

Datuk Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira is new MMA president

By [Amalia Azmi](#) - September 8, 2024 @ 11:07am



Datuk Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira is the new president of the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA). Pic courtesy of MMA

KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Dr Kalwinder Singh Khaira is the new president of the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA), taking over from Dr Azizan Abdul Aziz.

Dr Kalwinder is currently a consultant physician and head of the department of medicine at the Sarawak General Hospital in Kuching.

He said he will work with the Health Ministry and other government departments to secure a better future for doctors in public healthcare.

"My main focus will be on doing all that we can to provide and lay the groundwork for a better and more certain future for our doctors.

"This encompasses looking at their right to job security, a healthy work environment, specialist training options and opportunities, work-life balance, recognition of their efforts in terms of salaries, on-call allowances and also their mental well-being," he said in his inaugural speech at MMA's annual banquet held in Kuching yesterday.

As for doctors in private healthcare, he said that there were still several unresolved issues that must be addressed.

"There are issues in the private sector that beget attention and discussion. The issues include the harmonisation of private general practitioners' fee schedules and issues faced by private specialists with insurers and third-party administrators in the duty of care has been there for several years and warrant renewed attention," he said.

Dr Kalwinder also promised to include looking into societal issues such as the control and regulation of the tobacco and vape industry, planning for the needs of an ageing population as well as control of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).

He hoped to engage regularly with the ministry on issues affecting the country's healthcare and the health of the population.

"MMA has always had a good and healthy relationship with our health minister and ministry. We will continue to foster this relationship and work together.

"MMA acts not only as the voice of the medical doctors but has also always highlighted issues directly and indirectly related to the health care of our populace," he said.

Meanwhile, commenting on the upcoming 2025 Budget, Dr Kalwinder said there is a need to accelerate an increase in the nation's healthcare budget, both for infrastructure development and improvements to healthcare personnel.

"This is not only for infrastructure development but should also be for the improvement of its most important asset - its healthcare personnel.

"We thank the government for the new salary scheme taking effect in December, which we believe has brought some joy to all civil servants in the wake of the rising cost of living.

"But there are other issues affecting doctors, like the on-call allowances, which we hope that the budget will provide for," he said.