

## Editorial

The COVID-19 pandemic's slide into endemic status has brought much relief to everyone. Although the virus remains prevalent, the population may have evolved immunity to it as a result of vaccination and natural infection, resulting in lesser morbidity and mortality from severe COVID-19 infection. With that note, we can now focus on issues that have been there since before the COVID-19 pandemic.

The necessity to streamline the regulations governing private medical clinics (PMC) that are contradictory and overlap has been highlighted by the study published in this issue on the challenges faced by stakeholders in the primary health care system. The stakeholders believe that our proactive Health Minister, despite his hectic schedule, will be able to put forth strategies to overcome these obstacles and improve the PMC's health care service delivery while at the same time addressing the bullying issues that have plagued the medical fraternity for years.

It is also worth noting that, despite the bullying and toxic work culture in our hospitals, the study on medical students' perceptions of career opportunities yielded some surprising results. Medical students apparently are optimistic in their career progression despite the uncertainty of a

permanent post in the government sector. Most are determined to progress and seek opportunities in other countries, which can ultimately lead to medical brain drain and a loss for Malaysia.

It can be surmised that our medical students are either oblivious or extremely optimistic about what awaits them in some hospitals: toxic and bullying work environment; uncertainty of posts in the government sector; and the possibility that they may enter a very challenging private medical sector as general practitioners.

We hope our Health Minister and Director General of Health will be able to strengthen the work atmosphere and culture in order to provide a better and more efficient healthcare system.

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