

# New MMA chief vows to continue health reforms agenda

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*Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai will serve as Malaysian Medical Association president for a one-year term from today.*

PETALING JAYA: Healthcare reforms will continue to be the top priority for new Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Dr Muruga Raj Rajathurai.

In his acceptance speech at MMA's annual general meeting last night, he praised health minister Khairy Jamaluddin for his strong commitment to reforms in the healthcare system and vowed to continue MMA's push for the changes.

"We are delighted to have a health minister who is committed towards the much-needed healthcare reforms," he said, before thanking his predecessor Dr Koh Kar Chai for starting the ball rolling on the issue since the beginning of his term one year ago.

Muruga Raj also noted the healthcare human resources issues that need to be looked into with the health ministry and public services department (JPA).

"I am indeed looking forward to working closely with the health minister as well as the public services department as a number of the issues do involve human resources in healthcare," he said.

"There has been some notable progress on the issue of contract doctors although we still have a long way to go towards a more sustainable solution."

He added that he plans to meet with JPA soon to discuss increasing the number of permanent positions for doctors on contract.

"We also hope that these concerns will be adequately addressed through the health white paper which is expected to be tabled in November," he said.

Muruga Raj expressed hope for the process of reforms to the healthcare system to continue even if there is a change in government.

Another issue that's high on his list is bullying among healthcare workers in the public healthcare system.

"I will also make it my mission to tackle an issue that really saddens me as a healthcare professional and that is the issue of bullying in the public healthcare system.

"It is disturbing to hear. So let me just say that bullying will not be tolerated any longer as I will work together with the health ministry and colleagues to ensure that this cancerous behaviour that has crept into the system is dealt with," he said.

Muruga Raj, who also holds a law degree and a Masters in Business Administration, currently practices medicine as a private GP in Kempas, Johor Bahru.

Close to 500 doctors attended the AGM and National MMA Convention and Scientific Congress 2022 at the Marriot Putrajaya over the past three days.