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# 'Counter-productive' for pharmacists to administer vaccines, doctors' body says

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By Azril Annuar



Dr Namazie argued that pharmacists must not be seen to have a vested interest in encouraging vaccination by being able to administer it. — Reuters pic

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 25 — The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) dismissed today a need for pharmacists to administer vaccines, refuting the Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society's (MPS) claims that pharmacists can take a load off government healthcare facilities on the procedures.

MMA president Dr Mohamed Namazie Ibrahim said in a press statement that the move would be "counter-productive", adding that there is no shortage of public and private healthcare facilities to provide and administer vaccines.



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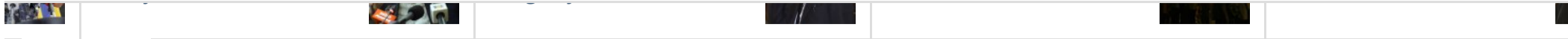


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int functions they carry out to spend time learning how to administer intramuscular injections in such a way as to avoid damage to nerves and blood vessels while also avoiding infections and other complications.”

However, he acknowledged the role of the pharmacists at a community level where they have a strong position to be advocates for vaccination.

Recently MPS president Amrahi Buang said it was time to update the National Immunisation Programme to officially include pharmacists, who are the most accessible health care providers, as vaccination advocates and providers.

“We would like to empower community pharmacists, allowing them to play a bigger role in serving and taking care of our society.

“Vaccination by pharmacists is not new. Of course the pharmacists will have to be trained and undergo a proper programme before they can administer the vaccines.

“This will not only take a load off other health service providers, including the government, it will also increase vaccine coverage by providing more access to people to get their shots,” said Amrahi.

However, Dr Namazie argued that pharmacists must not be seen to have a vested interest in encouraging vaccination by being able to administer it.

He added that different professions in the healthcare sector have important roles to play in overcoming vaccine refusal and resistance and the solution does not lie in all professions taking all roles.

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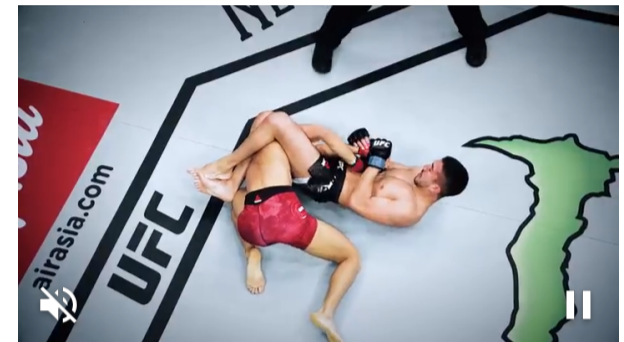
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