



PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • 10AM, 16 DEC 2021

Proceed Cautiously with Act 342

The Malaysian Health Coalition is deeply concerned with several proposed amendments to the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act (or Act 342).

We believe that some amendments are necessary, such as:

1. Section 2 to clarify the correct title of Environmental Health Officer (*instead of the old title of Health Inspector*),
2. Section 10 to require medical practitioners to inform the Ministry of Health (MOH) of an infectious disease through any channel specified by the Director-General (DG) of Health (*instead of only through submitting a paper form*),
3. Section 15A to require the temporary wearing of tracking devices for a patient deemed to be infectious (*to ensure patients isolate at home*), and
4. Section 22A to separate the penalties between individuals and companies (*instead of the previous single-standard for both individuals and companies*).

However, we are deeply concerned with several proposed amendments, such as:

1. Section 14A that allows an authorized officer to “use such force as may be necessary” (*without specifying any training for them to use such force or ways to hold them accountable*),
2. Section 21A that provides the DG of Health wide powers to issue any instruction to prevent or control any infectious disease (*without specifying any accountability mechanism*),
3. Section 22A that presumes an organisation is “guilty until proven innocent” (*instead of the legal principle of “innocent until proven guilty”*), and
4. Section 24 that proposes maximum fines or imprisonment for individual offenses that are excessive and disproportionate.

We believe that existing laws are not enforced fairly and consistently; we do not necessarily need new laws. There is a risk that the amendments may cause even more unnecessary suffering by the Rakyat, especially if deployed in harsh, unfair or arbitrary ways.

Some amendments can and should be passed in the December 2021 sitting. Some amendments need more debate and scrutiny before passing. Therefore, we urge the government to clearly show us how these amendments will truly protect us and how these powers will be implemented in fair and equal ways. Otherwise, the alarming amendments should not pass.

BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA.

Malaysian Health Coalition (Full Signature List on myhealthcoalition.org)

16 December 2021

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[Website](https://www.myhealthcoalition.org) | [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/myhealthcoalition) | [Twitter](https://twitter.com/myhealthcoalition)

Full signature list:**Organisations**

1. Academy of Medicine Malaysia
2. Association of Malaysian Optometrists
3. Asthma Malaysia
4. College of Anaesthesiologists
5. College of Physicians
6. Dermatology Society of Malaysia (PDM)
7. IKRAM Health Malaysia
8. Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia
9. Malaysian Association for Bronchology and Interventional Pulmonology
10. Malaysian Association of Clinical Biochemists
11. Malaysian Association of Environmental Health
12. Malaysian Association of Medical Assistants
13. Malaysian Dental Public Health Association
14. Malaysian Medical Association
15. Malaysian Nurses Association
16. Malaysian Paediatric Association
17. Malaysian Pharmacists Society
18. Malaysian Public Health Physician Association
19. Malaysian Society of Clinical Psychology
20. Malaysian Society of Geriatric Medicine
21. Malaysian Society of Ophthalmology
22. Malaysian Thoracic Society
23. Medical Practitioners Coalition Association of Malaysia
24. MedTweetMy
25. MMA Public Health Society
26. National Cancer Society of Malaysia
27. Perinatal Society of Malaysia

Individuals

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4. Dr Khor Swee Kheng
5. Prof Datuk Dr Zulkifli Ismail
6. Prof Dr Asri Said
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