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Build Sustainable Solutions for Medicine Shortages

The Malaysian Health Coalition is concerned about the news of [medicine shortages](#) in Malaysia, which have affected both the public and [private](#) sectors. These medicines are used to treat many common diseases and a shortage could negatively impact the quality of care provided to the Rakyat

We urge the following:

1. Streamline approval process for alternate purchase and medicines requiring special authorization in MOH facilities

Malaysia procures medicines from alternate suppliers or with special authorization from the Director-General of Health or Senior Director of Pharmaceutical Services in two situations: when original suppliers cannot fulfil the orders or when medicines are not listed in the Ministry of Health (MOH) Medicines Formulary. Alternate suppliers and special authorization are necessary during shortages. Therefore, the approval process for these regulations should be streamlined to improve efficiency and reduce the waiting period for decisions. This is important especially during situations posing public health risks such as medicines shortage, especially during an ongoing COVID pandemic.

2. Strengthen local manufacturing capacity for medicines

Currently, Malaysia is a [net importer of pharmaceutical products](#) in three categories: finished pharmaceutical products, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), and pharmaceutical intermediates for local manufacturing. Consequently, the supplies of pharmaceutical products are impacted following [supply chain disruptions](#) such as the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War and lockdowns in China. Therefore, we must strengthen our local capacity of pharmaceutical goods manufacturing to minimise the impact from future disruptions. This must be accompanied by Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) to ensure all locally manufactured medicines meet the required standards of safety, quality and efficacy, in line with [Malaysian National Medicines Policy](#). The government must provide a favorable policy, tax and regulatory climate for private sector investment in this sector.

3. Strengthen collaboration between public and private sectors through medicine stock loans and medicine utilization data-sharing

The MOH's swift action in assisting private healthcare facilities through [medicine stock loans](#) by public healthcare facilities is commendable. Collaboration between the public and private sectors should be promoted to improve healthcare delivery to patients. These collaborations need transparent data-sharing, especially on prices and medicines utilization. MOH must lead and coordinate the [medicine utilisation data collection](#) process to improve current medicines procurement strategy and prioritise distribution of medicines to facilities with higher demands.

We urge the government to take immediate short-term and long-term actions to ensure the sustainability of medicine supply. This is crucial to ensure the health of the Rakyat.

BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA.

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

27 June 2022

Full signature list:**Organisations**

1. Academy of Medicine Malaysia
2. Association of Malaysian Optometrists
3. College of Anaesthesiologists
4. College of Surgeons Academy of Medicine of Malaysia
5. Dermatology Society of Malaysia
6. IKRAM Health Malaysia
7. Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia
8. Lung Cancer Network of Malaysia
9. Malaysian Association for Bronchology and Interventional Pulmonology
10. Malaysian Association of Clinical Biochemists
11. Malaysian Association of Dental Public Health Specialists
12. Malaysian Coalition on Ageing
13. Malaysian Paediatric Association
14. Malaysian Pharmacists Society
15. Malaysian Society of Anaesthesiologists
16. Malaysian Society of Clinical Psychology
17. Malaysian Society of Occupational Safety and Health
18. Malaysian Society of Ophthalmology
19. Malaysian Thoracic Society
20. Medical Practitioners Coalition Association of Malaysia
21. MedTweetMy
22. MMA Public Health Society
23. Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Malaysia
24. Perinatal Society of Malaysia

Individuals

1. Assoc Prof Dr Uma Devi Palanisamy
2. Dato' Dr Amar Singh-HSS
3. Dato' Dr Jahizah Hassan
4. Dr Khor Swee Kheng
5. Prof Datuk Dr Zulkifli Ismail
6. Prof Dr Roslina Abdul Manap
7. Prof Dr Sharifa Ezat Wan Puteh
8. Prof Dr Zaleha Abdullah Mahdy

Coordinated by: Chen Fan Jie, Dr Sean Thum