

# Klinik Rahmah programme not suitable for private clinics, says Malaysian Medical Association

By [GRACE CHEN](#)

Sunday, 12 Feb 2023

6:30 PM MYT

THE Rahmah initiative, a programme spurred by the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry to help the hardcore poor, may be well received by food traders, supermarkets and soon to come, the clothing industry.

The private medical community, however, has decided to pull the hand brakes on this call.

In reaction to minister Datuk Seri Salahuddin Ayub's statement that the healthcare sector was also attracted to provide cheap prices to those in need, especially the B40 group, Malaysian Medical Association president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai has replied in a statement that the "Klinik Rahmah" programme may end up doing more harm than good.

"Giving unsubsidised healthcare at knockdown prices can end up with substandard care being provided.

"As it is, many private general practitioners (GP) are struggling to keep their private clinics afloat with the high rentals, operational expenses and the private consultation fees that have remained stagnant for the past 30 years.

"As such, lowering prices will not be sustainable for private GPs in sustaining their practice," said Dr Muruga.

He further added that it needed to be noted that clinics giving bulk discounts and promoting their services was also a form of inducement which was unethical in the practice of medicine.

"Discounts will also lead to under-cutting among private clinics that will not be able to compete in terms of pricing.

"These issues need to be prevented as it can have a serious impact on the quality of care.

"It should be noted that the GPs understand the need to help the B40 groups and are already doing their part by charging less," he said.

It was earlier reported that Datuk Seri Salahuddin had revealed that there were medical doctors with their own clinics intending to offer family packages at reasonable prices for the B40 group through "Klinik Rahmah".

He had also added that the ministry would need to collaborate with the Health Ministry to implement the "Klinik Ramah" programme while appearing as a guest on Bernama Radio's Jendela Fikir last Thursday (Feb 9).

A check at the Health Ministry online portal revealed a total of 195 community clinics and 2,839 health clinics nationwide offering a variety of treatments ranging from that of minor illnesses, follow-ups of stable and controlled cases of chronic diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure and asthma, light treatment procedures such as washing wounds and opening sutures to maternal and child health.

General outpatient charges at government hospitals and clinics are RM1 per visit, including tests.