

MMA voices frustration over unchanged RM10 consultation rate for GPs

MMA President Datuk Dr R Thirunavukarasu said the decision failed to reflect the true value of general practitioners' contributions, describing them as the frontliners of Malaysia's healthcare system.

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The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) expresses disappointment over the government's decision to retain the minimum consultation fee for general practitioners (GPs) at RM10, a rate that has remained unchanged since 1992 despite a review being carried out after 17 years. Photo for illustration purposes only. Photo: Edited via CANVA

PUTRAJAYA - The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) expresses disappointment over the government's decision to maintain the minimum consultation fee for general practitioners (GPs) at RM10 despite the fee review being conducted after 17 years.

MMA President Datuk Dr R Thirunavukarasu said the decision failed to reflect the true value of general practitioners' contributions, describing them as the frontliners of Malaysia's healthcare system.

He said the MMA had long proposed a minimum rate of RM50, pointing out that over 60 per cent of patients sought treatment through third-party administrators (TPAs) and companies that only pay below RM35.

"With over 10,000 clinics nationwide, this low rate could affect the sustainability of clinic operations, encourage price-cutting practices and create financial pressure that would render the existing model unsustainable in the near future," he said in a statement issued in conjunction with Budget 2026 on Friday.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, in his presentation of the Madani Budget, announced that the government had revised the GP consultation fee range to between RM10 and RM80, compared to the previous RM10 to RM35, which provided flexibility based on the level of service while keeping the minimum rate affordable for the public.

However, Dr Thirunavukarasu said the government's continued commitment to healthcare with an all-time high allocation of RM46.5 billion was commendable.

He said it demonstrated the recognition of the need to strengthen the healthcare system in line with the Health White Paper, which focuses on infrastructure development, workforce strengthening and public-private collaboration.

"MMA also appreciates the increase in on-call allowances announced as recognition of the dedication of doctors and specialists.

"However, we await further details on its implementation and the actual rate of increase, especially for medical officers," he said.

He added that while the creation of 4,500 permanent positions for contract doctors was welcomed, it must be supported by long-term workforce planning to ensure balance across other critical healthcare areas.

On the implementation of a Diagnosis Related Group (DRG)-based integration system, he cautioned against rushing the process.

He highlighted that MMA believed a poorly planned DRG implementation could lead to unintended consequences and compromise the effectiveness of the public healthcare system in the long term.

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“Without sufficient manpower, facility upgrades will not have a significant impact on the pressure faced by the healthcare system,” he emphasised, referring to the persistent shortage of doctors, nurses and allied health staff.

Commenting on the proposal to use Employees Provident Fund (EPF) savings for alternative healthcare financing, he said the MMA viewed it seriously as it could compromise retirement security.

“The EPF was established to safeguard retirees’ futures, and the use of such funds could affect long-term financial wellbeing, which is closely linked to health outcomes.

“Therefore, any such policy must be studied carefully to avoid negatively impacting vulnerable groups,” he said.

The MMA also supported the government’s decision to raise excise duties on tobacco and alcohol to combat non-communicable diseases.

He further said electronic cigarettes or vape should be banned completely and immediately due to their growing health impact on the younger population.

Dr Thirunavukarasu reiterated that the MMA remained committed to collaborating with the Health Ministry to ensure that all Budget 2026 initiatives enhance access, quality and sustainability of the national healthcare system for the wellbeing of the people.