

New MMA President Prioritises Government Doctors, GP Issues With TPAs

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MMA's newly elected president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz is prioritising issues involving government doctors, as well as private GP issues, like the fee schedule and TPAs. She also wants an update from MOH on implementation of reforms in the Health White Paper.



Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz speaks at MMA's annual banquet in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, on September 8, 2023. Photo by MMA.

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 12 – The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has elected Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz as its new president, the second female president in 63 years, replacing Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai.

Dr Azizan said in her inaugural speech at MMA's annual banquet in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, last Friday that she would prioritise looking into the wellbeing of doctors in the public health service during her 2023-2024 term as MMA president.

"Wellbeing of doctors and by extension, all health care workers in the public health care system should be treated as a priority to ensure the highest quality of care in the country is maintained," MMA quoted her in a statement as saying.

"Public health care is unlike other civil service departments as health care workers often work extra hours putting the needs of the patient first.

"Health care workers in the public sector are entrusted with the responsibility of care for a high percentage of our population. More than 70 per cent of the population rely on public health care services for their health needs.

"Hospitals operate 24/7 and health care workers deal with life and death situations on an almost daily basis. Ensuring the wellbeing of health care workers are paramount to maintain high quality care for the best possible outcomes."

MMA said Dr Azizan would address issues like contract doctors, overcrowding of public health care facilities, maldistribution of health care workers, shortages in specialists, remuneration, junior doctors' career pathways, work environment, work-life balance of doctors to avoid burnout, preparing for an ageing nation, and digitalisation of health care.

"I am looking forward to engaging with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to resolve these issues, as these are important areas to address in improving the delivery of care and the system," Dr Azizan said.

Dr Azizan also expressed hope that some of the health care reforms planned by the government will be carried out during her term. MMA presidents serve for only one year.

"We hope to get an update from the MOH soon on the implementation of health care reforms that are being planned in line with the Health White Paper," she said.

In her speech, she said issues faced by private medical practitioners would also be among her priorities.

"There are longstanding issues in private healthcare that also need to be addressed. The private general practitioners' (GPs) fee schedule and issues with third party administrators (TPAs) or managed care organisations (MCOs), as well as the issues private health care specialists are facing will be addressed in our engagements with the ministry."