

3,850 medical officers accept postings

BANGI: A total of 3,850 out of 4,352 Grade UD10 medical officers have agreed to accept the offer of permanent appointment, says Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

The Health Minister said medical officers who accepted the offer will report to Health Ministry facilities nationwide from Oct 2.

"Compared to previous years, the acceptance rate is about the same now.

"The difference this time is that we are providing three placement options, which include positions in Sabah and Sarawak.

"That's the main challenge: to overcome the problem of maldistribution.

"I hope they will continue to be with us to develop, strengthen and empower our public health facilities further," he told reporters after opening the 14th Allied Health Scientific Conference 2025 here yesterday.

Dzulkefly said the results of a survey in Sabah and Sarawak showed that many medical officers from Peninsular Malaysia eventually chose to remain serving there for five to 10 years.

On July 23, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the government would expedite the filling of 4,352 healthcare positions, including the appointment of contract doctors this year,

due to urgent requirements.

Earlier in his speech, Dzulkefly said the ministry, together with the Finance Ministry, Bank Negara Malaysia and the Employees Provident

Fund, had introduced Reset to ensure health financing reform is coordinated across the government and the private sector.

He said that Reset serves as the foundation for the coherent development of initiatives such as Medical and Health Insurance/Takaful, Diagnosis-Related Groups, and the National Health Fund.

"It is designed to ensure financial sustainability, safeguard equity and give us the resilience to



Medical science: Dzulkefly (second from left) visiting exhibition booths at the 14th Allied Health Scientific Conference in Bangi. — Bernama

respond to future health threats.

"Every ringgit collected will be ring-fenced and channelled back into strengthening our public

health system.

"This is not privatisation. These reforms are about strengthening our public system," he added.

KKM dedah 45,000 pelajar merokok tahun lalu

Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) mendedahkan hampir 45,000 pelajar sekolah di seluruh negara dikesan menggunakan produk merokok, termasuk rokok konvensional, elektronik atau vape, tahun lalu.

Angka itu membabitkan 44,211 pelajar sekolah menengah, manakala 230 lagi murid sekolah rendah dengan mereka dikesan terjebak gejala itu selepas menyertai Program Kesihatan Oral Tanpa Amalan Merokok (KOTAK).

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, berkata seramai 17,172 pelajar sekolah menengah dikenal pasti menggunakan rokok biasa, manakala 19,782 lagi rokok elektronik atau vape dengan 36,870 orang sudah menyertai intervensi berhenti merokok.

Selain itu, katanya, 55 murid sekolah dikenal pasti menggunakan rokok biasa dan 138 lagi rokok elektronik atau vape dengan 201 orang sudah menyertai intervensi berhenti merokok.

"KKM komited membendung amalan merokok dan ketagihan vape dalam kalangan generasi muda melalui pelaksanaan inisiatif bersepadu, merangkumi pencegahan awal dan intervensi berhenti merokok secara berfokus.

"Perkhidmatan berhenti merokok, iaitu Klinik Berhenti Merokok (KBM) turut ditawarkan di 857 klinik kesihatan di seluruh negara.

"Perkhidmatan ini disediakan bagi membantu dan memudahkan cara perokok berhenti merokok melalui teknik terapi modifikasi tingkah laku, terapi farmakoterapi atau gabungan kedua-duanya dalam tempoh enam bulan.

"Seramai 38,467 perokok mendaftar dalam program berhenti merokok di KBM tahun lalu, selain 8,659 klien sudah menetapkan tarikh berhenti dan 4,916 lagi berjaya berhenti merokok dengan kadar kejayaan sebanyak 56.8 peratus," katanya.

Beliau menjawab soalan Senator Datuk Seri Dr Mujahid Yusof mengenai keberkesanan program berhenti merokok dalam kalangan generasi muda, menerusi jawapan bertulis Dewan Negara.

Dzulkefly berkata, KKM turut mengoptimalkan penggunaan teknologi melalui platform JomQuit yang menyediakan rundingan berhenti merokok secara dalam talian oleh pengamal kesihatan bertauliah.

"Seramai 1,968 klien diberikan sesi rundingan perkhidmatan berhenti merokok melalui platform ini, antara Oktober 2024 hingga Ogos lalu," katanya.

ORAL HEALTH WITHOUT SMOKING PRACTICES PROGRAMME

Dzulkefly: Nearly 44,500 students used cigarettes, vapes in 2024

NEARLY 44,500 students were found to have used smoking products, including conventional cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vapes, last year, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad yesterday.

In a written reply in Dewan Negara, he said the 44,211 secondary school students and 230 primary school pupils were identified through the Oral Health Without Smoking Practices Programme.

"Last year, this programme screened 2,711,479 primary school pupils nationwide, 230 of which were found to be smokers, including 55 who used conven-

tional cigarettes and 138 who used e-cigarettes or vapes."

He said of those, 201 participated in smoking cessation interventions.

"A total of 1,870,427 secondary school students were screened, of which 44,211 were identified as smokers, including 17,172 who used conventional cigarettes and 19,782 who used e-cigarettes or vapes."

Of those, 36,870 participated in smoking cessation interventions.

He was responding to Senator Datuk Seri Dr Mujahid Yusof, who asked about the effectiveness of smoking cessation pro-

grammes among the younger generation.

Dzulkefly said there were 857 clinics to help smokers quit through behavioural modification therapy, pharmacotherapy or a combination of both over a six-month period.

"Last year, 38,467 smokers registered for the cessation programme. Of these, 8,659 clients set a quit date and 4,916 successfully quit smoking, recording a quit rate of 56.8 per cent."

He added that the ministry had optimised the use of technology through the JomQuit platform, which provided online consulta-

tions by certified healthcare professionals.

He said between October 2024 and last month, 1,968 clients received cessation consultation services via this platform.

"These initiatives reflect the ef-

fectiveness of the programmes designed to help the younger generation break free from smoking and vaping addiction, in line with the Health Ministry's aspiration to create a smoke-free generation," he added.



Lebih 3,000 pegawai perubatan terima tawaran lantikan tetap - Dr Dzulkefly

FOTO: BERNAMA



Dr Dzulkefly (tengah) melawat reruai pameran pada majlis perasmian Persidangan Saintifik Kesihatan Bersekutu Kali Ke-4 pada Selasa.

BANGI - Sebanyak 3,850 daripada 4,352 pegawai perubatan Gred UD10 bersetuju menerima tawaran lantikan tetap setakat hari ini, kata Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

Beliau berkata, semua pegawai perubatan yang menerima tawaran itu akan melapor diri di fasiliti Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) di seluruh negara bermula 2 Oktober ini.

"Secara amnya, kalau dibandingkan dengan tahun-tahun yang lepas, kadar penerimaan kini lebih kurang sama. Bezanya kali ini kita memberi tiga pilihan penempatan, termasuk di Sabah dan Sarawak. Itu cabaran utama untuk mengatasi masalah maldistribution.

"Daripada perspektif KKM, sebagai menteri saya sangat mengharapkan mereka terus bersama kami untuk membangunkan, memperkukuh dan memperkasakan lagi fasiliti-fasiliti kesihatan awam kita," katanya selepas merasmikan Persidangan Saintifik Kesihatan Bersekutu ke-14 Tahun 2025 di sini pada Selasa.

Menurut Dr Dzulkefly, hasil tinjauan di Sabah dan Sarawak menunjukkan banyak pegawai

perubatan dari Semenanjung yang pada awalnya keberatan, akhirnya memilih untuk kekal berkhidmat di sana hingga lima ke 10 tahun.

Pada 23 Julai lalu, Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim dilaporkan berkata, kerajaan akan menyegerakan pengisian 4,352 perjawatan di fasiliti kesihatan, termasuk lantikan doktor kontrak tahun ini, berikutan keperluan mendesak terhadap sektor penjagaan kesihatan negara.

Sementara itu, Dr Dzulkefly dalam ucapannya berkata, Kementerian bersama Kementerian Kewangan, Bank Negara Malaysia dan Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja memperkenalkan RESET bagi memastikan pembaharuan pembiayaan kesihatan diselaras merentasi kerajaan serta sektor swasta.

"Ia direka bagi memastikan kewangan yang mampan, memelihara ekuiti dan memberi ketahanan untuk kita berdepan ancaman kesihatan pada masa hadapan," ujarnya. - Bernama

EK ELEH

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Anti-bullying policy must be concrete, say stakeholders

BY JAAYNE JEEVITA
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PETALING JAYA: The Education Ministry's focus on creating an anti-bullying framework under Budget 2026 must go beyond symbolic statements and translate into concrete action, say stakeholders.

Malaysian Mental Health Association president Prof Datuk Dr Andrew Mohanraj said the goal must be to build a safe school culture, which should include interventions like robust reporting systems, mental health support and transparent mechanisms that inspire confidence among parents and the public.

"For a long time, ragging or hazing in schools, particularly boarding schools, has become institutionalised and culturally accepted. Punitive measures alone will not work," he said.

He stressed that the framework must be designed through

research partnerships so it does not end up as a policy statement but a living, adaptable document.

"It should incorporate data collection to build a national database of bullying cases, enabling better tracking and evaluation of interventions," he said.

Mohanraj also highlighted the importance of capacity building, particularly for teachers and boarding school wardens, to detect subtle forms of bullying and their psychological impact.

"Boarding schools remain high-risk environments, and special attention must be given to equipping wardens and residential staff with the tools to manage these settings.

"It's the mental health impact of subtle forms of bullying, especially in boarding schools, that needs to be recognised.

"Staff must be trained to identify how these behaviours can show up as psychological changes

in students," he said, adding that they must also be trained with de-escalation techniques.

He added that the framework should involve law enforcement, social welfare, cybersecurity authorities and digital platforms to address cyberbullying, alongside education programmes at the primary school level.

National Union of the Teaching Profession secretary-general Fouzi Singon said part of the Budget 2026 allocation should be channelled towards installing more closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in school dormitories nationwide, especially in secluded areas.

"These facilities are often where bullying incidents occur, and the presence of CCTV cameras will not only act as a deterrent but also as an important tool for investigation and accountability," he said.

Beyond physical monitoring, he added that parents must be direct-

ly engaged, particularly those whose children are identified as potential bullies or as being vulnerable to bullying.

"Bullying is not just a disciplinary issue but a societal challenge.

"If left unchecked, it can lead to long-term emotional scars, school dropouts and delinquency," he said.

Parent Action Group for Education Malaysia chairman Datin Noor Azimah Abdul Rahim said the framework should move beyond slogans and "zero-bullying declarations" towards a whole-of-society approach that builds safe environments, empowers students, trains educators and enforces accountability.

"The very first step is a clear and consistent definition of bullying. It must cover physical, verbal, relational and cyberbullying.

"There must also be prevention before reaction, such as positive

school culture initiatives like peer mentorship and inclusivity programmes," she said.

Noor Azimah also urged the ministry to establish robust reporting and protection systems, including anonymous, safe channels for students and proper whistleblower protections.

"Students from primary to secondary, including those in boarding schools and special needs institutions, experience bullying firsthand.

"Their voices are essential for designing reporting tools that feel safe and accessible," she said.

On Aug 29, Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek said among the ministry's main focuses in Budget 2026 will be creating an anti-bullying framework in educational institutions.

She also revealed that the number of bullying cases in schools continues to climb, with 7,681 cases last year compared with 6,528 in 2023.

'Malaysia's healthcare system needs urgent reform'

■ BY FAIZ RUZMAN
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PETALING JAYA: Malaysia must move quickly to reform its healthcare system as demographic shifts, rising chronic diseases and mounting financial pressures threaten to overwhelm public services, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

Speaking at the 14th Allied Health Scientific Conference 2025, he said Malaysia's gains in extending life expectancy and improving maternal and child health risk being overshadowed by new challenges.

"By 2030, 15% of Malaysians will be above 60. Non-communicable diseases already account for more than 70% of premature deaths, costing RM64.2 billion annually.

"Our workforce is stretched thin, overworked and overburdened while financial pressures demand a system that is both equitable and sustainable."

He said Malaysia's dual healthcare system is increasingly lopsided, with public hospitals bearing most of the load while private facilities remain underutilised.

"Without intervention, the gap will only grow. The task is clear – strengthen the public system to deliver universal health coverage while giving the private sector a structured, complementary role."

Dzulkefly said health financing has been prioritised under the 13th Malaysia Plan and in the upcoming Budget 2026 as out-of-pocket payments remain high.

"Malaysians still spend about 36% of total health expenditure from their own pockets, nearly double the World Health Organisation's recommended benchmark of below 20%.

"To fix this, we need a financing model that is equitable, sustainable and future-proof."

He outlined reforms under the Reset framework, developed with the Finance Ministry, Bank Negara and the Employees Provident Fund, bringing several initiatives under one umbrella.

These include RakanKKM (premium services in public hospitals with revenues reinvested), the Medical and Health Insurance/Takaful scheme (a voluntary option for middle-income families), the Diagnosis Related Groups model (a performance-based hospital payment system), and the National Health Fund (a pooled fund from taxation, levies and contributions).

"Every ringgit collected will be ring-fenced and channelled back into strengthening our public health system.

"Let me be clear. This is not privatisation. These reforms are about strengthening our public system because only the public system serves every Malaysian, in every corner of the country."

Turning to digitalisation, Dzulkefly said reforms are already showing results, with electronic medical records now used in 275 health clinics and 22 public hospitals.

'Keutamaan kami stabilkan dahulu pesakit'

Kota Kinabalu: Pegawai Perubatan di Jabatan Kecemasan dan Trauma Hospital Queen Elizabeth (HQE), Dr Janefer Voo, memberitahu Mahkamah Koroner pihaknya tidak menghubungi polis ketika menerima Zara Qairina Mahathir di jabatan itu pada 16 Julai lalu.

Menjawab soalan peguam ibu arwah, Rizwande M Borhan, beliau berkata keutamaan ketika itu adalah untuk menstabilkan pesakit kerana dia tiba dalam keadaan kritikal dan tiada maklumat lengkap dari pihak ambulans.

Saksi ketiga inkues kematian Zara Qairina itu berkata, beliau juga tidak melihat kehadiran polis dan ibu Zara Qairina berada di Jabatan Kecemasan HQE pada 16

Julai lalu.

Rizwande: Biasanya apabila doktor menerima pesakit yang tidak diketahui mekanisme, *time* dan *receding insiden that may have led the patient to be found in her current condition*, adakah pihak hospital menghubungi polis?

Dr Janefer: Bergantung, bergantung kepada kes-kes tertentu.

Rizwande: Boleh mohon penjelasan?

Dr Janefer: Bagi kes ini kami tiada menghubungi polis kerana semasa pesakit sampai dia sedang dalam keadaan kritikal dan informasi lebih dari pihak ambulans juga tidak mendapat kepastian berkait mekanisme tersebut. Dalam kes ini kami utamakan sta-

bilkan dahulu pesakit.

Rizwande: Pada 16 Julai semasa pesakit dirawat, ada doktor nampak kalau ada pegawai polis hadir?

Dr Janefer: Tiada.

Rizwande: Pada 16 Julai ada nampak atau jumpa dengan ibu pesakit?

Dr Janefer: Tiada.

Ketika prosiding itu, Rizwande turut bertanya sama ada Dr Janefer ada memberikan ubat anti sawan Phenytoin kepada Zara Qairina ketika masih dirawat, namun beliau menyatakan tiada.

Ubat anti sawan ditemui dalam ujian tisu buah pinggang arwah Zara Qairina ketika bedah siasat

sebelum ini seperti diterangkan pakar patologi HQE yang juga saksi pertama inkues, Dr Jessie Hiu.

Sementara itu, menjawab soalan peguam, Dr Janefer turut mengakui pernah menerima kes pesakit yang jatuh.

Rizwande: Tadi doktor ada sebut kinetik. Sepanjang pengalaman doktor di Jabatan Kecemasan dan Trauma, pernahkah terima pesakit yang mendapat kecederaan melalui jatuh?

Dr Janefer: Pernah.

Rizwande: Jatuh dari tempat yang tinggi?

Dr Janefer: Pernah.

Rizwande: Pada pengalaman

doktor, adakah pesakit yang jatuh dari tempat tinggi mempunyai kesan lebam akibat jatuh dari tempat tinggi?

Dr Janefer: Bagi merujuk kepada, secara amnya pesakit yang jatuh, sama ada mempunyai kesan lebam atau *bruise*, sepanjang pengalaman saya bergantung kepada bahagian anggota badan pesakit yang jatuh dahulu, maksudnya *which part of the body landed first*. Maksudnya kecederaan bergantung kepada mekanisme di mana ia jatuh dahulu.

Rizwande: Melalui pengalaman doktor, pernah jumpa pesakit ada lebam di badan, depan ke belakang atau leher?

Dr Janefer: Seingat saya tidak pasti.

UN: Rising heat a danger to workers

RISING global temperatures are having an ever-worsening impact on the health and productivity of workers, the United Nations said, urging immediate action to tackle the dangers of heat stress.

Extreme heat is posing growing challenges in the workplace, the UN's health and climate agencies said, as they issued guidance for governments, employers and health authorities to mitigate the risks.

"Immediate action is needed to address the worsening impact of heat stress on workers worldwide," they said.

Many workers are regularly exposed to dangerous heat conditions, the World Health Organisation and the World Meteorological Organisation said.

But the WHO and WMO said the frequency and intensity of those extreme heat events had risen sharply, increasing the risks for both outdoor and indoor workers alike.

Manual workers in sectors such as agriculture, construction and fisheries are particularly hard hit, they said in a report.

The agencies said worker productivity dropped by two to three per cent for every degree above 20°C.

The related health risks include heatstroke, dehydration, kidney dysfunction and neurological disorders.

ECONOMIC FACTOR

"Occupational heat stress has become a global societal challenge, which is no



Heat-related health risks include heatstroke, dehydration, kidney dysfunction and neurological disorders. PICTURE CREDIT: FREEPIK

longer confined to countries located close to the Equator," said WMO Deputy Secretary-General Ko Barrett.

"Protection of workers from extreme heat is not just a health imperative but an economic necessity."

The agencies called for occupational heat action plans, tailored to specific industries and regions.

The guidance drew on findings by the UN's International Labour Organisation (ILO), highlighting that more than 2.4 billion workers are exposed to excessive heat globally — 71 per cent of the world's working population.

It results in more than 22.85 million occupational injuries each year and almost 19,000 fatalities.

"Investing in effective, preventive and protective strategies would save the world several billion dollars every single year," said Joaquim Pinto Nunes, the ILO's chief of occupational safety and health and the working environment.

"Without bold, coordinated action, heat stress will become one of the most devastating occupational hazards of our time, leading to a significant loss of life and productivity."

ADAPT OR DIE

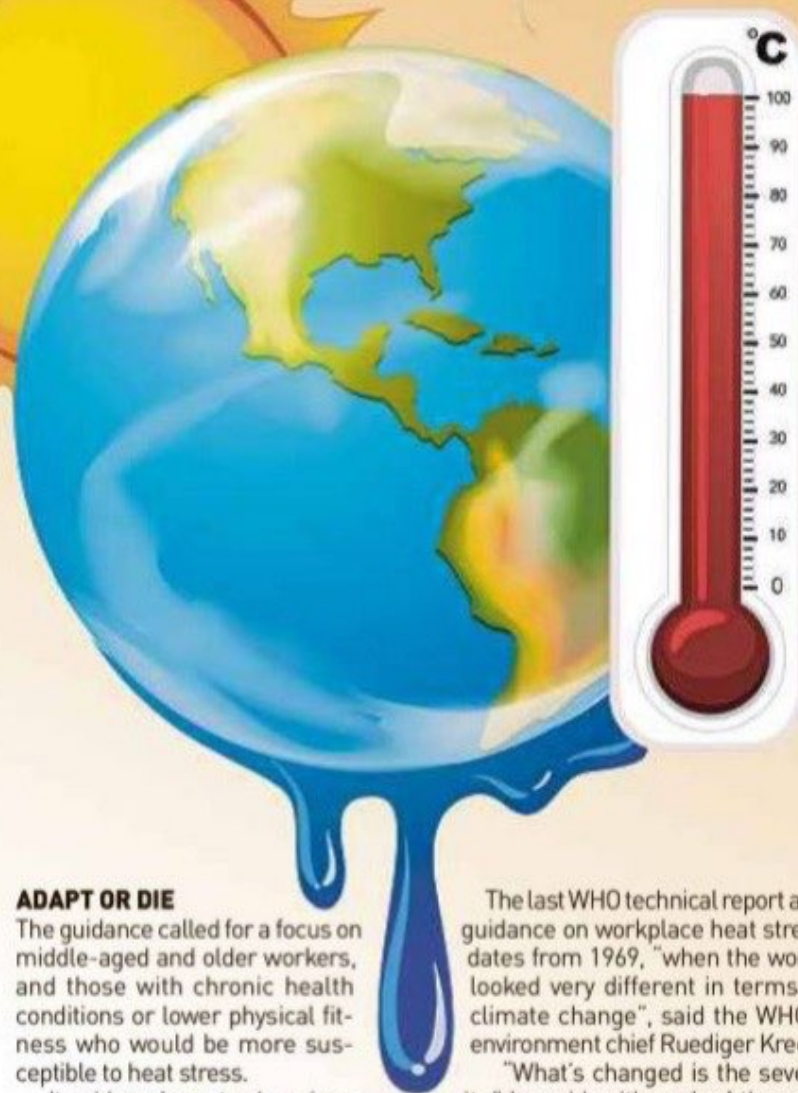
The guidance called for a focus on middle-aged and older workers, and those with chronic health conditions or lower physical fitness who would be more susceptible to heat stress.

It said workers, trade unions, health experts and local authorities should work together to come up with heat-health strategies that would then be widely supported.

It said heat stress symptoms were often misdiagnosed, with people failing to recognise the signs.

Extreme heat is posing growing challenges in the workplace. PICTURE

CREDIT: BRGFX - FREEPIK



The last WHO technical report and guidance on workplace heat stress dates from 1969, "when the world looked very different in terms of climate change", said the WHO's environment chief Ruediger Krech.

"What's changed is the severity," he said, with each of the past 10 years being the warmest 10 ever recorded.

WMO services division senior director Johan Stander added: "We must face up to the future of extreme heat. It's a reality for many: a case of adapt or die."