

MMA to ministry: Don't discriminate against frontliners' kids

NATION 

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PETALING JAYA: Children of medical frontliners should not be discriminated against in childcare centres, says the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA).

MMA president Dr N. Ganabaskaran said that frontliners and their children should not be subject to “discriminatory policies and practices”.

This comes as a response to the updated standard operating procedures (SOPs) for childcare centres set by the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry.

Appendix 12, Section 2.1.2 of the guidelines stated that frontliners' children “are at high risk of getting the (Covid-19) infection from their parents”.

“The safest place for these children is to be cared for at home. However, if frontliners' children are to be sent to the childcare centres, they must be segregated from other children,” the guidelines read.

The guidelines were revised on May 22 and had been circulated by Welfare Department officers.

Checks with some childcare providers and associations also showed that the guidelines were also being disseminated.

Dr Ganabaskaran said guidelines were “unacceptable”.

“The MMA finds it disturbing and is shocked that such a policy had been approved by the Ministry concerned and circulated by the Welfare Department,” he said in a statement.

Earlier, a letter written by paediatrician Datuk Dr Amar Singh and signed by about 250 paediatricians had highlighted the updated childcare centre guidelines.

Describing the SOPs as a “slap in the face” to frontliners, they said the guidelines communicated that the children of frontliners, who were working hard to serve the country, were “contaminated” and “preferably not even welcome” at childcare centres.



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“That such a policy statement can come from the Women, Family and Community Development Ministry is of concern.

“This ministry should be protecting the rights of all children and their parents, not eroding them and sending a message of non-inclusion and segregation,” they said.

They urged for such guidelines to be reviewed.

TAGS / KEYWORDS:

Malaysian Medical Association , Children , Frontliners , Discriminatory , Women Family And Community Development Ministry , Dr N. Ganabaskaran , Dr Amar Singh , SOP

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