

MMA: Lack of transparency in job placements frustrates junior doctors

By [Amisha Syahira](#) - November 7, 2024 @ 12:06pm



Datuk Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira, is concerned about the lack of transparency in the selection criteria and other 'technical issues', which have resulted in frustration among some junior doctors. - File pic, for illustration purposes

KUALA LUMPUR: While the awarding of permanent positions to junior doctors who applied for interim contracts has been met with gratitude, the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has some concerns about the process.

Its president, Datuk Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira, is concerned about the lack of transparency in the selection criteria and other 'technical issues', which have resulted in frustration among some junior doctors.

"A significant issue with the recent placements has been the lack of clarity surrounding the criteria for the selection of permanent positions.

"Many junior doctors who have served diligently are now questioning why some colleagues were offered permanent positions, while others were not, and placed on the reserve list.

"The absence of transparency has led to disappointment and frustration among these doctors," he said in a statement today.

Dr Kalwinder highlighted reports of system crashes and limited availability of state slots during the application process, noting that feedback indicated that the placement system experienced failures upon its release, which prevented many applicants from accessing it.

"By the time it was restored, certain states had already run out of slots, forcing doctors to choose locations far from where they had been contributing effectively," he added.

To address this, he proposed that the government consider allowing doctors already trained in a specific discipline to remain in their current positions if they wished to do so.

"Input from heads of departments should be given strong consideration in transfer decisions, as relocating experienced junior doctors without consultation risks further disrupting critical services and departmental needs," he said, adding that such relocations, when doctors were willing to continue in their current roles, placed unnecessary costs on both the government and the doctors.

The MMA is also calling for the selection criteria for permanent positions set by the Health Ministry and the Public Service Department to be made transparent for all applicants, as this would significantly help build trust among doctors and the general public while ensuring fairness in the process.

In terms of manpower planning, the MMA has repeatedly called for transparency and the publication of data on the healthcare workforce at public facilities nationwide, which is crucial to preventing the inequitable distribution of healthcare workers.

"This information should be augmented with the needs of each facility, taking into account factors such as the number of beds, services provided, and the availability of daycare services and daycare operating theatres (OT), inpatient and outpatient services, and regular and specialty clinics.

"This can then show the numbers each facility needs in terms of House Officers (HOs), Medical Officers (MOs), and specialists to run the service, while comparing the actual staffing levels with the required norms will clearly identify any shortages or critical gaps," added Dr Kalwinder.