

Budget gets intensive care

Essential healthcare services safe, admin spending cut

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PETALING JAYA: The proposed budget cuts for the Health Ministry will only affect non-essential expenditure such as overseas travel, official functions and meetings, and overtime allowances.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad gave an assurance that “essential healthcare services – including patient treatment, emergency care, all core essential services, as well as the supply of medicines and medical devices – will not face any reduction”.

However, the ministry had already put in place cost-cutting measures in March, before the Finance Ministry directive to slash budgets.

In a circular dated March 17, the ministry’s secretary-general Datuk Seri Hasnol Zam Zam Ahmad said although the ministry received a higher budget allocation this year, there was still a constraint.

The ministry received an allocation of RM46.5bil under Budget 2026. Its operating allocation for 2026 was RM39.78bil, an increase of 3.22% or RM1.24bil from RM38.53bil in 2025.

Of that, RM6.745bil has been approved under the Development Allocation, an increase of 0.1% or RM6.4mil compared with RM6.738bil in 2025.

“Although there is an overall increase in allocation compared with 2025, it remains relatively low and constrained in relation to the ministry’s actual needs. This is due to the expansion of existing and new services in the interest of

patient care, rising and difficult-to-control supply costs, particularly for pharmaceuticals as well as various unforeseen expenditures arising from natural disasters, disease outbreaks, and changes in government policy,” Hasnol said.

For spending not accounted for in the 2026 Estimated Operating Expenditure (ABM) – including outstanding liabilities from previous years or the implementation of any new decisions – such expenditure must be financed using the current year’s allocation through trade-offs with less urgent expenditure.

Among the areas where resources would be optimised is laboratory testing.

The ministry’s expenditure guideline requires each test request to be supported by strong justification to avoid repeat testing, inappropriate requests, and duplication of laboratory investigations.

This is to ensure that financial resources are optimised across the ministry’s laboratories, as well as to minimise wastage and prevent any adverse impact on the implementation of essential and critical diagnostic tests.

As for medical supply, the stock across ministry facilities including District Health Offices will be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure that there are enough supplies to meet treatment service requirements.

Meanwhile, Dzulkefly affirmed that any plans to recalibrate ministries’ budget was currently still in the proposal stage and discussions were still underway.

He said his ministry would ensure that core healthcare services remain protected during the negotiations.

MOH's budget saving measures

Accommodation
(Domestic & Overseas)

- > Officers are required to book accommodation which are cost-effective

Outsourcing

- > Review service standards to align with actual needs.
- > Reduce wastage and unnecessary financial commitments
- > Responsibility Centres (PTJ) must ensure that outsourcing is carried out on a demand-driven basis and aimed at improving the quality of public services at reasonable cost, rather than being supply-driven.

Events / Official Functions / Meetings

- > Limit the organisation of official events.
- > Ensure all activities are conducted in a moderate and controlled manner.

Overtime allowance

- > Must be strictly controlled.
- > Only approved when genuinely necessary.
- > Must be authorised in writing before overtime begins.

Campaigns / Promotions / Sponsorships / Advertising

- > Online campaigns and promotions to reduce costs.

Overseas Official Travel

Only allowed for essential and approved purposes:

- > Critical meetings, negotiations or conferences with national impact
- > Cabinet-approved meetings and conferences
- > Technical training where no local expertise is available

Delegation limits:

- > Applies to Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, and Department Heads
- > A maximum of four accompanying officers, including ministerial office representatives

Exception:

- > Asean official assignments and scheduled budget screening meetings (no fixed limit)

Source: MOH
*The Star*graphics

Ensuring safe and healthy workplaces

PUTRAJAYA: Two new work-force-focused programmes have been launched by the Health Ministry to better ensure the occupational safety and health of all workers across the country.

This includes the Malaysia Occupational Health Service for Public Sector programme that aims to strengthen occupational health services in the public sector.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad (*pic*) said the programme will achieve this through implementing medical surveillance, early detection, and prevention of occupational diseases policies in public agencies.



The project’s implementation will be done in phases, starting with a pilot project involving four high-risk key agencies in the Klang Valley area first.

This includes the police, local authorities, the Malaysian Nuclear Agency and the Road Transport Department.

Dzulkefly also announced the launch of the Integrated Workplace Health Programme, a workplace health intervention that aims to improve overall health in workplaces across the country.

The programme, which is open for all companies to apply, will provide employees of participating companies with webinars, and newsletters on healthcare and mental health education to build healthier workplaces.

Essential services protected amid spending recalibration

PETALING JAYA: Budget recalibration measures will not affect the essential services, security, healthcare and education sectors, the Finance Ministry has assured.

It said in a statement that the exercise targets only non-critical expenditure, while core spending will continue as approved under Budget 2026.

“This includes key allocations to ministries such as Health and Education, which received the largest shares in this year’s budget,” it said yesterday.

The ministry stressed that front-

liners, including essential healthcare services, will not be impacted.

Meanwhile, Transport Minister Anthony Loke said his ministry will implement energy-saving measures in line with broader federal directives on fiscal discipline.

These include adjustments to operational practices and expenditure controls aimed at reducing utility and fuel usage.

“Efforts are being made to control utility and transportation costs carefully. For any programmes that take place, spending must be prudent, with no

large-scale or excessive expenditure,” he told reporters on the sidelines of an event.

He added that cost-saving steps include carpooling, flying economy class for official travel and reducing overseas trips.

Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming also said his ministry will comply with the spending cuts, while ensuring development projects remain on track.

“We support the move to re-prioritise RM10bil in government expenditure and are prepared to

implement savings without compromising development spending, so that the people’s well-being and national development agenda remain on course,” he said in a statement.

Nga noted that the recalibration is necessary to strengthen fiscal resilience, with subsidy spending this year expected to exceed RM58bil, compared with the RM15bil initially projected before the global energy crisis.

Among the measures to be taken are postponing non-essential official events, meetings, con-

ferences, seminars and workshops, while scaling down necessary programmes.

Overseas travel by the minister and officials will also be limited to essential engagements.

Nga reiterated that frontline and basic public services will not be affected.

On Wednesday, the Treasury issued guidelines to ministries and agencies to reprioritise operating expenditure in response to the ongoing global energy supply challenges and rising subsidy burden.

Expert says 'zombie drug' could be found in vape liquids

PETALING JAYA: AN expert says furanylfentanyl is among the most dangerous substances found in vape liquids.

Universiti Sains Malaysia's Drug Research Centre director Prof Dr M. Vikneswaran said furanylfentanyl – otherwise known as the 'zombie drug' – carries an extreme overall danger.

"It carries a very high risk of

death, even at extremely small or microgram levels.

"At the same time, furanylfentanyl carries extremely high addiction risk," he said.

Furanylfentanyl is an analog of fentanyl, both of which are highly potent synthetic opioids. Both are about 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine.

"While fentanyl is approved for

use in pain management, furanylfentanyl is regarded as a designer drug and not approved for any indication by the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency or even the Food and Drug Administration of the United States.

"Furanylfentanyl has no accepted medical use in most countries and is mainly encountered as an

illicit drug.

"Due to its high potency, it is considered very dangerous to both physical and mental health, often more so than heroin or morphine," Prof Vikneswaran said.

Furanylfentanyl is a potent synthetic opioid linked to fatal overdoses, severe respiratory suppression, neurological impairment and potential long-term damage.

Balanced approach to staying hydrated in hot weather

THE Health Ministry recently issued a statement outlining six primary guidelines for the public to follow in order to mitigate health risks during the current heatwave.

Among them is to drink plenty of water regardless of the level of physical activity to ensure the body remains hydrated.

As food scientists, we would like to share our perspectives on effective hydration. It is not just about drinking more water; it is also about ensuring that the body can properly absorb and use the ingested fluids.

Water is fundamental to regulating body temperature, transporting nutrients and maintaining metabolic functions. During prolonged exposure to heat, the body loses not only water through sweat but also essential electrolytes such as sodium and potassium. Consuming fluids without these minerals may not fully restore the hydration balance.

Electrolyte-rich beverages can play an important role. Natural options like coconut water provide potassium and a small amount of sugar that support fluid absorption in the intestine.

Isotonic drinks, formulated to match the body's fluid balance, may also help in situations of heavy sweating or outdoor activity.

Hydration can also come from food. Fruits and vegetables with high water content are practical and nutritious choices during hot weather. Watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple,



orange and cucumber contain over 85% water, making them excellent for hydration while also supplying essential vitamins and minerals. Consuming these foods can help maintain the body's fluid balance throughout the day.

Semi-solid foods such as jelly or agar-based desserts are another useful option. Their high water content and soft texture make them suitable for children, older adults and those with reduced appetite during hot weather. Their gel structure also allows for a slower, more sustained release of fluids in the body.

For optimal hydration, beverages should be balanced in both sugar and electrolytes. Drinks that are too sweet – known as hypertonic solutions – can slow fluid absorption and may even worsen dehydration by drawing water into the digestive tract.

In coastal areas, particularly

during extended dry spells, reduced river flow and increased evaporation may lead to seawater intrusion into freshwater sources, resulting in tap or even filtered water tasting slightly salty.

This raises two important concerns. First, higher salinity may make water less palatable, leading individuals to drink less and increasing the risk of dehydration. Second, compromised water quality may elevate the risk of microbial contamination.

Residents in the affected areas are advised to boil water before consumption to reduce the risk of waterborne illnesses such as diarrhoea. Boiling remains one of the most effective domestic interventions to ensure microbiological safety, especially when water quality is compromised.

And don't wait until you are thirsty. Thirst is a late indicator of dehydration. By the time a person feels thirsty, the body has

already begun to lose significant fluids. Instead, drink small amounts regularly throughout the day and monitor simple signs: pale yellow urine generally indicates adequate hydration.

In the face of the constantly high temperatures, Malaysians are encouraged to adopt a comprehensive hydration strategy by:

- > Drinking water consistently throughout the day;
- > Including electrolyte-rich beverages when needed;
- > Consuming water-dense fruits and foods;
- > Avoiding overly sugary drinks;
- > Drinking green juices made from spinach, celery, green apple and cucumber; and
- > Ensuring water safety, particularly in the affected regions.

Parents can encourage their children to stay hydrated by using a fun daily chart to track their water intake.

A balanced approach by combining safe water, electrolytes and hydrating foods can help Malaysians stay resilient and healthy during this period of extreme heat.

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Zoomers prioritising mental health, work flexibility

MENTAL health has emerged as a leading concern for Gen Z workers as economic pressures continue to weigh on job markets worldwide.

These Zoomers are not only seeking more open conversations around psychological well-being, but also greater institutional support from employers.

According to a 2024 "State of the Graduate" report by job search platform Monster, the issue was influencing companies' ability to retain talents.

"Up to 92% of Gen Z want to be able to discuss mental health as the focus on work-life balance gains momentum," it said.

"This is having an effect on their willingness to stay at their place of employment."

However, expectations are not always matched by workplace realities.

A 2025 study titled "The Gen Z Effect and the Workforce Evolution" by Taiwan-based talent agency Cake found that many young workers remained hesitant to raise mental health concerns with their superiors.

"Only 52% believed their managers would be able to support them, whereas 26% worried they would be discriminated against if they tried openly discussing these issues," it said.

Flexible working arrange-



Mental health is a top concern among Gen Z when it comes to employment. — Filepic

ments are another key priority.

A 2025 study by consulting firm Gallup found that only 20% of Gen Z employees preferred fully remote roles, while two-thirds favoured hybrid arrangements.

The report said many in this cohort entered the workforce during the Covid-19 pandemic, when work-from-home (WFH) practices became widespread.

While WFH has remained attractive, some respondents expressed concerns it could limit opportunities for social interaction, which they viewed as important for long-term career development, it added.

Personal values are also playing an increasing role in employment decisions.

The Cake study found that 44% of respondents felt strongly about issues such as carbon footprint, impact on social inequality and employers'

approaches to work-life balance.

"Gen Z also expect a workplace to have ethical business practices (81%) and a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion (43.1%)," it added.

At the same time, advances in artificial intelligence are reshaping entry-level opportunities as automation increasingly takes over jobs traditionally handled by junior talents.

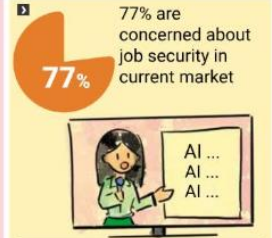
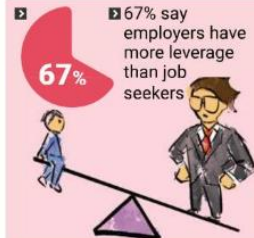
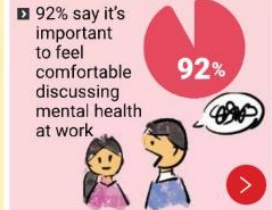
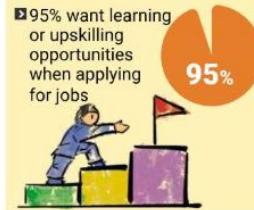
A study by recruitment agency Randstad "The Gen Z Workplace Blueprint" reported that entry-level job postings had declined by 29% since January 2024.

Despite these challenges, the report said young workers had remained resilient.

"While there have been concerns about long-term career prospects, many young workers are ambitious and focused on meaningful careers," it said.

— By FARID WAHAB

What Gen Z seek in modern job markets



Source: 2024 State of the Graduate Report, Monster (based on poll of 1,000 Gen Z individuals)

The Star graphics

Urgent investment needed in healthcare sector: MMA

BY ANDREW SAGAYAM
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KUALA LUMPUR: Urgent investment is needed in the national healthcare sector as it serves at least 70% of the Malaysian population, said Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Datuk Dr Thirunavukarasu Rajoo.

"We acknowledge the Finance Ministry's statement that spending adjustments will not jeopardise critical services. We hold the government to that commitment.

"However, the proposed RM3.06 billion cut represents 6.6% of the Health Ministry's operating budget, leaving the ministry with less allocation than last year. This is a significant reduction to a system already under severe strain.

"Malaysia is short of nearly 11,000 specialists, while nursing vacancies stand at 18%. Hospitals nationwide are operating at or near full capacity," Thirunavukarasu said in a statement.

He also mentioned the dire situation faced by Hospital Ampang.

"The conditions at Hospital Ampang puts a clear human face on what underfunding means. As Malaysia's national referral centre for haematology, it cares for some of the most vulnerable patients, those with blood cancers and complex disorders.

"With a capacity of 701 beds across 17 wards, the hospital was among the first in Malaysia to implement a fully digital Total Hospital Information System to support patient care.

"On April 23, that system collapsed for 33 hours. Doctors have reported that it had not been upgraded since 2007 and was still running on Windows XP, an operating system retired over a decade ago.

"During this time, patient records were inaccessible, blood test results were delayed and prescriptions could not be processed.

"Doctors reverted to manual documentation. For patients waiting for blood results to determine chemotherapy dosing, 33 hours is not a technical issue, it is 33 hours of uncertainty."

Thirunavukarasu pointed out that four days later, a burst pipe flooded the operating theatre (OT).

"Surgical equipment had to be moved. Patients who had waited weeks for surgery were sent home and told to wait again.

"The Health and Finance ministries must provide a clear explanation on how this was allowed to happen."

According to media reports, the Finance Ministry had said on Wednesday that RM5.4 billion in operational expenditure cuts were proposed for the Health and Higher Education ministries as part of measures to save government funds due to the conflict in the Middle East.

The Finance Ministry said the directive issued by the Treasury had suggested that cost savings could be achieved by various ministries, departments and agencies.

According to the directive, a total of RM10 billion could be saved across the board, including RM3.06 billion from the Health Ministry and RM2.39 billion from the Higher Education Ministry.

The Health Ministry was given RM46.5 billion under this year's budget while the Higher Education Ministry was allocated RM18.6 billion.

The Finance Ministry also instructed the postponement of government conferences, seminars and workshops as well as the hiring of new civil servants.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the ministry has directed a comprehensive structural and digital audit of Hospital Ampang to address underlying issues stemming from its



Dzulkefly said the Health Ministry has directed a comprehensive structural and digital audit of Hospital Ampang to address underlying issues stemming from its ageing infrastructure. — ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

ageing infrastructure.

He said in a post on his X account that the ministry is working to restore normalcy, and that patient safety remains a non-negotiable priority.

On the disruption of the hospital's electronic information system, Dzulkefly said it was caused by a technical maintenance error that affected system modules.

"Technical teams from the Health Ministry are currently performing

system synchronisation and data integrity validation.

"Business continuity plans are also active to ensure that clinical care continues manually without interruption."

Dzulkefly also said the CT Scan replacement project is nearing completion.

Following a transition to a new leasing model, the unit is on track to be operational by today.

He also clarified that a recent leakage in the OT complex involved a chilled water pipe within the ventilation system.

"While repairs were completed swiftly, we are now conducting mandatory re-sterilisation, terminal cleaning and air-particle audits.

"There will be no compromise, the OT will only resume once 100% infection control compliance is verified."

First mobile mental health service launched

IPOH: The Sultan Idris Education University (Upsi) has received recognition from the Malaysia Book of Records (MBOR) for the implementation of the First Mobile Mental Health Counselling programme.

The "Counsellor On Wheels" initiative is the first of its kind in the country.

Its deputy vice-chancellor (Student Affairs and Alumni) Prof Dr Norkhalid Salimin said the initiative is a proactive step by the university to engage with the community by bringing mental health intervention services directly to the public.

"Through 'Counsellor On Wheels', we have transformed the Bas Pendidikan Upsi into a mobile counselling service platform that not only focuses on prevention and psychoeducation aspects but also involves intervention and referrals to specialists.

"The programme proves that the university's role is not just as a centre for the dissemination of knowledge, but also as an institution that acts as a solution to societal issues, particularly in the aspect of mental wellbeing," he said in a statement.

MBOR representative Siti Hajar Johor presented the recognition during the launch of the programme held at the Upsi Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah Campus in Tanjung Malim recently.

Norkhalid said the implementation team, comprising psychological officers and student facilitators trained in Psychological First Aid, successfully assisted 7,648 participants at 38 locations throughout Peninsular Malaysia.

"This initiative is also strengthened by the use of virtual reality technology, which helps provide

Norkhalid said the initiative uses virtual reality technology, which helps provide a more effective intervention experience and reduce stigma towards mental health treatment. — PIC COURTESY OF MALAYSIA BOOK OF RECORDS



a more effective intervention experience, thereby reducing societal stigma towards mental health treatment."

Meanwhile, the same ceremony also celebrated Autism Awareness Month, observed

throughout April, to enhance understanding and acceptance of individuals with autism.

Norkhalid added that autism should be seen as a uniqueness that requires support and understanding, not judgement.

"As an educational institution, Upsi is committed to building an inclusive ecosystem that not only raises awareness but also strengthens acceptance of diversity in society." — Bernama



Hanifah speaks to reporters.

'Ensure spending cuts do not affect public well-being'

Michael Uham

MUKAH: The government must ensure that any effort to reduce national operating expenditure is carried out cautiously and does not directly affect the well-being of the people, said Deputy Health Minister Hanifah Hajar Taib.

She said cost-saving measures should focus on alternative areas, such as reducing physical promotions and shifting towards digital platforms or information-sharing through strategic partners.

"It is important that these measures do not impact the rakyat. We need to remain vigilant and take interim steps to ensure key priorities are not affected," she told reporters after officiating the National Healthy

Malaysia Agenda (ANMS) Jelajah Mukah Division 2026 at the Kaul Festival site here yesterday.

Hanifah, who is Mukah MP, was responding to a proposal by the Ministry of Finance to cut RM5.4 billion in operating expenditure, involving the healthcare and higher education sectors, as part of efforts to strengthen the country's fiscal position.

She confirmed she had been informed of the proposal but had yet to receive detailed briefings.

Touching on global geopolitical pressures affecting the cost of goods, Hanifah urged the public to practise prudent spending to cope with circumstances beyond their control.

The government will bear what it can, but the people must

also play their part by being prudent," she said, adding that the proposed cuts, while not ideal, are necessary as Malaysia is affected by global challenges such as oil sanctions and rising import costs.

On the ANMS initiative, she said the programme would be expanded to Betong and Sabah, although further expansion would depend on careful assessment of current conditions.

"I am not certain if it can be extended further as we must adapt to the current situation," she said.

"We understand the need to reduce financial spending to ensure that more critical areas have sufficient funding for long-term sustainability."

Perbelanjaan bagi barisan hadapan kekal dilindungi - Amir Hamzah

KUALA LUMPUR - Langkah pelarasan perbelanjaan mengurus tidak akan menjejaskan petugas barisan hadapan mahupun penyampaian perkhidmatan asas kepada rakyat, memandangkan hanya melibatkan perbelanjaan tidak kritikal, kata Menteri Kewangan II, Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan.

Dalam satu kenyataan pada Khamis, beliau menegaskan bahawa sektor kritikal seperti kesihatan, pendidikan dan keselamatan kekal menjadi keutamaan kerajaan, selaras dengan komitmen untuk memastikan kesejahteraan rakyat terus terpelihara.

"Kementerian seperti Kementerian Kesihatan dan Kementerian Pendidikan utamanya mereka di barisan hadapan perkhidmatan akan terus menerima sokongan penuh seperti yang telah diluluskan.

"Ini termasuk memastikan hospital, sekolah dan perkhidmatan penting lain beroperasi tanpa gangguan," katanya.

Amir Hamzah berkata, kerajaan perlu memastikan setiap ringgit dibelanjakan dengan lebih berfokus.

"Penyelarasan ini membolehkan kita menyalurkan sumber kepada keperluan yang lebih mendesak, terutama untuk membantu golongan dan sektor yang paling terkenas.

"Ketidaktentuan global ketika ini bukan sesuatu yang bersifat sementara. Oleh itu, kita perlu bersedia dengan langkah yang realistik dan mampan supaya kerajaan kekal mampu memberi sokongan apabila diperlukan," ujarnya.

Beliau menegaskan langkah pelarasan perbelanjaan mengurus, yang dilaksanakan pada masa ini hanya melibatkan perbelanjaan tidak kritikal, merupakan sebahagian daripada usaha berdisiplin memastikan ne-



AMIR HAMZAH

gara kekal berdaya tahan dalam menghadapi tekanan ekonomi global yang semakin mencabar.

"Perkara yang disemak semula adalah perbelanjaan yang boleh ditangguhkan tanpa menjejaskan penyampaian kepada rakyat. Perkhidmatan asas akan terus berjalan seperti biasa," katanya.

Amir Hamzah berkata, pada masa sama, Kementerian Kewangan (MoF) telah menggariskan beberapa langkah pelarasan bagi meningkatkan kecekapan perbelanjaan awam, termasuk menangguhkan acara yang tidak mendesak, meniadakan perjalanan rasmi ke luar negara, mengawal penggunaan utiliti, mengoptimalkan perbelanjaan agensi serta menangguhkan pengisian jawatan bukan kritikal.

Sebelum itu, MoF dalam kenyataan pada Khamis menegaskan, panduan pelarasan perbelanjaan mengurus hanya melibatkan perbelanjaan tidak kritikal, manakala perbelanjaan teras termasuk perkhidmatan asas, keselamatan, kesihatan dan pendidikan diteruskan seperti diluluskan dalam Belanjawan 2026.

"Peruntukan bagi kementerian kritikal seperti Kementerian Kesihatan dan Kementerian Pendidikan tidak terjejas, memandangkan kedua-duanya merupakan antara penerima peruntukan tertinggi dalam belanjawan tahun ini.

"Pelarasan perbelanjaan itu melibatkan langkah seperti penangguhan penganjuran acara, meniadakan kunjungan dan latihan ke luar negara, penjimatan utiliti, pengoptimuman rizab simpanan agensi serta penangguhan pengisian jawatan bukan kritikal," jelas MoF. - *Bernama*

Ketirisan belanja operasi perlu dikawal

Perkara yang tidak efisien dalam sektor kesihatan dan pendidikan tinggi perlu diberikan perhatian untuk memberi lebih banyak penjimatan

Oleh RAIHAM MOHD SANUSI

SHAH ALAM - Panduan pelarasan perbelanjaan mengurus kerajaan termasuk melibatkan sektor kesihatan dan pendidikan tinggi disyor turut melihat masalah asas kedua-dua sektor itu bagi mengawal ketirisan.

Pakar Ekonomi, University College I-CATS Kuching, Profesor Datuk Dr Shazali Abu Mansor berkata, perkara yang tidak efisien dalam dua sektor terbabit perlu diberikan perhatian untuk memberi lebih banyak penjimatan dan mengelakkan pembaziran.

"Kesihatan dan pendidikan tinggi adalah bidang yang sangat penting terhadap pembangunan sumber manusia dan memerlukan perbelanjaan yang mencukupi.

"Jadi kalau kerajaan beri jaminan bahawa pelarasan perbelanjaan itu tidak menjejaskan petugas barisan hadapan atau 'frontliners' termasuk perkhidmatan asas kepada rakyat, itu bagus untuk tetapi elak pembaziran tetapi perkara yang tidak efisien dan tidak produktif juga mesti dikawal serta diperbetulkan," katanya kepada *Sinar Harian*.

Mengulas lanjut mengenai perkara yang perlu diperbetulkan, Shazali menegaskan,



Kesihatan serta pendidikan tinggi adalah bidang yang sangat penting terhadap pembangunan sumber manusia dan memerlukan perbelanjaan yang mencukupi. - *Gambar hiasan*

sistem kesihatan awam negara ketika ini memerlukan model baharu yang lebih efisien kerana pendekatan sedia ada dilihat sudah ketinggalan dan tidak lagi sesuai dengan peningkatan jumlah penduduk serta keperluan semasa.

Katanya, masalah seperti tempoh menunggu terlalu lama di hospital kerajaan, kekurangan kemudahan asas seperti Pengimejan Resonans Magnet (MRI) dan kesesakan wad menunjukkan sistem sedia ada perlu ditambah baik, bukannya dikurangkan peruntukan.

"Model yang kita guna ini saya rasa sudah berpuluh tahun sejak merdeka. Rakyat me-



SHAZALI

tingkat, tetapi model masih sama.

"Ada hospital terlalu sibuk, ada yang kurang pesakit. Jadi kita kena susun semula supaya lebih efisien dan rakyat tidak perlu menunggu terlalu lama untuk rawatan," ujarnya.

Shazali turut mencadangkan supaya kerajaan mempertimbangkan model insurans kesihatan bersama seperti diamalkan di United Kingdom (UK) melalui Perkhidmatan Kesihatan Nasional (NHS), yang membolehkan rakyat mendapatkan rawatan di hospital kerajaan dan swasta dengan lebih mudah.

"Rakyat sebagai pembayar cukai mahu

perkhidmatan kesihatan yang baik. Jangan sampai mereka bayar cukai tetapi tidak mendapat perkhidmatan yang sepatutnya," jelasnya.

Dalam sektor pendidikan tinggi pula, beliau berpandangan universiti awam boleh mencontohi sebahagian model universiti swasta dari segi kecekapan pengurusan dan pengoptimuman sumber tanpa menjejaskan akses pelajar terhadap pendidikan.

Katanya, antara langkah yang boleh dipertimbangkan termasuk menyusun semula fakulti atau program yang kurang permintaan serta memfokuskan bantuan kepada pelajar yang benar-benar memerlukan.

"Pelajar yang susah mesti terus dibantu, itu tidak boleh diketepikan. Tetapi pelajar yang berkemampuan mungkin bantuan boleh dikurangkan.

"Kalau ada program atau fakulti yang tidak produktif dan terlalu banyak pertindihan antara universiti, itu boleh dioptimumkan supaya penggunaan sumber lebih berkesan," katanya.

Beliau turut menegaskan, untuk berlaku adil, pengurangan perbelanjaan seharusnya secara sama rata kepada semua kementerian dan tidak seharusnya dua sektor yang kritikal dicadang untuk membuat pengurangan yang tertinggi.

"Kalau mahu kurangkan, semua kementerian perlu lihat perkara yang tidak produktif. Jika dua kementerian ini yang dibuat pengurangan tertinggi, persepsi rakyat akan menjadi negatif dan boleh menimbulkan kemarahan kerana sektor ini sangat kritikal kepada kehidupan mereka," ujarnya.

Pastikan perkhidmatan kesihatan, mutu pendidikan tinggi kekal optimum

Dalam sistem pengurusan ekonomi negara, setiap keputusan dibuat yang menyentuh perbelanjaan atau dasar fiskal amat memerlukan pertimbangan halus di antara keperluan penjimatan tanpa menjejaskan kesejahteraan rakyat.

Berdepan krisis geopolitik yang tidak putus-putus dengan terkini perang di Asia Barat, tekanan kewangan kerajaan semakin kuat berikutan gangguan berterusan terhadap bekalan minyak mentah dan bahan api global. Harga minyak yang meningkat ditambah pula bekalan yang mengalami kelewatan, kerajaan akhirnya terpaksa menyemak semula dan merasionalisasi perbelanjaan yang dicadangkan menerusi Belanjawan 2026 sebelum ini.

Terkini, Kementerian Kewangan mencadangkan pengurangan perbelanjaan operasi berjumlah RM5.4 bilion membabitkan sektor kesihatan dan pendidikan tinggi sebagai sebahagian usaha mengukuhkan fiskal negara. Cadangan itu dilaporkan dibuat susulan keperluan menyemak semula perbelanjaan kerajaan, khususnya ketika beban subsidi dijangka meningkat dan memberi tekanan kepada kewangan negara.

Walaupun rasionalnya dapat difahami, persoalan yang timbul ialah sejauh mana pengurangan ini benar-benar signifikan dari segi impaknya, khususnya terhadap keupayaan sistem sedia ada untuk terus berfungsi secara optimum.

Apabila ia membabitkan sektor asas seperti kesihatan dan pendidikan tinggi, sudah tentu bakal membangkitkan kebimbangan masyarakat terhadap perkhidmatan bakal ditawarkan. Dalam sektor kesihatan, jaminan kerajaan yang perkhidmatan asas tidak akan terjejas sememangnya memberikan sedikit kelegaan. Namun, realitinya perkhidmatan kesihatan awam sudah lama beroperasi dalam keadaan tertekan.

Sehubungan itu, sebarang pengurangan bajet perbelanjaan operasi sektor kesihatan pasti berpotensi memberi kesan tidak langsung kepada perkhidmatan atau bekalan ubat-ubatan serta keupayaan menaik taraf kemudahan. Walaupun kesan pemotongan bajet ini mungkin tidak berlaku secara serta-merta, penjimatan yang disasarkan harus lebih bersasar mengikut nilai risiko dan bidang kritikal.

Paling penting, aspek kebajikan pengamal perubatan dan petugas kesihatan tidak harus diketepikan. Ketika warga sektor kesihatan mendakwa 'menderita' dengan pelbagai masalah dalaman, pemotongan bajet seharusnya tidak menambah lagi beban mereka.

Bagi sektor pendidikan tinggi pula, pengurangan perbelanjaan operasi menimbulkan persoalan terhadap keupayaan universiti awam (UA) mengekalkan standard akademik dan penyelidikan. Walaupun UA mempunyai kuasa autonomi, penyesuaian bajet mungkin menuntut IPT menilai semula hala tuju, termasuk dari sudut program pengajian, kemudahan pembelajaran serta pelaburan inovasi.

Implikasi ini akhirnya mempengaruhi kualiti graduan bakal dilahirkan. Dalam persekitaran global semakin kompetitif, kemampuan universiti menyediakan pendidikan berkualiti tinggi menjadi faktor penting bagi memastikan graduan kekal relevan dan berdaya saing. Dalam mendepani kekangan ini, UA sudah tentu perlu lebih proaktif dan kreatif meneroka sumber pendapatan alternatif, memperkukuh kerjasama dengan industri dan meningkatkan kecekapan pengurusan dalaman.

Walau apa pun implikasinya, penilaian semula keputusan fiskal negara dalam sektor kesihatan dan pendidikan tinggi wajar dinilai lebih menyeluruh dari sudut jangka pendek serta panjang supaya tidak menjejaskan keupayaan negara membina masa depan mampan.

Kerajaan jamin khidmat kritikal tak akan terjejas



Pelarasan perbelanjaan tetap utama kebajikan rakyat

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Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian, jabatan dan agensi kerajaan yang terbabit Pelarasan Perbelanjaan Mengurus (OE) yang dikeluarkan Kementerian Kewangan memberi jaminan langkah penjimatan tidak akan menjejaskan perkhidmatan kepada rakyat, terutama dalam bidang kritikal.

Bidang kritikal seperti rawatan, kecemasan, bekalan ubat dan keselamatan mahu pun perkhidmatan untuk kebajikan rakyat terus terpelihara, sekali gus memastikan kedudukan fiskal negara kekal kukuh.

Menteri Kewangan II, Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan, berkata langkah pelarasan itu tidak akan menjejaskan petugas barisan hadapan mahupun penyampaian perkhidmatan asas kepada rakyat.

Beliau menegaskan sektor kritikal seperti kesihatan, pendidikan dan keselamatan kekal menjadi keutamaan kerajaan, selaras dengan komitmen untuk memastikan kesejahteraan rakyat akan

terus terpelihara.

"Kementerian seperti Kementerian Kesihatan dan Kementerian Pendidikan, terutama mereka di barisan hadapan perkhidmatan akan terus menerima sokongan penuh seperti yang telah diluluskan.

"Ini termasuk memastikan hospital, sekolah dan perkhidmatan penting lain beroperasi tanpa gangguan," katanya kepada BERNAMA dengan menegaskan kerajaan perlu memastikan setiap ringgit dibelanjakan dengan lebih berfokus.

Di **Putrajaya**, Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad memberi jaminan Kementerian Kesihatan tidak membuat pengurangan terhadap perkhidmatan teras kesihatan.

Malah, perkhidmatan asas seperti rawatan pesakit, penjagaan kecemasan, bekalan ubat-ubatan serta peralatan perubatan akan terus dipelihara tanpa sebarang pengurangan.

Katanya, semua perkhidmatan teras (core essential services), termasuk perkhidmatan kecemasan akan dipastikan tidak terjejas kerana ia sudah dirancang dalam pelan jangka panjang 2026.

"Sebarang pengurangan hanya akan membabitkan perkara bukan kritikal dan masih tertakluk kepada rundingan lanjut antara kementerian," katanya kepada media selepas menghadiri Sambutan Hari Keselamatan dan Kesihatan Pekerjaan 2025 di kementerian, semalam.



Sektor kritikal seperti kesihatan kekal menjadi keutamaan kerajaan, selaras dengan komitmen untuk memastikan kesejahteraan rakyat terus terpelihara. (Foto hiasan)

Kelmarin, MOF mengarahkan semua kementerian, jabatan dan agensi kerajaan melaksanakan penjimatan terhadap OE masing-masing, berdasarkan peruntukan belanjawan yang masih berbaki bagi 2025 dengan nilai keseluruhan mencapai RM10 bilion.

Menerusi satu panduan penjimatan yang dicadangkan Perbendaharaan untuk dilaksanakan, langkah itu adalah tindak balas kerajaan untuk menangani kesan krisis Asia Barat.

Dalam perkembangan sama, beliau memaklumkan pengisian jawatan dalam sektor kesihatan juga tidak dijangka terjejas, termasuk perancangan penambahan kira-kira 4,500 jawatan baharu, khususnya bagi doktor kontrak.

Katanya, langkah itu penting bagi memastikan penyampaian perkhidmatan kesihatan kepada rakyat kekal pada tahap optimum.

KPKT laksana penjimatan

Sementara itu, Kementerian Perumahan dan Kerajaan Tempatan (KPKT) akan melaksanakan penjimatan RM64.4 juta sebagai sokongan kepada usaha MOF menyusun semula keutamaan perbelanjaan kerajaan.

Menterinya, Nga Kor Ming, berkata KPKT komited memberikan kerjasama penuh dalam usaha rasionalisasi perbelanjaan itu bagi.

"Dalam Belanjawan 2026, KPKT diperuntukkan sebanyak RM2.07 bilion bagi perbelanjaan mengurus (OE). Namun, KPKT

bersedia untuk mencari ikhtiar melaksanakan penjimatan sebanyak RM64.4 juta seperti yang dicadangkan MOF," katanya dalam kenyataan, semalam.

Kor Ming berkata, jumlah subsidi yang disalurkan kepada rakyat dijangka melebihi RM58 bilion tahun ini berbanding RM15 bilion mengikut anggaran belanjawan asal sebelum tercetusnya krisis bekalan global.

Dalam perkembangan berkaitan, Kementerian Pengangkutan (MoT) memaklumkan langkah penjimatan kementerian sudah dilaksana seiring arahan penjimatan kerajaan bagi mengurangkan perbelanjaan operasi.

Katanya, MoT memberi jaminan mengurangkan kos utiliti dan pengangkutan yang akan cuba dikawal dengan rapi.

Saringan kesihatan hanya di fasiliti berdaftar

Putrajaya: Perkhidmatan saringan kesihatan termasuk pengambilan darah di farmasi komuniti hanya boleh dilaksanakan di fasiliti kesihatan yang berdaftar dan berlesen selaras dengan peruntukan undang-undang sedia ada.

Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) dalam satu kenyataan memaklumkan semalam pengambilan darah atau phlebotomy adalah prosedur klinikal memerlukan pematuhan ketat terhadap standard keselamatan serta pengurusan risiko yang sewajarnya.

Menurut KKM, merujuk Seksyen 2 Akta Kemudahan dan Perkhidmatan Jagaan Kesihatan Swasta 1998 [Akta 586], sebarang premis yang menyediakan perkhidmatan saringan kesihatan, termasuk pengambilan darah tertakluk kepada keperluan pendaftaran serta pelesenan di bawah akta berkenaan.

“Oleh itu, berdasarkan kepada kerangka perundangan sedia ada, premis yang menjalankan aktiviti pengambilan darah disifatkan menyediakan perkhidmatan jagaan kesihatan yang tertakluk kepada keperluan pendaftaran dan pelesenan bawah Akta 586.

“Menjalankan perkhidmatan ini tanpa pendaftaran atau lesen sah di bawah Akta 586 adalah satu kesalahan yang boleh dikenakan denda sehingga RM500,000 atau penjara sehingga enam tahun, atau kedua-duanya sekali,” menurut kenyataan itu.

Pada masa sama, KKM mengiktiraf peranan penting farmasi komuniti dalam menyumbang kepada ekosistem penyampaian perkhidmatan kesihatan kepada rakyat, namun aspek keselamatan, kualiti dan akauntabiliti perkhidmatan perlu sentiasa diutamakan.

Sehubungan itu, kementerian memaklumkan akan terus mempertingkatkan penguatkuasaan bagi memastikan semua perkhidmatan jagaan kesihatan dijalankan di premis fasiliti kesihatan yang mematuhi ketetapan undang-undang.

Langkah itu, menurut KKM, bukan sahaja bertujuan melindungi keselamatan pesakit, malah mengelakkan farmasi komuniti daripada berdepan risiko undang-undang serta reputasi sekiranya menjalankan perkhidmatan tanpa kelulusan sewajarnya. **BERNAMA**

Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mengarahkan audit struktur dan digital yang menyeluruh dijalankan ke atas Hospital Ampang bagi menangani isu-isu asas yang berpunca daripada infrastruktur fasiliti itu yang kian menua, kata Menteri Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

Dalam hantaran di media sosial beliau semalam, Dzulkefly berkata, KKM sedang berusaha dengan se-

KKM arah audit struktur, digital ke atas Hospital Ampang

gera untuk memastikan keadaan kembali normal dan keselamatan pesakit kekal sebagai keutamaan yang tidak boleh dikompromi.

Mengenai gangguan Sistem Maklumat Hospital (eHIS), Dzulkefly berkata, ia disebabkan oleh ralat penyelenggaraan teknikal yang menjejaskan modul sistem.

“Pasukan teknikal sedang menjalankan *system synchronisation* dan pengesahan integriti data. Pelan Kesenambungan Perkhidmatan (BCP) diaktifkan untuk memastikan penjaagaan klinikal diteruskan secara manual tanpa gangguan,” katanya selepas mengadakan lawatan ke hospital itu untuk menyelia tindakan pemulihan ber-

kaitan cabaran sistem digital dan infrastruktur baru-baru ini.

Mengenai kapasiti diagnostik fasiliti itu, beliau berkata, projek penggantian mesin imbasan CT hampir siap. Berikutan peralihan kepada model pajakan baharu, unit ini dijangka beroperasi menjelang 1 Mei.

Beliau berkata, KKM se-

dang menyemak semula protokol perolehan bagi mengelakkan kelompangan transisi tersebut berulang pada masa hadapan.

Mengulas mengenai integriti infrastruktur hospital, beliau berkata kebocoran di kompleks bilik bedah (OT) baru-baru ini melibatkan paip air dalam sistem pengudaraan.

“Walaupun pembaikan diselesaikan dengan cepat, kami kini menjalankan proses sterilisasi mandatori, pembersihan terminal dan audit partikel udara. Tidak akan ada kompromi, bilik bedah hanya akan dibenarkan beroperasi semula sebaik sahaja mematuhi audit kawalan infeksi 100 peratus,” katanya.