

# MMA rips into KJ, govt over vaccination programme

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PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) claims there has been no engagement between the National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme coordinating minister Khairy Jamaluddin and private general practitioners (GPs) on their involvement in the programme.

MMA president Dr Subramaniam Muniandy said the association had written to Khairy on March 2 to meet and discuss on plans for the private GPs to be involved in the vaccination programme, but there had been no reply from the minister's office.

"The minister should have come down from his high horse to meet with us months ago when we wrote to him. Perhaps that would have encouraged more GPs to get on board. What a difference it would have made if he showed some interest," Subramaniam said in a statement today.

"Every day, the minister is getting bombarded with questions on the slow progress of the programme. Shouldn't he be engaging with the private GPs who can instantly double or triple the vaccination rate?

"Only now when cases of Covid-19 and deaths have skyrocketed, there is talk of GPs. Where were MoH (health ministry) and JKJAV (Covid-19 vaccine supply access guarantee special committee) months ago? Or are we keeping the tradition of waiting for things to get worse before something is done?"

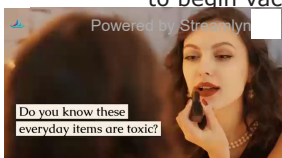
According to Khairy, a total of 2,500 GPs had signed up for the programme. Of that number, more than 1,800 had undergone training before opening their respective vaccination centres.

However, Subramaniam said these GPs were left hanging without any announcement from the government.

"By the end of April, most of the 2,500 private GPs had already received training and were ready to begin vaccinations in early May, but they were left hanging. The GPs have been waiting for the government to engage with relevant stakeholders before making any decisions.



Dr Subramaniam Muniandy.



“One of the main reasons why the government of the day, even after three MCOs, has failed to bring the Covid-19 situation under control is its failure to listen. There is a lot of talk from them but no listening. Policies are decided in silos, with hardly any engagement with stakeholders.

“How can there be any hope of success in managing the pandemic when the government is keeping to themselves and even turning away help?” he said.

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