

AKHBAR : THE SUN  
MUKA SURAT : 4  
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

THE SUN MIS 4 NATIONAL 15/4/2025 (SELASA)

# Poor workplace ergonomics linked to rising health issues

► Unsuitable furniture, prolonged sitting and lack of breaks driving sick leave, mental strain and lower productivity, say experts

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Non-ergonomic work environments are a major contributor to stress and various health issues among employees, particularly those affecting the spine, muscles and joints.

These problems often lead to increased sick leave and reduced productivity, ultimately impacting overall organisational performance.

According to Malaysian Society for Occupational Safety and Health president Ahmad Fakhru Anwar Ismail, such concerns are frequently raised by workers during programmes organised by the association, with many expressing anxiety over their long-term well-being.

"One of the most common issues raised is the increase in sick leave due to muscle and joint discomfort, as well as work-related stress, all stemming from a non-ergonomic workplace environment," he told Bernama.

Workplace ergonomics refers to the science of designing and arranging workspaces, tools and equipment to suit the needs of users, with the aim of creating a safe, comfortable and efficient environment.

Ahmad Fakhru stressed that employers must ensure workplace design aligns with the physical needs of their staff.

"One of the basic steps they can take is to ensure chairs and tables are adjustable. The same goes for the positioning of computer monitors. These are crucial to reduce physical strain on the body."

"Companies should also train employees on proper posture, safe lifting techniques and other practices that can minimise injury risks," he said.

He recommended the use of an ergonomic chair, screen, keyboard and mouse to reduce strain on hands and wrists, particularly for employees involved in repetitive computer work.

He also encouraged workers to take short breaks after prolonged periods of work to ease strain on the eyes, neck and shoulders.

"Understanding occupational health can help reduce the risk of work-related health problems," he added.

Ahmad Fakhru noted that long-term exposure to non-ergonomic conditions can have serious consequences, affecting both the



Ahmad Fakhru said long-term exposure to non-ergonomic conditions can have serious consequences, affecting both the physical and mental health of workers. - ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN

physical and mental health of workers.

In many cases, it not only leads to physical disability but also contributes to mental health issues such as chronic stress and depression caused by ongoing pain.

"Workers facing these issues may require frequent sick leave, which ultimately reduces their productivity."

"Companies that neglect ergonomic needs risk higher medical costs and diminished output. Unhealthy employees will struggle to focus and work efficiently, affecting overall performance," he said.

Meanwhile, Universiti Teknologi MARA assistant vice-chancellor Professor Dr Amer Shakir Zainol said without proper ergonomic adaptations, workers face increased risk of long-term health issues, particularly back and neck pain.

"Ergonomics concerns the relationship between people and their environment. In Western countries, it has long been applied across various sectors, including equipment and vehicle design. Automotive brands such as Mercedes-Benz, for instance, prioritise

ergonomics in seat design to ensure driver comfort and safety," he said.

He highlighted companies such as Google and local institutions such as the Employees Provident Fund as examples of workplaces applying ergonomic principles in office layouts.

"In these organisations, they've moved beyond the concept of assigning one desk per worker. Employees are encouraged to work in a variety of spaces, such as cafes or comfortable lounge areas, depending on their needs," Amer Shakir added.

Agreeing that non-ergonomic environments can pose health risks, Malaysian Public Health Medicine Specialists Association president Datuk Dr Zainal Ariffin Omar said unsuitable furniture and prolonged working hours without adequate breaks are key contributors to workplace health issues.

"Inadequate lighting and user-unfriendly equipment increase fatigue and discomfort. Beyond the physical effects, uncomfortable environments also create mental stress, which impacts focus and overall productivity," he said.



**AKHBAR : THE STAR**  
**MUKA SURAT : 5**  
**RUANGAN : NEWS**

THE STAR M/S S - NEWS 15/4/2025 (SELASA)

By REMAR NORDIN  
remar.nordin@thestar.com.my

JOHOR government plans to relocate mother-and-child healthcare services at Klinik Kesihatan Gelang Patah to a new facility in Southern Industrial and Logistics Clusters (SILC), Iskandar Puteri.

State health and environment committee chairman Ling Tian Soon said Johor health department had identified a suitable building to be renovated and converted into a dedicated clinic.

"The Gelang Patah clinic receives about 800 visitors daily, so we plan to reduce congestion by relocating the mother-and-child healthcare services to SILC.

"Once completed, it will be handed over to the state health department for operations," he told reporters after a medical equipment handover ceremony at the clinic.

Ling added that the new facility at SILC was expected to be ready by July.

"For the long term, the state government has identified a piece of land for construction of a permanent facility, pending approval and funding under

## Mother-child healthcare services moving to new Iskandar Puteri facility



Ling (in white) checking out the new ultrasound machine during his visit to the Gelang Patah clinic.

the Malaysia Plan.

"This will require at least another three years of study before we can reach a decision," he said.

At the clinic, Ling saw over RM630,000 worth of medical

equipment from Bridge Data Centres being donated, including ultrasound machines.

"This is part of the company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme to upgrade three clinics in the state, namely

those in Gelang Patah, Tebrau and Majidee.

"The aid will help improve facilities in these clinics, including furniture and essential medical equipment, replacement of non-medical equipment and procurement of additional medical devices," he said.

Ling added that with the increasing number of patients, particularly expectant mothers, having only one ultrasound machine per clinic led to long waiting times.

"The additional ultrasound machines will speed up the process and improve service efficiency," he said.

Ling also encouraged private entities operating in Johor to participate in CSR programmes to support the state's healthcare facilities.

In addition to medical upgrades, he said the state government would provide three new ambulances to enhance emergency services at these clinics.