

Health Ministry recalling retired doctors, nurses to reinforce frontlines

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CORONAVIRUS | The Health Ministry is recalling its retired doctors and nurses to reinforce the current frontliners in the face of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Health director-general Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah told a press conference today that they are targeting to reach 2,000 skilled healthcare professionals to assist as soon as possible.

"We are in the process of looking at how we can increase human resources, including nurses and doctors.

"What is important now, we are looking at those who already have the experience like nurses and specialists who have retired. They can help us.

"We are also in the process of enhancing our equipment," he said during a press conference on Covid-19 in Putrajaya today.

According to Noor Hisham, the ministry is now working on registering and interviewing volunteers to know where they have served before.

Meanwhile, asked on complaints of contract-based medical officers not getting their service renewed or accepted into permanent positions, Noor Hisham said they are trying their best to solve the matter.

"This issue was there even before Covid-19.

"We are trying our best to solve this with the Public Services Department, in terms of permanent or contract post (for our medical officers)," he said.

It was reported before that Malaysia was facing a glut of healthcare industry workers who have yet to get any placement in government hospitals, a problem the government attributed to an increase in medical graduates from local and foreign institutions.

In 2018, the then health minister Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said the government wanted to solve the problem by among others, changing the method of appointment from permanent to contract appointment, in which the officer has the opportunity to undergo housemanship and obtain full registration as required under the Medical Act 1971 to improve the clinical skills and experience

of officers.

However, this later led to a large number of floating house officers who were stuck in limbo between being house officers and medical officers.

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