



**HARM REDUCTION KEY TO REDUCING SMOKING PREVALENCE**  
***AMAM and FPMPAM urges Government to adopt inclusive policies***

**17 May 2023 (Kuala Lumpur)** – The Addiction Medicine Association Malaysia and the Federation of Private Medical Practitioners' Associations Malaysia (FPMPAM), the national body representing doctors in private practice in Malaysia, has once again urged the Ministry of Health (MoH) to consider the science of harm reduction to reduce smoking prevalence instead of just pushing for harsh policies such as the generation endgame (GEG).

AMAM and FPMPAM made this call after culminating its two-day Joint Scientific Meeting where data on harm reduction was shared and discussed amongst medical practitioners in Malaysia.

**Dr. Steven Chow, President of AMAM and Dr Shanmuganathan Ganesan, President of FPMPAM** said, "In our experience with engaging with smokers, we have learnt that many want to quit, but do not have the right support or tools to aid their journey. We are also cognisant of the fact that smokers who are not ready to quit or insistent on a cigarette will find access to the products they need by any means necessary."

"Given these insights, we believe that smokers need a more supportive approach, not one that is focused mainly on prohibition, if we want to reduce the incidence of smoking in Malaysia. There are many credible studies that have highlighted the science behind harm reduction. Public Health England and the Royal College of Physicians are two key reports that have shared overwhelming scientific data that harm reduction efforts can work with proper regulatory framework in place. The field of tobacco harm reduction is in urgent need of research and a regulatory framework, particularly in Malaysia, and we must take the time to explore this option."

At the meeting, experts have noted that the GEG will not curb smoking, but instead drive smokers to unregulated or black channels. Instead, what is needed immediately is a regulatory framework to control vaping, vaping solutions and vaping devices. The constant focus on the GEG is distracting policy and lawmakers from this urgent task.

"If indeed the Ministry of Health (MoH) envisions a [healthier nation](#), then it must consider harm reduction strategies. It is too simplistic to envision that a country can be free from cigarettes and vaping without effective measures that support smokers. A prohibition-focused policy does not help and certainly does not support smokers to quit smoking."

"Furthermore, GEG is not all inclusive and does not provide for measures to address unregulated channels which we know plague our country. Introducing GEG and excluding harm reduction from the policy would be a missed opportunity, as we may be losing out on a viable solution that can have a meaningful impact on the tobacco epidemic. Our experience with opiate harm reduction, since 2002, is a clear example of what can be successfully achieved with inclusive harm reduction policies"

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**About the Addiction Medicine Association Malaysia (AMAM)**

**The Addiction Medicine Association of Malaysia (AMAM) was formed in middle of 2006 with its primary objective to develop the science of addiction medicine in Malaysia. Members of AMAM consists of GPs, specialists in addiction medicine and allied healthcare professionals with interest or working in addiction medicine.**

**About the Federation of Private Medical Practitioners Associations Malaysia (FPMPAM)**

Founded in 1989, it has more than 5,000 members in seven state-level associations in the country. While it is primarily committed to improving the quality of private healthcare through continuing medical education, continuing professional development of its members and ethics advocacy, it has in recent years been focusing on frontier medicine, addiction medicine and a mentoring programme for trainee doctors.

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