

Malaysian Medical Association fears more resignations from contract doctors if issues not tackled well



MMA president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai said that apart from the lack of permanent posts, there are many other issues that are causing frustration among the public health care workforce which the government should focus on resolving now. — Picture by Ahmad Zamzahuri

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KUCHING, April 2 — Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) expects more resignations of contract doctors as some may not be willing to wait another three years, which was the timeframe given by the Prime Minister to resolve contract doctor issues.

“We understand that securing permanent positions will require a significant, long-term financial commitment from the government but for now, the government can go ahead with the more easily attainable measures,” said MMA president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai.

He said that apart from the lack of permanent posts, there are many other issues that are causing frustration among the public health care workforce which the government should focus on resolving now.

Some of the issues do not even require financial commitment to resolve such as ensuring more reasonable working hours for a work-life balance, transparency in the selection criteria for permanent posts, and ensuring a proper career pathway, he pointed out.

“MMA wishes to thank the Prime Minister for his stated commitment to resolving the issues of contract doctors in three years. However, the government should set a timeline with milestones to achieving it for the affected doctors. It will take some convincing for the contract doctors to believe that a breakthrough is possible for them to obtain permanent posts.”

He added that the work environment can also be improved by eliminating bullying.

He said that all the issues along with solutions have been brought up during their townhall session with the health minister.

“We hope the Prime Minister had been briefed on the issues and the many solutions that the MMA had proposed during the townhall with the Health Ministry.”

He pointed out that MMA had in fact written to the Prime Minister’s office to meet with him and brief him first hand on the issues but was referred to the health minister.

“We appreciate having met with the health minister on a number of occasions. However, it is important that the Prime Minister as the leader of the nation be made aware of the magnitude of the issues in our public health care system and its far-reaching impact on the delivery of health care for the population. These problems we are being faced with are systemic and are the result of failed policies of the past.”

As for the 1,500 permanent positions that will be given this year, it is not any different from the 1,500 permanent positions that were promised by the previous Health Minister for each year. It needs to be at least doubled as around 3,000 medical graduates will join the system each year, he said. — Borneo Post