

Shortage of flu vaccine at GPs

LETTERS

Monday, 13 Jan 2020

THERE is an acute shortage in the supply of flu vaccine from the four main suppliers. Many general practitioners (GPs) have called the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) to report this problem. The issue is also currently trending on various social media platforms with GPs voicing their displeasure over it, and there are claims that there is preference to supply private hospitals while the fragmented but well-distributed GP clinics are being sidelined.

Each time there is a vaccine shortage, GPs are the last to receive supply if there are any stocks. Normally, priority is given to public hospitals followed by private hospitals and the leftovers to the 7,000 well-distributed general practitioners that have faster and more convenient access to the rakyat.

Private hospitals should focus on secondary and tertiary care as per the Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act (PHFSA).

GPs being the first point of contact and who are close to the community should be given priority by the suppliers.

It is estimated that GP visits annually stand at 70 million. Almost 80% of GP patients are repeat or regular patients and the majority are families.

MMA hopes the suppliers will play a proactive role whenever there is a hike in the number of cases of certain illnesses that can be prevented by primary care practitioners. The needs of patients must come first.

Convenient access to healthcare will increase efficiency and ultimately the standard of healthcare delivery in the country.

DR N. GANABASKARAN , President Malaysian Medical Association

What do you think of this article?

It is insightful

Not in my interest

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