



PRESS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE • 14 SEPTEMBER 2020

Protect and Recognise Malaysia's Health Professionals

The Malaysian Health Coalition is disappointed by the statements of two Deputy Health Ministers that support the current contract system for frontline Medical Officers (MOs) (as reported [here](#) and [here](#) on 9 Sept 2020). We firmly believe that all health professionals must be appropriately recognised for their contribution, skill and sacrifice. Therefore, the Coalition supports the principle of more permanent posts and longer-term contract posts for health professionals in our public sector.

We strongly urge the following:

1. Find a balance between permanent/contract posts and training/service posts

We acknowledge that creating more permanent posts for health professionals must consider equity for civil servants in other ministries, the government fiscal space and the risk of individual complacency. However, the current two-year contracts for health professionals do not motivate individuals and are not long enough to complete advanced postgraduate training. Therefore, we urge the government to create more permanent posts and to lengthen the contract duration (for example, 5-10 years with the same grade, pay and benefits as permanent posts). Permanent posts may be considered for those who possess essential skillsets (such as specialists and advanced nurse practitioners). All permanent posts must have transparent criteria that include performance metrics and passing recognised postgraduate programmes. Longer contracts (divided into training posts and service posts) can be reserved for other professionals. All contracts must cover the entire length of postgraduate training, if applicable. Malaysia must create sufficient opportunities for postgraduate training with earlier graduation. The system must appropriately incentivize individuals, whilst exercising responsibility in managing the national budget.

2. Distribute doctors and health professionals fairly

The current distribution of health professionals in Malaysia is unfair with many being concentrated on the West coast of Peninsula Malaysia, and too few on the East coast of the Peninsula and in Borneo states ([MOH 2013](#)). Therefore, we urge the government to review the geographic distribution of health professionals to ensure that all Malaysians have equitable access to adequate health services.

3. Enhance human capital and prevent brain drain

The government must implement sound strategies to retain talent in the public healthcare service and in Malaysia. Besides more permanent posts and better terms of service, we reiterate our call for better career advancement opportunities and mental health and family support for all health professionals (refer to our previous statements on [25 Aug 2020](#) and [8 April 2020](#)).

Malaysia's health professionals deserve the opportunity to excel in our health system. We believe our proposals will strengthen Malaysia's healthcare system for the future. The government must focus on providing durable, long-term solutions to make this happen.

BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA.

Malaysian Health Coalition

Full Signature List on myhealthcoalition.org.

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