

Budget 2025: Higher allocation needed, free-up bottleneck UD56 — MMA

By [Bernama](#) / [Bernama](#)

24 Sep 2024, 10:17 pm



Malaysian Medical Association president Datuk Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira said the Health White Paper goal of increasing the health budget to 5% of the nation's gross domestic product should be met sooner as over 70% of Malaysians rely on public healthcare services for their healthcare needs.

KUALA LUMPUR (Sept 24): An overall healthcare allocation increase for the upcoming Budget 2025 is needed to allow more meaningful improvements and reforms in the healthcare system, said the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA).

Its president Datuk Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira said the Health White Paper (HWP) goal of increasing the health budget to 5% of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) should be met sooner, as over 70% of Malaysians rely on public healthcare services for their healthcare needs.

He said the association has proposed several suggestions for the upcoming budget, including creating Khas Untuk Penyandang (KUP) Gred Khas C posts for specialists who have been stagnating at the UD56 scale.

“The last such promotion exercise was in 2012 where a few hundred KUP Khas C posts were specially created and this enabled many doctors to move up to Gred Khas C.

“After 13 years, another one-off creation of KUP Khas C is very much required to help retain our experienced senior doctors who are needed to treat, teach and mentor in the public sector,” he said in a statement on Tuesday.

Dr Kalwinder said the creation of 150 to 200 KUP Gred Khas C posts, would reduce resignations and clear the bottleneck that has persisted since 2017 for doctors on the UD56 scale.

In addition, he said MMA also anticipates the government to approve their proposal to increase the hourly active on-call rate for medical officers to RM25 per hour in Budget 2025, up from the current rate of RM9.16 per hour for weekend active calls.

“Similarly we hope that the government will also increase the specialists’ hourly active on-call allowance rate to RM30 per hour [from the existing RM10.40 per hour for active weekend calls]. As for passive calls for both medical officers and specialists, MMA proposes an increase of 50% from the existing rates,” he added.

To increase efficiency in the administration at public healthcare facilities and address the issue of overcrowding, the MMA also proposes increasing funding for digitalisation in public healthcare such as for an online dashboard listing the services and number of appointments available.

For the private healthcare sector, Dr Kalwinder emphasised the importance of public-private collaborations particularly in the prevention and management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as over half a million or 2.5% of Malaysian adults live with four NCDs in 2023, while nearly 2.3 million adults will have three.

“The 13,000 private GPs [general practitioners] who play an important role in prevention and health education are still under-utilised in addressing NCDs. A public-private collaboration with the wide distribution of private GPs can significantly improve effectiveness in the management of NCDs,” he said.

With healthcare and technology improving at a much more rapid pace than ever before, Dr Kalwinder said tax rebates should be given to the doctors for them to upscale knowledge including participating and attending courses or conferences organised by professional bodies.

To encourage more Malaysians to adopt a healthy lifestyle, the MMA also looks forward to the new Sugar-Sweetened Beverage (SSB) tax to be introduced as part the Health Ministry’s (MOH) “War on Sugar” initiative, in Budget 2025.

“We look forward to further details on this initiative and along with this initiative, we would like to see tax revenue from the sale of tobacco and alcohol products channelled to the health budget specifically for programmes to prevent and treat NCDs at public healthcare facilities,” he said.