

'Extra allocation won't be enough to build new hospitals'

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Malaysian Medical Association's Dr Ravindran R Naidu says more funding is needed to solve the problem of overcrowding.



There is a need for more hospitals, especially with an ageing population.

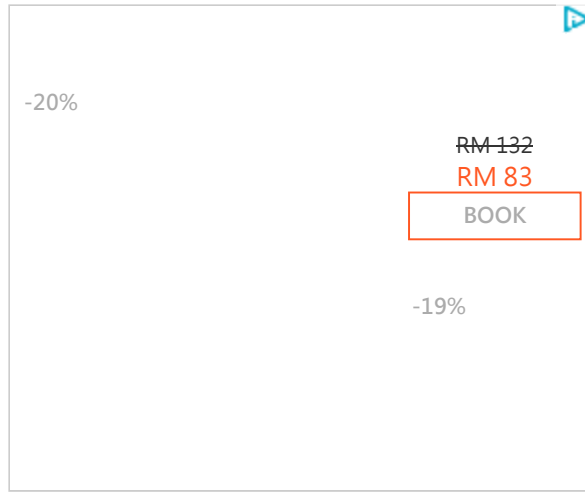
PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) warns that the additional RM479 million sought by the government for the health ministry's budget will not be enough to build new hospitals and tackle overcrowding at existing centres.

MMA president Dr Ravindran R Naidu said the allocation would be used for medication and supplies but would not be sufficient to finance the building of more hospitals.

"The health ministry needs more hospitals to reduce overcrowding and decentralise care.

"We would like to see a much greater expenditure on healthcare, with a significant increase in the development budget," he told FMT.

Ravindran was commenting on the tabling of the supplementary supply bill in the Dewan Rakyat to seek an additional RM7.122 billion for the 2017 federal budget.



Of the amount sought, RM479 million will be allocated to the health ministry.

Ravindran said the greater part of the budget allocation would go to salaries and medicine, with very little for building clinics and hospitals.

“The number of doctors graduating is 5,000 a year. The number of hospitals has only gone up from 36 to 42 while the number of patients has doubled.”

Critics and members of the opposition had said the RM27 billion allocation for the health ministry, announced by Prime Minister Najib Razak in the 2018 Budget, was insufficient to meet the growing needs of an ageing population.

FMT reported last year on the problems faced by government hospitals and clinics due to the lack of funding, including a shortage of medication, consumables and reagents for blood tests. There was also a lack of maintenance of medical equipment.

[Government seeks additional RM7.1 billion for budget](#)

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