



MMA urges swift reforms to curb exodus of doctors to Singapore

3 days ago

[FMT Reporters](#)

Retaining doctors must be treated as a national priority, says MMA president Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira.



Malaysian doctors are being offered attractive compensation packages in a Singaporean recruitment drive in Kuala Lumpur which may further deplete an already strained health system.

PETALING JAYA:

The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has called on the government to step up reforms of the national health service, warning that failure to act will worsen the brain drain of Malaysian doctors to neighbouring countries.

The call comes after reports of Malaysian doctors being offered attractive compensation packages by a [Singaporean recruitment drive](#) in Kuala Lumpur, a move that MMA says could further deplete an already strained public health system, particularly in Sabah and Sarawak.



Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira.

In a statement, MMA president Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira said retaining doctors must be treated as a national priority. “Delaying action risks causing irreparable harm and compromising the quality and accessibility of healthcare for the majority of Malaysians who depend on public services,” he said.

He urged the government to abolish the current contract system for medical officers and return to offering permanent positions as standard, as the outdated contract arrangement creates job insecurity and hampers career progression.

He urged the government to speed up a “long-overdue increase” for on-call allowances for doctors in health service. “There must be an understanding that retaining healthcare workers will come at a cost and the present rates do not do justice to the services of our doctors.”

Kalwinder also urged the government to cover relocation costs for doctors transferred between West and East Malaysia, noting that the financial burden of moving families and belongings has led some to reject postings or leave the service entirely.

He renewed calls for the government to establish clear and open career pathways for doctors to specialise and to allow specialist training under parallel pathway postgraduate programmes in public hospitals without taking the post-graduate federal scholarship Hadiah Latihan Persekutuan.

Kalwinder added that the government must rectify the disparity in regional incentives paid to doctors. He said new rules under the public service remuneration system had resulted in discrepancies in the take-home pay of doctors transferred within regions after Dec 1.

He said the policy had led to doctors of similar seniority receiving different pay for the same work and responsibilities. "This has discouraged more doctors from accepting postings in Sabah and Sarawak," he said, calling for the policy to be reviewed and corrected.