

Careers secure, vows PM

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Needs of contract medical officers will be taken care of immediately

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PETALING JAYA: The Prime Minister has promised that the career progression of contract medical, dental and pharmaceutical officers in the civil service will not be hindered in any way.

Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin (*pic*) said as an immediate solution, the Cabinet has agreed that all such officers be offered a contract of service for two years upon completion of their mandatory service to "enable" their career progression.

He said following a paper presented to the Cabinet on July 14, the government agreed to extend the contracts of officers accepted for specialist studies for a maximum of a further four years to ensure they were able to complete their specialisation studies.

Muhyiddin said the contracts of these medical officers must be in line with the careers of permanent medical officers, and that they be offered fully-paid study leave as well as sponsorship.

He said the Cabinet has also agreed to extend the contracts for a maximum of four years to medical and dental officers who have been accepted for specialist studies in their first two-year contract service to ensure they can complete their specialist studies.



"The government understands the demand of the contract health-care employees and acknowledges their contribution and roles as frontliners in giving the best health-care to the people, especially in this Covid-19 pandemic.

"To ensure that the matter is given complete attention and handled wholly and effectively, I have ordered the Health Ministry and all the relevant agencies to form a comprehensive and inclusive plan involving immediate actions, short-term, medium-term and long-term plans," he said in a statement yesterday.

The announcement comes amid protests from junior contract doctors who said the current contract system in the civil service has been unfair and hampers their career progression. There have also been reports of such doctors resigning due to this.

The Prime Minister also said the Cabinet agreed to an upgrading of benefits such as special medical duty leave, tuberculosis leave and allowance to visit places of origin to be offered to contract medical, dental and pharmaceutical officers.

"These decisions will give the government space to finalise the

reform study of the health system that is being done, looking at the existing Medical Act 1971, and to form a long-term direction plan for the medical profession.

"The government (very much) appreciates the contribution of doctors as frontliners in battling the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We are committed to ensuring that the welfare and career progression of contract officers are given due and fair attention," he added.

Muhyiddin also said Malaysia was edging closer to having half its adult population receive at least one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine.

He said 46.7% of the country's adult population has received at least one dose, with 21.8% getting both doses.

Since July 12, he said the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme successfully dispensed over 400,000 doses almost daily, hitting a new record on Thursday with a daily vaccination rate of 507,050 doses.

He said this meant that 10,920,862 people have received their first doses and 5,104,054 people have completed their inoculation since the programme began.

"This achievement is in line with the target set. It must be further improved so that we can achieve the target of 26 million fully vaccinated Malaysians," Muhyiddin said in a Facebook post.