

MELAKA, April 18 (Bernama) -- Local medicine producers need to meet international standards if they want to remain competitive.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Dr Abdul Latiff Ahmad said they should also maintain a competitive or reasonable pricing affordable to consumers.

"The advent of the Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA) in 2010 means that medicines registered in one Asean country need not be registered in another Asean country," he told reporters after opening the new building for New Liquids Pharmaceutical Plant Xepa-Soul Pattinson (M) Sdn Bhd, here today.

Abdul Latiff said as such, producers who did not meet the required international standards and were not cost-conscious would lose their competitive edge.

"The requirement to meet international standards would ensure that producers do not tamper with their products after registration."

He said enforcement agencies in Asean countries would coordinate related matters and ensure that the medicines meet international standards.

"Consumers will be spoilt for choice as the same medicines will come with different prices. This will spur the producers to become more competitive.

"The registration of medicines will be stringent and take a long time," he added.