

Medicine ‘Price Catcher’ App Risks Unethical Price Wars, Says MMA

By CodeBlue | 26 August 2025

MMA says MOH’s planned MyPriMeCatcher app, which lists retail drug prices, risks triggering “a race to the bottom” in price wars and further commercialisation of health care, pointing out that this is precisely what MOH has consistently cautioned against.



Malaysian Medical Association president Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira speaks at the Industry Leadership Summit 2024 in Kuala Lumpur on October 10, 2024, organised by the Galen Centre for Health and Social Policy and supported by PMCare Sdn Bhd. Photo by Saw Siow Feng.

KUALA LUMPUR, August 26 — The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has slammed a new government app that lists the retail medicine prices in private health care facilities and community pharmacies.

The doctors’ group stressed that selecting a health care provider solely on the basis of medicine prices was not in the best interest of patients, pointing out that clinics and health care professionals deliver professional medical advice, diagnostic assessments, patient education, treatment planning, and various therapeutic services – going beyond medications.

“These integral components of care are not captured by price listings alone. Patients deserve to choose their health care facility based on the quality of care, professionalism, continuity, and overall value, not merely by comparing medicine costs,” said MMA president Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira in a statement to *CodeBlue*.

“Moreover, promoting price comparisons risks triggering price wars and further commercialisation of health care, which is precisely what the Ministry of Health (MOH) has consistently cautioned against.

“A race to the bottom could undermine standards of care, drive unethical pricing practices, and ultimately erode the trust between patients and providers.”

CodeBlue recently reported that the MOH’s Pharmaceutical Services Programme (PSP) was piloting an app called MyPriMeCatcher to enable the public to compare retail medicine prices, following the price display mandate by the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry (KPDN) under the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011 (Act 723).

MMA said it did not believe that the MyPriMeCatcher app would get widespread participation from private clinics, mainly because the government has yet to raise general practitioners’ (GP) consultation fees that have remained unchanged at RM10 to RM35 for over three decades, despite the MOH’s “repeated commitments” to address this.

“Without a fair and sustainable consultation fee, clinics may see little incentive to channel any resources toward data submission for this app, especially when their core concern, which is clinic viability, remains unresolved,” said Dr Kalwinder.

Four other doctors’ associations have condemned the MyPriMeCatcher app as a “Trojan horse”, rejecting cooperation with the MOH to voluntarily submit drug price data in exchange for continuing professional development (CPD) points.

In a joint statement yesterday, the Federation of Private Medical Practitioners’ Associations Malaysia (FPMPAM), the Private Medical Practitioners Association of Selangor and Kuala Lumpur (PMPASKL), the Medical Practitioners Coalition Association of Malaysia (MPCAM), and the Organisation of Malaysian Muslim Doctors (Perdim) dubbed the project as a “backdoor enforcement of drug price display through a government-controlled app.”

“The MyPriMeCatcher initiative is misguided, counterproductive, and damaging to both patients and doctors. Until MOH focuses on strengthening its own failing system, we will reject any attempt to use private doctors as scapegoats or data feeders for bureaucratic apps,” said FPMPAM, PMPASKL, MPCAM, and Perdim.