

## MMA slams MoH for turning down higher on-call allowance proposal

Look at percentage of contract doctors' resignation, president tells ministry

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*From Health Ministry's written response to Malaysian Medical Association, Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz says it appears that the people in the position to make decisions may lack a clear understanding and are missing accurate information needed to decide on the proposed increase. – Pixabay pic, November 4, 2023*

### **BY The Vibes Team**

PETALING JAYA – The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) said it is “utterly disappointed” with the government’s rejection of its proposal for an increase in public healthcare doctors’ weekend on-call allowance.

MMA had earlier requested that the allowance be increased from the current hourly rate of RM9.16 to RM25.

“MoH’s response stating that RM9.16 is an ‘appropriate’ rate is an insult not only to doctors but all healthcare workers in the country.

“Is the government even aware that there are waiters in the country who get paid a higher hourly rate than its doctors?” asked its president, Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz.

From MoH’s written response to MMA, she said it appears that the people in the position to make decisions may lack a clear understanding and are missing accurate information needed to decide on the proposed increase.

“If indeed the decision (to reject the increase in on-call allowance) was made without referring to accurate information, we wish to request that the government reevaluate and reconsider its decision concerning the proposed on-call rate increase,” added Dr Azizan.

MMA also reminded the government of the high attrition rate in public healthcare.

From 2017 to 2022, contract medical officer resignations jumped by a whopping 1,131%.

It was also reported that 890 specialists resigned from government service between 2018 to 2022 – an average of more than 4 specialists leaving per week during that time.

“The frustration among doctors in public healthcare is a matter not to be taken lightly.

“There is concern that on top of the burnout, many doctors are experiencing, coupled with the low wages earned, issues like the stagnant on-call allowance may spark further frustration and brain drain.

“Doctors in public healthcare have not seen an increase in on-call allowance for over a decade.

“Taking into consideration inflation, the on-call allowance rate should be reviewed every five years.”

– **The Vibes, November 4, 2023**