



PERSEKUTUAN PERSATUAN DOKTOR PERUBATAN SWASTA MALAYSIA FEDERATION OF PRIVATE MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS' ASSOCIATIONS, MALAYSIA

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PRESS RELEASE

"FPMPAM Calls For Urgent Reforms And An End To The Government-Knows-Best Mindset In Healthcare"

KUALA LUMPUR, 28 August 2021

The Federation of Private Medical Practitioners' Associations, Malaysia (FPMPAM) today launched its book "*Malaysian Health Care Maladies and Remedies*" amidst a backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, a public health care system currently under unprecedented stress and expectation, and a workforce on call and on duty since March 2020. The FPMPAM's book calls for much needed reforms and delves into topics such as patient safety and quality of care, the over-regulation of medical practice, general practitioners' issues, Orang Asli health, and poor health care coverage in Sabah and Sarawak.

"As we have learnt the hard way from the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the old way of doing things must change. It is time to end the previous top-down approach to enact legislation and policies related to health, paying only lip service to consulting patient groups, health care professionals, and other stakeholders who would be directly impacted by such measures," said Dr. Steven Chow, FPMPAM President. "What is needed are reforms based on meaningful private-public partnership programmes to harvest the best from both components of our healthcare system minus the erection of unnecessary structural barriers. The disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed not only the strengths and resilience of our healthcare system but also its many gaps and weaknesses which are consequences of continuing with the attitude of "government-knows-best" and implementing policies without prior consultation with all stakeholders.

"In this book "Malaysian Health Care Maladies and Remedies", doctors, academics and senior retired government officials, speak truth to power by revealing issues in the Malaysian health care that are not often articulated in mainstream media", said Dr. Chow.

"A former Sarawak state health director describes how Malaysia's purported universal health coverage does not really apply in the East Malaysia state. A general practitioner reveals the burden and impact of a 1998 law regulating private health care facilities, as affordable family clinics are driven to the brink of extinction. The fires at Sultanah Aminah Hospital and the state of sexual reproductive health in Malaysia are discussed. There is also a call for a Royal Commission on Health which is appropriate given what we have seen and experienced over the past 18 months with COVID-19".

"There is no reason to keep silent on problems affecting our personal health and lives out of a misplaced sense of "gratitude". Public health care is not free", Dr. Chow emphasised. "It is paid by taxpayers. Being complacent threatens the continued wellbeing of the people. So, we have every right to demand the best quality care from the government."

"The government of the day should not continue to deliver more of the same, with sparse innovations, through an anarchaic organizational structure to a public that is now more aware and sophisticated. The FPMPAM's book "*Malaysian Health Care Maladies and Remedies*" can be ordered online now through the link: <https://forms.gle/N3yRUNfcnQWTbD1U7>

Dr. Steven KW Chow
President, FPMPAM