



PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • 25 JUL 2021

Good Steps, but We Need More for Our Health Professionals

The Malaysian Health Coalition (MHC) appreciates the set of short-term solutions to improve the employment terms of contract doctors, dentists, pharmacists and nurses, as announced by the Prime Minister on [23 July 2021](#), but we believe that we must do much more. We reiterate our previous statement on protecting the welfare of healthcare professionals (HCPs, [29 June 2021](#)).

Therefore, we urge the following:

1. Announce more details for all terms and conditions

We appreciate the equalising benefits offered to the contract HCPs in terms of leave, possible career advancement, and possible extension of contract durations to complete specialist training. However, the Cabinet decisions are unclear on whether salaries are equal to permanent posts, on the transparent criteria for permanent posts, and whether contract workers would be able to receive time-based promotions as enjoyed by their permanent counterparts. We urge an automatic contract duration of 10 years for HCPs with similar benefits as permanent HCPs, while creating more permanent posts for the Health Ministry.

2. Implement long-term solutions that address root causes

We note the plan to further reform the healthcare system and revise the Medical Act 1971. Long-term, not piecemeal, solutions are crucial to manage Malaysia's human resources for health (HRH). The government must identify the root causes of our HRH challenges, and must take politically difficult but necessary steps to consolidate the healthcare education system. We must also enhance the quality of medical graduates and expand the ability of the healthcare system to absorb and train doctors. Several solutions include extending the moratorium on medical schools, reducing the number of foreign medical schools approved by the Malaysian Medical Council, and introducing a Medical Licensing Exam to ensure that all doctors meet a high minimum standard.

3. Proactively engage all parties and stakeholders

Important stakeholders like the Public Service Department and Commission, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Finance must be consulted together with contract HCPs. This is the only way to produce equitable and durable solutions accepted by all parties. Unless there are durable solutions, the threat of strikes will always be present. HCPs have proven their worth and value, and should not be forced into situations where they feel compelled to strike (as might still happen on 26 July). Therefore, the government must adopt a proactive approach to long-term and equitable solutions, instead of waiting until the last minute.

We stand strongly behind all HCPs (especially contract HCPs) and believe that they are fundamental for Malaysia and all Malaysians. We sympathise with the inequalities and uncertainties faced by contract HCPs. Their employment terms must be fair and transparent, and their future with our public healthcare services must be reassured.

BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA.

Malaysian Health Coalition

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Organization

Academy of Medicine of Malaysia
Association of Malaysian Optometrist (AMO)
Asthma Malaysia
College of Anaesthesiologists
College of Ophthalmologists
Dermatology Society of Malaysia
Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia
Lung Cancer Network of Malaysia
Malaysian Association for Bronchology and Interventional Pulmonology
Malaysian Dental Public Health Association
Malaysian Medical Association
Malaysian Paediatric Association
Malaysian Pharmacists Society
Malaysian Public Health Physicians' Association
Malaysian Society of Anaesthesiologists
Malaysian Society of Clinical Psychology
Malaysian Society of Occupational Safety and Health
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