."

This is also good news for women who want to be vaccinated. The ministry's bulk purchase of the

women in Malaysia after breast cancer

"Researchers should find out why the rate in this country is higher and why mainly

Chinese women are affected," Llow said after launching the Cervical Cancer and Health Awareness Campaign.

It was organised by the MCA Crisis Relief Squad and the

Obstetrical & Gynaecological  
Society of Malaysia

The campaign has been going on since August last year and is headed by Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun, the Wanita MCA chief.

Chew said the campaign offered vaccines at a 45 per cent discount of the market price of RM1,200 for three doses.

vaccine could bring its price down from RM1,200 to RM500 for a three-dose course.

"We are negotiating with vaccine providers to reduce the price after we start the programme," he said, adding that any discount would only take effect next year.

A 2006 survey by the ministry showed that more than 50 per cent

of women above 18 years have not undergone Pap-smear tests, which can detect the HPV, while 2,000 cases are detected every year.

Studies show that Chinese women in Malaysia have the highest rate of the disease at 23.2 in every 100,000 women, followed by Indian women

☐ TURN TO PAGE 10, COL 4