

Remote and Border Areas Still Lack of Health Workers

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In many remote and border areas there are shortages of health personnel. In fact, they need many doctors, nurses, nutritionists and pharmacists. Therefore, the government is expected to assign health workers evenly without restricting their right to choose the workplace.

"Papua has a shortage of 250 general practitioners, not to mention the border and remote areas, while in Jakarta the doctor's practice is actually limited," said Vice Dean for Administration, Finance and Human Resources, UGM Faculty of Medicine on Wednesday (14/12). The statement was made in *the National Seminar on Health Professions Employment Prospect*.

Suhardjo mentioned, at this time there is 73 medical faculties at higher education institutes in Indonesia. The number of graduate doctors is able to meet the needs in the region. But unfortunately, the placement of doctors in the regions has not been evenly distributed. "UGM alone has installed 250 doctors each year," he added.

Although graduates of general practitioners are already sufficient, the number of specialist doctors is still very minimal. It is because the specialist graduates are more likely to work in big cities in Java. Therefore, to increase the number of specialists, he suggested the government to increase the allocation of scholarships for medical graduates who take specialist doctor education. "All this time they pursue specialists' education at their own expenses.

Therefore, when they work, they have the right to choose their own work place," he said.

To improve equity of health workers in remote and border areas, Suhardjo proposed that the government re-promote community service program for doctors' graduates to serve in the area. "It is like a compulsory social work. The point is to serve the country with their work in the area," he suggested.

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