

Contract issue – doctors told to be patient

By **Faye Kwan** - June 30, 2021 3:30 PM

PETALING JAYA: The Cabinet will soon discuss the issue involving contract doctors who are still in limbo over their permanent placements, says health minister Dr Adham Baba.

He said proposals to amend the contract doctor scheme are being prepared and will be presented to the Cabinet soon.

As at May 21, Adham said there were 35,216 contract doctors comprising 23,077 medical officers, 5,000 dental officers and 7,139 pharmacists.

He also reiterated that permanent positions were awarded based on merit and their performance in their Masters' degrees.

"Because of that, I ask all doctors under the contract scheme to remain patient and calm," he said in a joint press conference with science, technology and innovation minister Khairy Jamaluddin today.

Adham added that the government had previously implemented a salary adjustment for contract medical officers from Grades UD41 to UD43, just one rank below permanent medical officers at UD44.

"It is nearly the same pay and grade as those appointed as permanent doctors, there is not much difference. However, the matter will be brought up to the Cabinet and a decision will be made not long from now."

A social media campaign, known as #HartalDoktorKontrak, has called for contract doctors to go on strike at the end of next month if the government fails to resolve the issue of their permanent placement.

The Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) and its section for housemen and medical officers (Schomos) have also initiated a Code Black campaign in support of junior doctors.

From July 1 to 12, individuals or companies are encouraged to change their logos or social media profile pictures to black or monochrome. On the final day, people are asked to go to work dressed in black.

On a separate matter, Adham said 506,178 tests were conducted in the past seven days with a positivity rate of 7.4%, a 0.5% increase compared with the previous week.

Meanwhile, the number of daily new cases and patients receiving treatment in intensive care units (ICU) have both decreased by 4%. The average occupancy rate at public hospital ICUs now stood

at 83%.

He added that 151 new clusters, or a 6.3% increase in clusters, were recorded in the past week, of which 100 were detected at workplaces.

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