

Minister: Proposed increase in private GP fees to be raised in Cabinet

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By Loh Foon Fong



KUALA LUMPUR: The proposed increase in private general practitioners' fees will be brought up to the Cabinet, says Health Minister Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (*pic*).

He said it was discussed at the ministry's post-Cabinet meeting on Wednesday following the Malaysian Medical Association's proposal, and feedback gained from a townhall meeting held in August.

"We will raise it up with the Cabinet," he said after launching the 3rd Malaysian Nursing Council, International Nursing Conference (MNC-INC) here yesterday.

The ministry is awaiting feedback on the proposal from the Finance Ministry and the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry.

Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Mohamed Namazie Ibrahim said the consultation fees at shophot private clinics, now at between RM10 and RM35, should be “harmonised” with the fees for GPs in private hospitals which was revised to between RM35 and RM125 in 2013.

He said that in 2013, the fees in Schedule 13 of the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act for hospitals and specialists and GPs practising in hospitals as emergency department medical officers were revised, but not for Schedule 7 for private clinics including GPs operating outside hospitals.

He said the proposed increase to between RM35 and RM125 was actually from the MMA’s Fourth Fees Schedule way back in 2002, which recommended that simple consultation fee be increased to RM35 and complex consultation to RM125, adding that charges have not increased since 1992.

“The MMA wishes to assure the public that these fees gazettment will not reflect an increase in total overall medical charges,” he told *The Star* in a separate interview.

Meanwhile, Dr Dzulkefly said the ministry would look into graduate nurses who could not get into the civil service at U41 grade and instead were offered the diploma level U29 grade.

“We can only make recommendations. The Public Service Department makes the decision,” he said.

He said the ministry discussed the job freeze, which affected other professions as well, at its post-Cabinet meeting.

The minister said this had caused a shortage of staff and affected hospitals under the purview of the ministry as well as university hospitals.

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