

# **Medical Fraternity Boycotts MOH's Drug Price Display Briefing**

By Boo Su-Lyn | 23 July 2025

Doctors' groups, including MMA, FPMPAM, and Perdim, boycotted a July 21 MOH advocacy session on drug price display due to “unresolved jurisdictional ambiguity” between MOH and KPDN, even as the 3-month grace period for enforcement will end soon on July 31.



*Malaysian Medical Association president-elect Dr R. Arasu speaks at a doctors' rally in Putrajaya on May 6, 2025, to protest the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry's (KPDN) jurisdiction over mandatory drug price display under the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011 (Act 723). Photo by Sam Tham for CodeBlue.*

**KUALA LUMPUR, July 23** — At least three doctors' associations skipped a stakeholder engagement session by the Ministry of Health (MOH) last Monday on the government's drug price display mandate.

Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president-elect Dr R. Arasu [posted on X Monday morning](#) that general practitioners (GPs) were boycotting the medicine price display “advocacy”

session by the Drug Price Management Branch (CPHU) under the Pharmaceutical Services Programme's (PSP) Pharmacy Practice and Development Division.

"Where is Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and MOH's promise to review the use of Act 586 [Private Healthcare Facilities and Services Act 1998]?" he wrote.

"It's been nearly three months, but no engagement. Policy comes in through the window, while promises fly out with the wind."

[Health Minister Dzulkefly Ahmad said last May 13](#) that the MOH was reviewing whether the MOH could take jurisdiction over the drug price display mandate that was legislated and enforced by the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry (KPDN) under the Price Control and Anti-Profitteering Act 2011 (Act 723).

According to CPHU, the July 21 medicine price display advocacy session – its second after a February 27 briefing – was intended to "provide a comprehensive explanation on the implementation of the initiative, including guidelines for implementation, the need for compliance, and clarification of arising issues."

"This is to ensure that the initiative can be implemented in a more organised and effective manner in facilities," wrote CPHU in a July 14 email to invited stakeholders, as sighted by *CodeBlue*.

According to [PSP's website](#), CPHU's functions include planning, monitoring, and implementing policies related to the "management and setting of drug prices" in Malaysia. CPHU is also responsible for managing a database on medicine prices from "every stage of the supply chain" in the public and private sectors in Malaysia, as well as other countries for reference pricing.

Health deputy director-general (pharmaceutical services) Azuana Ramli told *CodeBlue* that CPHU isn't a newly established entity, but has been in operation for many years as part of the MOH's efforts to strengthen the management and oversight of medicine pricing and affordability in the country.

"Generally, CPHU is responsible for planning, implementing, and coordinating policies and strategies related to the pricing of medicines in Malaysia. This includes managing price databases, monitoring price trends, supporting price-related evaluations for procurement and formulary listing, engaging stakeholders through strategic communications, and enhancing public access to medicine price information," said Azuana.

"CPHU also collaborates with international organisations on issues related to affordable medicine pricing.

"The subdivision supports the Ministry's broader goal of promoting fair, transparent, and affordable access to medicines for all."

The MOH's current price transparency policy isn't price control; private health care facilities, like GP clinics and hospitals, as well as community pharmacies are merely required to display retail medicine prices.

Besides MMA, the largest doctors' group in the country, the Federation of Private Medical Practitioners' Associations Malaysia (FPMPAM) and the Organisation of Malaysian Muslim Doctors (Perdim) also boycotted CPHU's drug price display briefing last Monday.

Both FPMPAM and Perdim declined to participate in the advocacy session due to "unresolved jurisdictional ambiguity" between the MOH and KPDN (old name: KPDNHEP) on the authority to regulate price display.

"To date, we have not received any official notification or evidence indicating that KPDNHEP has delegated or transferred any statutory authority to the Pharmacy Division, MOH, with respect to the regulation or enforcement of price display requirements," FPMPAM president Dr Shanmuganathan TV Ganeson and Perdim president Dr Boi Saidi Abd Razak wrote in separate letters to the MOH's pharmaceutical services division on July 21, as sighted by *CodeBlue*.

"As you are aware, these matters fall squarely under the jurisdiction of KPDNHEP, pursuant to the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011 (Act 723) and associated consumer protection legislation.

"While we strongly support the principles of regulatory transparency and improved communication with patients, we believe that any engagement on such regulatory matters must be firmly grounded in appropriate legal authority.

"In the absence of a clear statutory mandate, there is a risk that the outcomes of such a session could undermine due process and create confusion among health care providers and the public."

Neither Dzulkefly nor Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Minister Armizan Mohd Ali have come out to clarify whether price display will remain under Act 723, even as the three-month grace period for enforcement of the mandate, which came into effect on May 1, draws near to an end on July 31, just a week away.

Dzulkefly's announcement about the MOH possibly taking jurisdiction over price transparency was made after more than 700 doctors held an [historic rally](#) in Putrajaya on May 6 to protest against gazettment of the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering (Price Marking for Drug) Order 2025 under Act 723.

[The Star reported](#) last Saturday former Skudai assemblyman Dr Boo Cheng Hau, who is currently a DAP branch publicity secretary, as calling for the Attorney-General's Chambers to conduct a legal review of the drug price display order.

Dr Boo pointed out that Section 2(2)(f) of the Consumer Protection Act 1999 explicitly exempts health care and other professional services from consumer law, as these are regulated under separate professional legislation.

He also noted that the sale, licensing, and regulation of medicines are governed by the Poisons Act 1952, the Sale of Drugs Act 1952, and the Control of Drugs and Cosmetics Regulations 1984, all under the MOH's purview.

"The Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry does not have the technical expertise, authority, or jurisdiction to regulate pharmaceutical licensing or pricing. These responsibilities lie solely with the Health Ministry," Dr Boo was quoted saying.