



MMA wants new task force to review HWCITF's recommendations

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It says knowing if the Healthcare Work Culture Improvement Task Force's recommendations were adopted would clarify the direction moving forward.



MMA president Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira said significant time, effort and resources went into the preparation of the HWCITF report two years ago. (MMA pic)

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) supports the call for the special task force formed to investigate the death of a government doctor in Lahad Datu, Sabah, to also review the recommendations made by the Healthcare Work Culture Improvement Task Force (HWCITF).

MMA president Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira said significant time, effort and resources were invested in research, gathering insights and feedback from public healthcare staff to prepare the HWCITF report two years ago.

“Transparency regarding which recommendations, if any, were adopted by the health ministry would help clarify the direction of these ongoing reforms and reassure healthcare personnel about the government’s commitment to addressing work culture issues and challenges.

“The newly-formed task force must also be empowered to review the findings and recommendations of the HWCITF”, he said in a statement.

HWCITF made 11 recommendations in its report which was released in August 2022.

Kalwinder also called for the newly-formed task force to obtain the views of all stakeholders and consider other complaints that have been raised when coming up with its own recommendations to prevent bullying at the workplace.

On Wednesday, senator Dr RA Lingeshwaran said that the current task force should find out more about the HWCITF’s recommendations, as two years have passed, and with another death having occurred.

The government set up the HWCITF in 2022 following the death of a houseman at Penang Hospital on April 17 of that year.

Lingeshwaran had questioned as to the findings and recommendations from the HWCITF’s report and the follow-up action taken by the health ministry.

Previously, health minister Dzulkefly Ahmad announced the formation of an independent special task force to investigate the death of Dr Tay Tien Yaa, a pathologist with the Lahad Datu Hospital, who allegedly committed suicide.

Tay died on Aug 29, after which her sister claimed that bullying might have been one of the factors that led to her death.

Dzulkefly said the new task force would be headed by former public service department director-general Borhan Dollah and will comprise five other independent members who have extensive expertise in medicine, psychiatry, pathology as well as mental health and bullying.

The current task force will also identify the type of bullying that typically occurs in government hospitals as well as factors that may contribute to it, and prepare a report of its findings and recommendations within three months.