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## Resolve status of contract pharmacy officers without delay, MMA tells Health Ministry

By [TEH ATHIRA YUSOF](#)

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**PETALING JAYA:** The status of 730 pharmacy officers whose contracts are expiring next year requires urgent attention from the Health Ministry, says the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA).

Its president Datuk Dr Thirunavukarasu Rajoo called on the ministry to immediately address the reserve status issue affecting the officers, who are from the July 2024 intake.

"The MMA strongly supports the call for the immediate reinstatement of 'reserve candidate' status for the 730 affected officers.

"We also urge the ministry to expedite the permanent appointment process to ensure these officers do not face contract expiry next year," he said in a statement on Thursday (Dec 11).

Dr Thirunavukarasu said it is also important for the ministry to provide clear and transparent communication on the matter.

He stressed that the ministry must show that concrete steps are being taken to resolve the matter, including whether or not contracts will be extended while the officers await permanent absorption.

"Such clarity is essential to safeguard the morale and well-being of these officers and to uphold the stability of Malaysia's healthcare workforce," he added.

The MMA also reiterated that Malaysia's healthcare human resources are among the nation's most valuable assets.

Dr Thirunavukarasu stressed that fair treatment, transparent processes and consistency in human resource governance are crucial to retain experienced professionals and sustain the quality of public healthcare services.

"Losing these officers to avoidable administrative failures would significantly impact service delivery and ultimately affect patient care.

"We urge the Health Ministry to act swiftly, decisively and transparently to resolve this issue and ensure that all healthcare professionals feel valued and supported for their dedication and contributions to the public healthcare system," he said.

On Monday (Dec 8), Senator Dr RA Lingeshwaran told the Dewan Negara that 730 government pharmacists have been left in limbo because promises to absorb them into permanent positions have yet to be fulfilled.

He said they were among 1,330 floating officers who were to have been offered permanent posts in October, but only 600 were absorbed.

Lingeshwaran said these pharmacists had been told by the ministry that their applications had expired and that they were no longer on the waiting list.