

## **Medical association urges tighter oversight on e-prescriptions to ensure patient safety**

BY GALILEO PETINGI ON JANUARY 18, 2025, SATURDAY AT 7:01 AM [SARAWAK](#)



*Dr Kalwinder Singh says the lack of proper oversight in e-prescription services could lead to increased complications such as end-stage kidney disease, worsening patient outcomes, and higher healthcare costs.— AFP photo*

**KUCHING (Jan 18):** The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) calls for stringent inspections and audits of e-prescription practices to ensure adherence with the Poisons Act and safeguard patient safety, particularly in the dispensing of long-term medications.

Its president Dato Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira said the appeal follows notifications from third-party administrators – which mandate a shift to pharmacy-based dispensing via e-prescriptions – that medications were being dispensed without valid prescriptions from patients’ treating doctors, which could contravene existing regulations particularly the Poisons Act.

“According to existing regulations, prescriptions should only be reissued for a limited period, typically up to two additional supplies.

“However, MMA has identified instances where prescriptions for follow-up medications are being issued by online doctors who have never physically examined or treated the patient.

“This practice not only contravenes regulatory requirements, but also undermines the principles of safe and effective patient care,” he said in a statement.

Emphasising the importance of regular monitoring and clinical assessments in managing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like diabetes and hypertension, he said the lack of proper oversight in e-prescription services could lead to increased complications such as end-stage kidney disease, worsening patient outcomes, and higher healthcare costs.

“The lack of adequate supervision in long-term medication management may further escalate the burden of chronic diseases, leading to worsening patient outcomes and increased healthcare costs.”

To mitigate these risks, he urged authorities to enforce strict compliance with the Poisons Act and conduct comprehensive audits of pharmacies using e-prescription services.

Acknowledging the benefits of digital healthcare solutions, MMA stressed the need for responsible implementation aligned with healthcare laws to protect public health.

“Strict enforcement of the Poisons Act is essential to ensure that patient care is not compromised by improper dispensing practices.

“While technology and digital healthcare solutions can enhance efficiency, they must be implemented responsibly and in full compliance with existing healthcare laws.

“MMA stands ready to engage with the relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health and regulatory bodies, to discuss measures that will strengthen patient safety in the digital healthcare landscape,” added Dr Kalwinder Singh.