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## MMA urged govt to reform healthcare



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THE Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) is calling for immediate reform in the healthcare system to ensure everyone can obtain the needed medical care without worrying about the cost.

The association's president Dr Koh Kar Chai highlighted that the cost of medical care has been increasing and will continue to increase which will affect those who cannot afford high-cost insurance schemes with unlimited benefits.

He noted the issue of costly hospital bills for severe Covid-19 patients that are managed at private hospitals, where the amounts quoted on social media are in the range between a few hundred thousand ringgit.

"Not having access to the actual cost incurred by the hospital and not having sighted the breakdown of the total hospital bill, MMA is not in a position to say if the bill is justified or not.

"It does, however, bring into light the high cost of medical care which has been increasing and will definitely continue to increase, maybe exponentially so.





“Some users of public healthcare services may not realise it but the cost is high in the public sector too. We do not see this cost as public healthcare is heavily subsidised by the government,” he said in a statement yesterday.

He said long-term illness and other income-draining diseases like cancer and Covid-19 require specialised medication which also causes a dent in a patient’s bank account due to high prolonged cost.

Some of the illnesses may not be covered by medical schemes as those with almost unlimited benefits are out of reach for most patients.

“To get into the public health system for such treatments is possible and the Ministry of Health does provide for it, though understandably, there is a long waiting list and some may not survive it.

“We need to wake up now to the reality that reform of our healthcare system is needed immediately. We need to fix it now before more fall along the wayside on the journey to obtain much-needed healthcare,” he said.

Dr Koh added the matter should be debated in Parliament and both sides of the political divide need to be aware of the urgency for the reforms.

“Hopefully, we do not need another pandemic to tell us that we have been forewarned.

“The 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP) has touched on various aspects of healthcare but is it enough? Being included in the 12MP should mean that it has all been thought through and well-debated,” he added.

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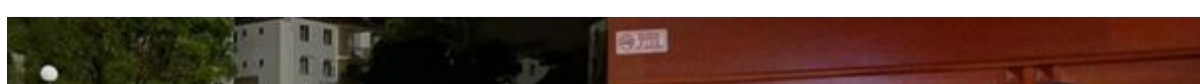
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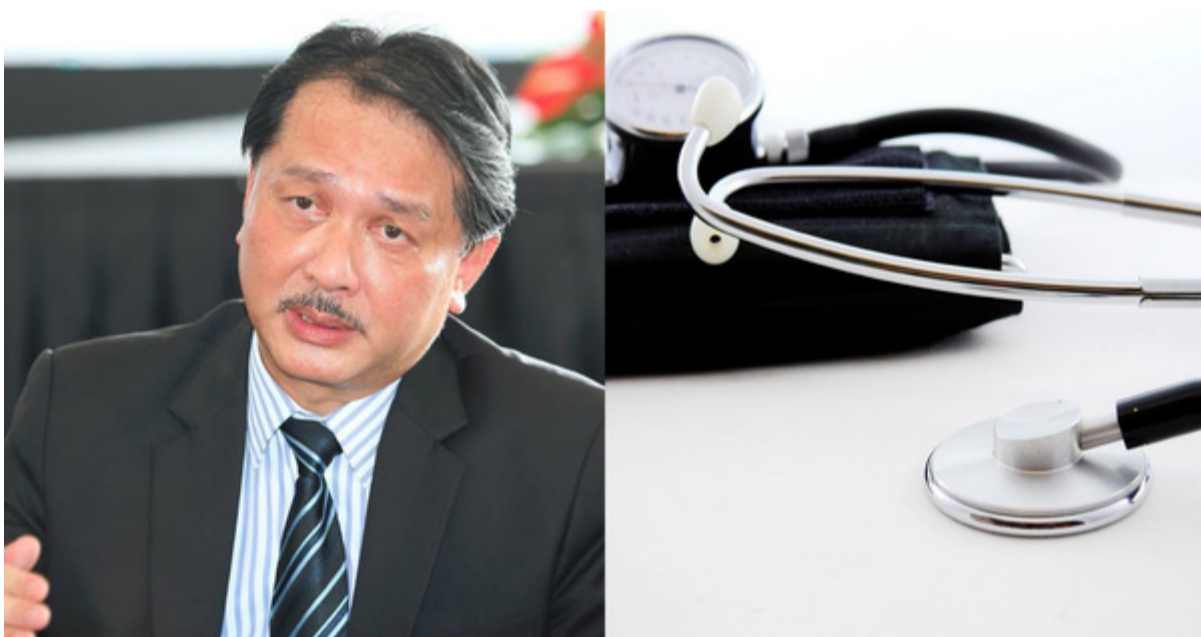




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