

Malaysian Medical association: Formation of implementing body next key step in Health White Paper



Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai said the process of reforms should have already begun. — Borneo Post pic

Follow us on [Instagram](#), subscribe to our [Telegram](#) channel and [browser alerts](#) for the latest news you need to know.

Saturday, 17 Jun 2023 11:48 AM MYT

KUCHING, June 17 — The next major step for Ministry of Health (MoH)'s Health White Paper (HWP), which had been passed in the Dewan Rakyat via majority voice on Thursday (June 15), would be to ensure the formation of a body or special committee tasked exclusively with the planning and overseeing of the systematic implementation of healthcare reforms throughout the projected 15-year timeframe for completion.

In highlighting this, Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai said the process of reforms should have already begun.

He took the opportunity to thank all the MPs for supporting the HWP Bill.

“We thank the MPs for playing their important role as parliamentarians — highlighting the many issues affecting our nation’s healthcare.

“We again wish to thank the Health White Paper Advisory Council for their hard work and dedication in together producing the HWP. MMA is indeed happy to have played a part in the HWP with representation in the council.

“We agree with the view shared by a number of MPs that healthcare reforms will only be possible with strong leadership and so, we hope that the Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim), as a reformist himself, would ensure the government’s full commitment to all the necessary support in terms of allocation of funds and cooperation from the relevant ministries, towards the successful implementation of the planned reforms,” said Dr Muruga in a statement.

The MMA chief said as acknowledged by the MoH, the nation’s healthcare had, for years, been underfunded.

“MMA hopes to see a more significant increase in the yearly health budget that would truly reflect the government’s commitment to the reforms.

“Five per cent of the nation’s GDP has been set as a target.

“Although the government would work towards gradually increasing the budget towards five per cent, we hope that this year, there would be a more meaningful increase in the health budget set to be tabled for 2024,” he said.

Dr Muruga also said with the HWP being passed in the Dewan Rakyat, MMA would call upon the government to release the findings of two studies on Malaysia’s healthcare system.

“(The studies are) the second part of a Harvard study, which involves recommendations for health delivery and financing; and a study done by McKinsey in 2021. As they involve public funds, the findings of these studies should be made public,” he stressed.

Back on the healthcare reforms, Dr Muruga said although the first and most important step towards it had been taken, he said there was ‘still much work to do’.

“We hope to see in the coming weeks and months, engagements between government and stakeholders continue as a whole of society approach is indeed the way forward towards a stronger, more resilient healthcare system.

“Yesterday’s (Thursday’s) session in Parliament showed that MPs could come together and could work towards a common goal for the people. From the support shown, the MPs from both sides are on board with the plans for reforms in our healthcare,” said Dr Muruga. — Borneo Post