



More strain on public healthcare system if insurance premiums rise, says MMA

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The Malaysian Medical Association says insurance policies should accommodate all income groups to encourage financial preparedness.



A group of PKR MPs said last week the rising cost of private healthcare services is forcing the middle-income group to seek treatment at government hospitals and clinics.

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) warns that the purported spike in medical insurance premiums may result in further dependency on an already overburdened public healthcare system.

It was reported on Tuesday that medical insurance premiums are expected to rise by 40% to 70% next year based on notices sent by insurance providers to policyholders citing the rising cost of healthcare at private hospitals.

MMA said medical insurance policyholders unable to afford significantly increased premiums or who have insufficient coverage may have no option but to turn to the public healthcare system for their healthcare needs.

“While adjustments to insurance premiums may be needed to account for rising healthcare costs, it is crucial that these adjustments remain within a reasonable and affordable range.

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“Insurance policies should be designed to accommodate all income groups to encourage financial preparedness. A balanced approach is essential to maintaining a sustainable healthcare ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders,” MMA president Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira said in a statement.

Last week, a group of PKR MPs claimed the rising cost of private healthcare services was forcing the middle-income group to seek treatment at government hospitals and clinics, exacerbating the problem of overcrowding at these facilities.

While he provided no data to support the claim, Bayan Baru MP Sim Tze Tzin said the rate hikes were hurting the middle class, who could no longer cope with the high costs.

Sim called on Bank Negara Malaysia to investigate insurance companies which have increased medical insurance premiums for excessive profiteering.