

# MMA gives thumbs up for Sabah's homegrown doctors plan

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September 14, 2022 8:30 AM



*There's a shortage of medical specialists in Sabah. (Freepik pic)*

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has commended the Sabah government for promising scholarships and loans to Sabahans seeking to pursue medical studies, saying any move to improve healthcare in the country should be lauded.

MMA president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai said the promise to Sabahans should be augmented by a commitment to provide on-the-job training after graduation and to improve medical and healthcare facilities in the state.

He suggested that the state government and the public services department discuss attaching a bond to the scholarships.

He also said it was important to plan for the equitable distribution of healthcare services in Sabah.



*Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai*

“We hope the infrastructure to enable convenient access to healthcare services, particularly in rural areas, will be given emphasis,” he told FMT. Last week, chief minister Hajiji Noor said he was aware of the shortage of medical specialists in the state and of the need to improve the healthcare of Sabahans.

He told Yayasan Sabah and the state public services department to focus their attention on youths wanting to study medicine and to offer them loans and scholarships.

Hajiji also said the state government and its strategic partners would continue to provide support to the Healthy Malaysia national agenda in the state.

Former MMA Sabah chairman Dr Kew Seih Teik spoke to FMT of alleged reluctance among medical personnel from the peninsula to serve in the state.

“Right now, they make up about 80% of healthcare personnel in government hospitals, but many of them do not want to stay in Sabah after they finish their training,” he said.

He said it was also difficult to retain specialists in the state.

Kew said training Sabahans in medical fields would increase the chances of their staying put because they would understand the needs of the local residents.