

Let us buy and administer vaccines, private hospitals tell govt

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The Association of Private Hospitals Malaysia says the National Immunisation Programme is 'extremely long and unacceptable'. (AP pic)

PETALING JAYA: The association representing private hospitals in Malaysia has urged the government to allow its members to buy their own supply of Covid-19 vaccines and administer them.

This comes after science, technology, and innovation minister Khairy Jamaluddin was reported by CodeBlue as saying there is no immediate provision for private hospitals to buy and run their own vaccination programmes.

"There are also no supplies for private hospitals at the moment. But, we will consider it later," he was quoted as saying.

In a statement today, Association of Private Hospitals Malaysia president Dr Kuljit Singh said private hospitals can procure vaccines from different sources once approvals are granted by the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA).

It said the government's programme, which is expected to end in February 2022, is "extremely long and unacceptable".

"Private hospitals could be mobilised very fast to complement the government's efforts in ensuring the majority of the population is vaccinated in the shortest possible time to assist in achieving 'herd immunity'.

"This will include utilising the government-endorsed track and trace system to build a database on the provision of vaccinations," he said.

Kuljit said for every patient that opts to be vaccinated in a private hospital, the government has one less patient to pay for.

He said expatriates and those in the diplomatic community may need to travel for work or business in the near term.

“But the current public vaccination programme will only include them in Phase III which may not be feasible. A private sector vaccination option will assist in these cases,” he said.

He said there will also be companies who want to fund the vaccines for their own employees to better ensure they complete the two-dose regimen, and that the involvement of the private sector can help in this.

“We hope the private hospitals are not ignored in our plea to the government as our motives are not to gain profits but to help out as partners with the government. There is a huge demand from the public to get this working out soon.”

“The availability of vaccines of different types in private hospitals will curtail the occurrence of certain quarters trying to jump queue in the National Immunisation Programme and further depriving those who require to be vaccinated,” he said.

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