



Where's our 'elusive' higher on-call allowance, ask doctors

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The Malaysian Medical Association's government doctors' wing says they are still waiting for the increased allowances that were promised twice last year.



When tabling the 2025 budget, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim announced that the on-call duty allowance for doctors and dentists in certain categories would be increased by between RM55 and RM65. (Reuters pic)

PETALING JAYA: The government doctors' wing of the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has called out the health ministry for being "elusive" about promised higher on-call allowances for doctors.

In a Facebook post earlier, the section concerning house officers, medical officers and specialists (Schomos) said its doctors have been waiting patiently for their allowances to be raised as promised twice last year.

"MMA Schomos awaits the elusive higher on-call allowance that was announced a second time in the 2025 budget last October without any detail on the implementation.

“It is confusing and irresponsible to announce policies without clear directions and guidelines that are fair and transparent,” Schomos said, adding that a delay in implementation will lead to more doctors leaving government service.

The first announcement of a hike in the allowance was made in February last year. At the time, health minister Dzulkefly Ahmad called for patience, saying the issue had been discussed by the Cabinet and that an announcement would be made “in the near future”.

When contacted, Schomos chairman Dr Timothy Cheng said the announcement in the 2025 budget was extremely vague with no details as to how and when the new rates would kick in.

“As far as I know, hospitals have not received any directive on this yet. We have entered the second week of the new year already. Budget proposals are normally effective immediately or on Jan 1 of the following year (unless specified otherwise).

“We hope the health ministry will implement the increases fast to stop medical officers and specialists from leaving service,” he told FMT.

When tabling the 2025 budget, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim announced that the on-call duty allowance for doctors and dentists in certain categories would be increased by between RM55 and RM65. This works out to about 25% from the current RM200 for one 24-hour active call on weekdays.

On weekends and public holidays, the rate is RM220 per call. For passive calls, where doctors remain on standby at home, doctors are entitled to RM80 for weekdays, and RM85 for weekends and public holidays.

An extra payment of RM50 is given for weekdays and RM55 for weekends if they are recalled to work for more than four hours.

As for specialists, the on-call allowances are RM230 on weekdays and RM250 for weekends and public holidays.