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UCHING: Renovation works to convert the former nurses' quarters here into an Anjung Kasih facility is still awaiting formal approvals from the Sarawak government and Welfare Department, said Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri.

The Minister of Women, Family and Community Development said the project, which will repurpose the heritage building, is planned as the second phase of Anjung Kasih development to support the families of patients receiving treatment at Sarawak General Hospital.

"In Kuching, actually Phase 1 is already at the Sarawak General Hospital. What needs to be understood is that Anjung Kasih is for families who are waiting while their loved ones are hospitalised," she said.

The Santubong MP told reporters this during her Ziarah Kasih visit to a household in Kampung Tabuan Lot here yesterday.

On the proposed Phase 2 project at the former nurses' quarters, Nancy said the building will be renovated with assistance

from the Sarawak government and other partners.

"We are grateful to the Sarawak government and also Yayasan OBYU for helping to build the second phase using the old heritage building," she said.

"We are still waiting for the letter from the Welfare Department in Sarawak and also from the state government. Once they have completed the construction, Yayasan Kebajikan Negara will help to provide the fittings inside the building," she said.

She explained that while the renovation and structural works will be undertaken by the relevant authorities, the furnishings and internal facilities will be handled by Yayasan Kebajikan Negara, which she chairs.

She said Anjung Kasih facilities are designed to provide temporary accommodation for families who must remain close to hospitals while caring for relatives undergoing treatment.

"Some families have to wait for months, especially those with cancer patients. They stay there while accompanying their loved ones," she said.

The minister explained that the final capacity of the Kuching facility will only be determined after the renovation plans are completed.

"At the moment we cannot determine the capacity because the building has not been renovated yet. Once it is completed, we can see whether we can provide double-decker beds or single rooms. It can be designed similar to a hotel," she said.

Nancy added that similar facilities have been developed elsewhere in the country through collaborations with corporate sponsors and government agencies.

Nationwide, she said, there are currently 19 Anjung Kasih facilities established near major hospitals.

"In Peninsular Malaysia, many are sponsored by companies such as TNB and Sunway under Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah. They have contributed significantly to these facilities," she said.

She also noted that the need for such facilities is particularly significant in Sabah and Sarawak due to the large number of rural patients, who must travel long distances to seek treatment.

