

The Role of Legal Protection for Medical Personnel in Ensuring Public Health

Istiana Heriani¹⁾, Eko Budi Sariyono²⁾, Putera Astomo³⁾, Marastika Wicaksono Aji Bawono⁴⁾ & Retno Fitriati⁵⁾

¹⁾ Universitas Islam Kalimantan MAB, Indonesia, E-mail: ihheriani2579@gmail.com

²⁾ Akademi Kepolisian Semarang, Indonesia, E-mail: ekobudi@akpol.ac.id

³⁾ Universitas Sulawesi Barat, Indonesia, E-mail: puteraastomo@unsulbar.ac.id

⁴⁾ Politeknik Digital Boash, Indonesia, E-mail: marastika.wab@pdbi.ac.id

⁵⁾ Akademi Farmasi Bhumi Husada, Indonesia, E-mail: retnokartikadewi@gmail.com

Abstract. *Legal protection for medical personnel has become a strategic issue in strengthening health system governance and ensuring sustainable public health. Although previous studies have extensively discussed professional liability and the implementation of health regulations, limited attention has been given to the governance role of legal protection in connecting legal certainty with broader public health outcomes. This study aims to analyse the role of legal protection for medical personnel in ensuring public health through Indonesia's health law reform. The research employed a qualitative library research design using statutory, conceptual, and comparative approaches. Primary legal materials consisted of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health, Government Regulation Number 28 of 2024, and Minister of Health Regulation Number 24 of 2022, while secondary materials were obtained from international policy documents and relevant scholarly literature. Data were collected through documentary research and analysed using content analysis and thematic analysis to identify the relationships between legal protection, institutional governance, and public health. The findings reveal that effective legal protection strengthens legal certainty, enhances professional confidence, promotes compliance with professional standards, reinforces institutional accountability, improves health workforce resilience, and ultimately contributes to healthcare quality, patient safety, public trust, and sustainable public health. The novelty of this research lies in the development of a governance model that conceptualises legal protection as an integrated mechanism linking health law reform, legal certainty, institutional governance, and sustainable public health. This model extends previous legal studies by demonstrating that legal protection functions not only as a safeguard for medical personnel but also as a strategic governance instrument for strengthening resilient healthcare systems and achieving long-term public health outcomes.*

Keywords: *Health; Medical; Personnel; Protection; Resilience.*

1. Introduction

Legal protection for medical personnel has become an increasingly important issue in contemporary healthcare governance because the effectiveness of public health systems largely depends on the ability of healthcare professionals to provide safe, accountable, and uninterrupted medical services. Recent studies indicate that legal certainty is essential for ensuring that medical personnel can perform their professional duties in accordance with established professional standards while remaining protected from unjust legal consequences arising from medical practice (Prayuti et al., 2025; Widjaja & Sijabat, 2025). The enactment of Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health represents a significant milestone in Indonesia's healthcare reform by integrating various health regulations into a comprehensive legal framework intended to improve healthcare governance, strengthen the health workforce, and ensure legal certainty for both healthcare providers and patients (Nurchasanah et al., 2025). This reform reflects the constitutional mandate to guarantee every citizen's right to health while simultaneously recognizing the strategic role of medical personnel in achieving national health objectives (Gostin, 2014; Indonesia & Penerangan, 1993). At the international level, the World Health Organization emphasizes that strengthening the health workforce is indispensable for achieving universal health coverage, improving patient safety, and maintaining resilient healthcare systems capable of responding to present and future public health challenges (WHO, 2022, 2023a, 2023b). Likewise, the OECD argues that resilient healthcare systems require comprehensive governance mechanisms that not only improve healthcare quality but also provide institutional and legal support for healthcare professionals (OECD, 2023a, 2023b). These developments demonstrate that legal protection for medical personnel should no longer be viewed solely as a legal safeguard against professional disputes but also as a strategic component of public health governance.

The urgency of strengthening legal protection has become increasingly apparent following the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed significant weaknesses in healthcare systems across the world. During the pandemic, medical personnel were required to perform their professional responsibilities under extraordinary circumstances characterized by increased workloads, occupational risks, limited resources, and rapidly evolving clinical protocols. Beyond physical and psychological burdens, healthcare professionals also faced growing legal uncertainty related to professional accountability, workplace safety, and emergency medical decision-making (Gidengil et al., 2024; WHO, 2020). These challenges highlighted that inadequate legal protection may discourage professional decision-making, reduce workforce resilience, and ultimately affect the quality and continuity of healthcare services delivered to the public. The WHO Global Patient Safety Action Plan further emphasizes that patient safety cannot be achieved without ensuring a safe and supportive working environment for healthcare professionals because the quality of healthcare services is closely associated with the well-being, competence, and legal security of the health workforce (WHO, 2021). Consequently, legal protection should be understood as a preventive governance instrument that promotes professional confidence, strengthens institutional accountability, and contributes to sustainable public health outcomes rather than merely functioning as a mechanism for resolving legal disputes after adverse events occur.

Previous studies have substantially contributed to understanding the legal protection of medical personnel in Indonesia, particularly following the enactment of Law Number 17

of 2023 concerning Health. Prayuti et al. (2025) argue that the new Health Law strengthens legal certainty for medical personnel by providing a more comprehensive legal framework governing professional rights, obligations, and responsibilities. Similarly, Nurchasanah et al. (2025) emphasize that the legislation seeks to harmonize legal protection for medical and health personnel while maintaining patients' rights within an integrated healthcare system. Widjaja & Sijabat (2025) further explain that legal protection should ensure that medical personnel who perform healthcare services in accordance with professional standards are protected from unjust legal consequences arising from their professional practice. Other studies have examined the implementation of the Health Law from different perspectives, including the transformation of Indonesia's health law, the balance between patients' rights and the responsibilities of medical personnel, legal protection within primary healthcare services, and legal issues following the enactment of the new legislation (Dahlan & Budiarsih, 2025; Hermanto et al., 2026; Saputro & Shinta, 2026; Sari & Ropii, 2026). More specifically, Sari and Ropii (2026) examine the implementation of the Health Law in providing legal protection for both medical personnel and patients, reinforcing the importance of examining legal protection not only at the normative level but also in its practical implementation within the healthcare system. Meanwhile, studies conducted by Emmanuella (2023) and Liem & Sembiring (2024) focus primarily on legal protection in the context of medical malpractice and criminal acts against medical personnel. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that the current academic discourse has predominantly concentrated on normative legal protection, statutory implementation, professional accountability, dispute resolution, and the relationship between the rights of patients and healthcare professionals.

Despite the growing body of literature, several important issues remain insufficiently explored. Most previous studies discuss legal protection from a normative legal perspective by examining statutory provisions or professional liability, while relatively limited attention has been devoted to analysing how legal protection functions as an essential component of public health governance. International organizations increasingly recognize that effective health workforce policies, supportive institutional environments, and appropriate governance contribute to workforce resilience, patient safety, and the sustainability of healthcare systems (WHO, 2021, 2022, 2023a, 2023b). More recent research also positions the health workforce as an important component of the intersection between climate change and health-system resilience, indicating that workforce policy increasingly needs to respond to broader and evolving public health challenges (Clarke et al., 2025). Nevertheless, this governance-oriented perspective has not been comprehensively integrated into studies concerning Indonesia's post-reform health legal framework. Existing Indonesian research generally evaluates whether legal protection has been formally provided under the Health Law rather than examining how such protection supports the broader objectives of ensuring public health through improved governance, professional confidence, regulatory certainty, and healthcare system resilience. This gap indicates the need for a more comprehensive analysis that connects legal protection for medical personnel with the broader goals of public health rather than treating it solely as an issue of legal liability or statutory compliance.

This study offers a different analytical perspective from previous research by positioning legal protection for medical personnel not merely as a legal mechanism for resolving professional disputes, but as a strategic governance instrument that supports the achievement of public health objectives. While earlier studies have primarily focused on

statutory interpretation, professional liability, legal certainty, and the implementation of Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health, this research adopts a broader perspective by integrating legal, institutional, and public health dimensions into a unified analytical framework (Prayuti et al., 2025; Nurchasanah et al., 2025; Widjaja & Sijabat, 2025). This broader perspective is consistent with established scholarship in medical law and ethics, which treats professional duties, patient rights, accountability, and the legal responsibilities of healthcare practitioners as interconnected dimensions of healthcare practice (Dowie & Griffith, 2019; Herring, 2020; Laurie et al., 2016; Montgomery, 2005). This perspective is consistent with the governance framework promoted by the World Health Organization and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which emphasize that a resilient health system requires not only adequate infrastructure and financial resources but also a legal environment capable of protecting healthcare professionals, strengthening institutional accountability, and maintaining public trust in healthcare services (WHO, 2023a; WHO, 2023b; OECD, 2023b). Accordingly, this study argues that effective legal protection contributes to improving professional confidence, reducing legal uncertainty, encouraging compliance with professional standards, and supporting the continuity and quality of healthcare services. By linking legal protection with health workforce resilience and public health governance, this study extends the existing literature beyond the traditional legal analysis of rights and obligations and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the strategic role of law in strengthening healthcare systems.

Therefore, this research addresses the existing gap by examining the role of legal protection for medical personnel within the broader framework of public health governance in Indonesia following the enactment of Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health and its implementing regulations. Using a qualitative library research approach, this study analyses constitutional principles, statutory provisions, international policy documents, and recent scholarly literature to explain how legal protection contributes to the effectiveness, sustainability, and resilience of healthcare systems. The findings are expected to enrich the academic discourse on health law by offering a governance-oriented perspective that integrates legal certainty, professional protection, and public health objectives into a coherent analytical framework. In addition, this study is expected to provide practical recommendations for policymakers, healthcare institutions, and medical professionals in strengthening legal policies that support high-quality healthcare services while ensuring balanced protection for both medical personnel and patients. Therefore, this research aims to analyse the role of legal protection for medical personnel in ensuring public health by examining Indonesia's health law reform through a qualitative library research approach.

2. Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative research design using a library research method. The research examined the role of legal protection for medical personnel in ensuring public health through the analysis of legal norms, regulations, and scholarly literature.

The research applied three approaches, namely the statute approach, conceptual approach, and comparative approach. The statute approach analysed the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health, Government Regulation Number 28 of 2024, and Minister of Health Regulation Number 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records (K. K. Indonesia, 2022; P. P. Indonesia, 2024;

Indonesia & Penerangan, 1993; Perundang-undangan, 2023). The conceptual approach examined theories and concepts related to legal protection, medical personnel, public health, and health governance. The comparative approach compared Indonesia's legal framework with international policy perspectives presented in publications of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The research specification was descriptive-analytical, focusing on identifying, analysing, and interpreting legal norms and policy developments concerning the legal protection of medical personnel and their contribution to public health.

The data consisted of primary and secondary legal materials. Primary legal materials included the Constitution, statutes, government regulations, and ministerial regulations governing the health sector. Secondary legal materials comprised WHO and OECD reports, peer-reviewed journal articles, and academic books relevant to health law, medical ethics, healthcare governance, and legal protection for medical personnel. Data were collected through documentary research by systematically reviewing and classifying legal documents and scholarly publications relevant to the research objectives.

The collected data were analysed using content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis was employed to identify legal principles, regulatory provisions, and policy directions related to the protection of medical personnel, while thematic analysis was used to synthesise the findings into major themes concerning legal certainty, professional protection, health workforce resilience, healthcare governance, and public health. The findings were interpreted descriptively to explain the contribution of legal protection to strengthening an effective, accountable, and sustainable public health system.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Legal Protection for Medical Personnel under Indonesia's Health Law Reform

Legal protection for medical personnel constitutes a fundamental element of Indonesia's healthcare legal system because it provides legal certainty for healthcare professionals while supporting the implementation of safe, accountable, and high-quality healthcare services. The enactment of Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health marks a significant milestone in Indonesia's health law reform by integrating various sectoral regulations into a comprehensive legal framework. Unlike the previous regulatory model, which was fragmented across several statutes, the new Health Law establishes a more integrated legal framework governing the rights, obligations, professional standards, and responsibilities of medical personnel. This reform reflects the constitutional mandate contained in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which recognizes health as a fundamental right of every citizen and places responsibility upon the State to ensure the availability of accessible, equitable, and quality healthcare services. Accordingly, legal protection should not be interpreted solely as a mechanism for protecting individual professionals but also as a legal instrument that supports the effective functioning of the national healthcare system (Prayuti et al., 2025; Nurchasanah et al., 2025).

The legal framework established under Law Number 17 of 2023 is further strengthened through Government Regulation Number 28 of 2024, which provides implementing provisions regarding healthcare administration, professional practice, institutional responsibilities, and the management of health services. In addition, Minister of Health Regulation Number 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records reinforces legal accountability by requiring proper documentation of healthcare services through an integrated medical record system. Accurate and accountable medical records not only function as clinical documents but also serve as legal evidence supporting professional accountability and protecting both medical personnel and patients in the event of legal disputes. Consequently, Indonesia's current regulatory framework demonstrates that legal protection extends beyond professional immunity and encompasses preventive legal certainty, institutional accountability, and transparency in healthcare delivery.

Previous studies have consistently concluded that the enactment of Law Number 17 of 2023 strengthens the legal position of medical personnel by providing clearer legal norms regarding professional practice. Prayuti et al. (2025) argue that the new legislation provides broader legal guarantees while maintaining professional accountability within healthcare services. Likewise, Widjaja and Sijabat (2025) emphasize that legal protection should only be afforded to medical personnel who perform their professional duties in accordance with applicable professional standards, ethical principles, and statutory provisions. Similarly, Dahlan & Budiarsih (2025) observe that the transformation of Indonesia's health law reflects a broader effort to improve legal certainty, strengthen patients' rights, and clarify the responsibilities of healthcare providers. These findings indicate that legal protection is inseparable from compliance with professional competence, ethical conduct, and statutory obligations.

Rather than creating absolute immunity, the Health Law establishes a balanced legal framework that simultaneously protects medical personnel and safeguards patients' rights. This balance is essential because effective healthcare services depend upon mutual legal certainty between healthcare providers and healthcare recipients. Hermanto et al. (2026) argue that legal protection should be implemented proportionally to ensure fairness for both parties within healthcare relationships. Similarly, studies by Emmanuella (2023) and Liem and Sembiring (2024) demonstrate that legal protection remains closely associated with legal accountability, particularly in cases involving allegations of malpractice or criminal acts against medical personnel. These findings suggest that legal protection should operate within a balanced regulatory framework that promotes professional responsibility while preventing arbitrary legal actions capable of undermining healthcare delivery.

To clarify the contribution of Indonesia's current legal framework, the principal regulatory instruments analysed in this study are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Legal Framework for the Protection of Medical Personnel in Indonesia

Legal Instrument	Primary Scope	Contribution to Public Health
The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia	Constitutional guarantee of the right to health	Establishes the constitutional basis for protecting healthcare services and ensuring access to health

Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health	Rights, obligations, professional standards, and health system governance	Strengthens legal certainty and improves healthcare governance
Government Regulation Number 28 of 2024	Implementation of the Health Law	Provides operational guidance for healthcare administration and professional practice
Minister of Health Regulation Number 24 of 2022 concerning Medical Records	Medical record management and legal documentation	Enhances accountability, transparency, and legal evidence in healthcare services

As shown in Table 1, Indonesia's legal framework adopts a multi-level regulatory approach in which constitutional principles, statutory provisions, implementing regulations, and administrative regulations complement one another. This integrated structure demonstrates that legal protection for medical personnel is intended not only to regulate professional practice but also to strengthen institutional governance, improve accountability, and create legal certainty that ultimately supports the delivery of safe, effective, and sustainable public health services.

3.2. The Contribution of Legal Protection to Ensuring Public Health

Legal protection for medical personnel should not be understood solely as a mechanism for resolving professional disputes but as an essential governance instrument that directly contributes to achieving public health objectives. Public health depends on the availability of competent healthcare professionals who are able to perform their duties independently, responsibly, and in accordance with professional standards. In practice, however, medical personnel often encounter legal uncertainty arising from allegations of malpractice, administrative sanctions, criminal proceedings, or civil liability. Such conditions may encourage defensive medical practice, reduce professional confidence, and ultimately affect the accessibility and quality of healthcare services. Consequently, an effective legal protection framework contributes not only to safeguarding the rights of medical personnel but also to maintaining the continuity and effectiveness of healthcare delivery. This perspective is consistent with the governance approach adopted by the World Health Organization, which recognizes the health workforce as one of the most important pillars of a resilient healthcare system capable of achieving universal health coverage and sustainable public health (WHO, 2023a; WHO, 2023b).

The relationship between legal protection and public health may be understood through the interaction between legal certainty, professional confidence, compliance with professional standards, and patient safety. Medical personnel who perform their duties within a clear legal framework are more likely to exercise professional judgement based on scientific evidence and ethical standards rather than fear of potential litigation. Such legal certainty promotes greater compliance with clinical guidelines, encourages transparent decision-making, and strengthens professional accountability. As a result, healthcare services become safer, more consistent, and more responsive to patients' needs. This finding supports the WHO Global Patient Safety Action Plan, which emphasizes that patient safety depends not only on clinical competence but also on organisational, legal, and institutional environments that enable healthcare professionals to provide safe care (WHO, 2021). Likewise, the OECD (2023b) argues that resilient

healthcare systems require governance arrangements capable of protecting healthcare workers while maintaining accountability and public confidence.

The Indonesian health law reform reflects these international policy directions by establishing a more integrated legal framework governing professional practice and healthcare administration. Law Number 17 of 2023, together with its implementing regulations, provides legal certainty concerning professional responsibilities, healthcare standards, institutional governance, and accountability mechanisms. Rather than creating legal immunity for medical personnel, the reform seeks to balance professional protection with patients' rights through clearer regulatory standards and institutional oversight. This balanced approach is also reflected in recent Indonesian studies, which conclude that legal protection should be implemented proportionally to ensure fairness for both healthcare providers and healthcare recipients while maintaining professional accountability (Prayuti et al., 2025; Widjaja & Sijabat, 2025; Hermanto et al., 2026). Accordingly, legal protection should be interpreted as a preventive legal framework that promotes responsible professional practice instead of merely functioning as a remedial mechanism after disputes occur.

Another important contribution of legal protection concerns the resilience of the health workforce. Healthcare professionals represent strategic human resources whose performance determines the effectiveness of healthcare systems during both routine service delivery and public health emergencies. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that inadequate legal protection, excessive occupational risks, and uncertainty regarding professional liability may weaken workforce resilience and reduce the capacity of healthcare systems to respond effectively to crises (WHO, 2020; Gidengil et al., 2024). Conversely, comprehensive legal protection strengthens professional confidence, improves job security, and encourages healthcare professionals to continue delivering essential services under challenging circumstances. This relationship indicates that legal protection contributes not only to the welfare of individual professionals but also to institutional stability and the long-term sustainability of healthcare systems.

The findings of this study suggest that the contribution of legal protection to public health may be conceptualised as a governance process linking legal certainty with healthcare quality. Legal certainty enables medical personnel to perform their professional duties in accordance with statutory provisions, ethical principles, and professional standards. This condition increases professional confidence and encourages compliance with evidence-based clinical practice, which subsequently improves the quality and safety of healthcare services. Improved healthcare quality strengthens public trust in healthcare institutions, thereby supporting broader public health objectives, including equitable access to healthcare, patient safety, and health system resilience. The conceptual relationship developed in this study is illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Conceptual Relationship between Legal Protection and Public Health

As illustrated in Figure 1, legal protection operates through a sequence of interconnected governance mechanisms rather than functioning as an isolated legal concept. This model extends previous studies that primarily examined legal protection from the perspective of statutory implementation or professional liability by demonstrating that legal certainty also generates broader institutional and public health benefits. Consequently, strengthening legal protection for medical personnel should be regarded as an integral component of health system governance that supports professional accountability, institutional resilience, and the achievement of sustainable public health outcomes.

3.3. Challenges in Strengthening Legal Protection for Medical Personnel

Although Indonesia has established a more comprehensive legal framework through Law Number 17 of 2023 concerning Health and its implementing regulations, the effectiveness of legal protection for medical personnel remains influenced by several structural and institutional challenges. The existence of legal provisions alone does not

automatically ensure effective legal protection if implementation is constrained by inconsistent institutional practices, varying interpretations of legal norms, and limited regulatory coordination. Consequently, the challenge of legal protection extends beyond the enactment of legislation to encompass the capacity of healthcare institutions, regulatory authorities, and professional organizations to implement legal norms consistently while maintaining public accountability. In this context, institutional oversight is important to ensure that the implementation of health regulations remains subject to appropriate accountability and constitutional scrutiny. Legislative oversight mechanisms form part of the broader constitutional framework for examining the exercise of governmental authority and ensuring that public policies are implemented within established legal boundaries (Syaidi, 2025). This finding indicates that legal protection should be viewed as a dynamic governance process requiring continuous legal and institutional development rather than a static regulatory framework.

One of the principal challenges concerns legal uncertainty arising from the interpretation and application of professional standards in medical practice. Medical decision-making frequently involves complex clinical judgments that must be made within limited time and information. Under such circumstances, differences in interpreting professional standards may increase the risk of legal disputes despite medical personnel having acted in good faith and in accordance with accepted clinical procedures. Previous studies have shown that legal protection should be closely linked to compliance with professional standards because legal certainty cannot be separated from professional responsibility and ethical practice (Prayuti et al., 2025; Widjaja & Sijabat, 2025). Therefore, legal protection requires not only clear statutory provisions but also consistent professional guidelines capable of reducing uncertainty in healthcare practice.

Another challenge relates to maintaining an appropriate balance between protecting medical personnel and safeguarding patients' rights. An effective healthcare system should avoid two equally undesirable conditions: excessive legal exposure for healthcare professionals and excessive legal immunity that weakens accountability. This principle reflects a broader concept of legal accountability in which protection from unjust legal consequences should not be interpreted as immunity from responsibility for unlawful conduct. The literature on legal accountability similarly emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between institutional protection and responsibility under applicable legal norms (Tarigan, 2024). Excessive legal exposure may encourage defensive medicine, discourage professional innovation, and reduce the quality of healthcare services. Conversely, disproportionate legal protection may undermine patients' rights and public confidence in healthcare institutions. Hermanto et al. (2026) emphasize that legal protection should be implemented proportionally to ensure fairness for both parties within the therapeutic relationship. Likewise, Dahlan and Budiarsih (2025) argue that Indonesia's health law reform seeks to create a balanced legal framework that simultaneously strengthens professional protection and reinforces patients' rights. Accordingly, proportionality constitutes a fundamental principle in developing an effective legal protection system.

The increasing digitalisation of healthcare services also presents new legal challenges. The implementation of electronic medical records has significantly improved healthcare efficiency, continuity of care, and institutional accountability. Nevertheless, digital transformation introduces legal concerns relating to data accuracy, confidentiality, cybersecurity, and the legal validity of electronic health documentation. Minister of

Health Regulation Number 24 of 2022 establishes the legal framework for medical records in Indonesia; however, its successful implementation depends upon institutional readiness, technological infrastructure, and the competence of healthcare professionals in managing digital information. Reliable medical documentation not only supports clinical decision-making but also provides legal evidence that protects both medical personnel and patients in the event of disputes. Consequently, strengthening digital health governance has become an essential component of legal protection in contemporary healthcare systems.

International experience further demonstrates that legal protection should be integrated into broader health workforce governance. WHO emphasizes that resilient health systems require legal certainty, occupational safety, professional support, and institutional preparedness to maintain healthcare services during routine conditions as well as public health emergencies (WHO, 2020; WHO, 2023b). Similarly, OECD (2023b) highlights that sustainable healthcare systems depend upon governance mechanisms capable of protecting healthcare professionals while ensuring transparency, accountability, and service quality. These international perspectives indicate that legal protection should be developed through coordinated legal, institutional, and managerial reforms rather than relying solely on legislative change. Therefore, Indonesia's legal reform should be accompanied by strengthened institutional capacity, continuous professional development, effective regulatory supervision, and integrated governance to ensure that legal protection contributes meaningfully to public health.

The major implementation challenges identified in this study are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. Challenges and Strategic Responses in Strengthening Legal Protection for Medical Personnel

Challenges	Potential Impact	Strategic Response
Inconsistent interpretation of legal and professional standards	Legal uncertainty and defensive medical practice	Harmonisation of legal interpretation and professional guidelines
Balancing the rights of patients and medical personnel	Reduced public trust or weakened professional confidence	Proportional legal protection supported by effective accountability mechanisms
Digitalisation of medical records and healthcare services	Data security risks and legal uncertainty regarding electronic documentation	Strengthening digital health governance and institutional capacity
Institutional and regulatory coordination	Inconsistent implementation of legal provisions	Integrated coordination among government, healthcare institutions, and professional organisations
Health workforce resilience	Declining service quality during crises	Sustainable legal protection supported by workforce development and institutional preparedness

As presented in Table 2, the effectiveness of legal protection depends upon the interaction between legal certainty, institutional governance, professional accountability, and healthcare management. These findings demonstrate that strengthening legal protection requires an integrated approach combining regulatory reform, institutional capacity building, professional competence, and effective governance. Accordingly, legal protection should be positioned as a strategic component of health system resilience

capable of improving healthcare quality while ensuring the long-term sustainability of public health.

3.4. Strengthening Legal Protection to Ensure Sustainable Public Health

The findings of this study demonstrate that legal protection for medical personnel should be positioned as an integral component of public health governance rather than merely as a legal mechanism for resolving disputes arising from medical practice. The analysis of Indonesia's health law reform, supported by international policy documents and recent scholarly literature, indicates that effective legal protection contributes to strengthening institutional governance, improving professional confidence, and enhancing the resilience of the health workforce. These contributions ultimately influence the quality, continuity, and sustainability of healthcare services, which constitute essential elements in achieving public health objectives. Consequently, the effectiveness of legal protection should be assessed not only by the existence of statutory regulations but also by its capacity to create a legal environment that enables medical personnel to perform their professional duties responsibly, independently, and in accordance with professional standards.

One important finding emerging from this study is that legal certainty constitutes the foundation upon which other components of healthcare governance are developed. Legal certainty enables medical personnel to exercise professional judgment without unnecessary concern regarding inconsistent legal interpretation, while simultaneously reinforcing compliance with ethical principles, professional standards, and statutory obligations. Such conditions encourage transparent decision-making, strengthen institutional accountability, and reduce the likelihood of legal disputes arising from uncertainty rather than professional negligence. In this context, legal protection serves a preventive rather than merely corrective function. Instead of responding only after disputes occur, preventive legal protection establishes governance conditions that minimise legal uncertainty and promote responsible healthcare practice. This preventive perspective is consistent with international policy directions that recognise legal and institutional support as fundamental requirements for developing resilient healthcare systems capable of responding effectively to evolving public health challenges (WHO, 2023a; OECD, 2023b).

The analysis also demonstrates that sustainable legal protection requires collaboration among multiple stakeholders rather than relying exclusively on legislative reform. Government institutions, healthcare facilities, professional organisations, educational institutions, and medical personnel each possess complementary responsibilities in ensuring that legal norms are implemented effectively. Government institutions are responsible for establishing coherent regulatory policies and ensuring regulatory consistency. Healthcare institutions should develop internal governance systems that support legal compliance, risk management, and professional accountability. Professional organisations contribute by strengthening ethical standards, professional competence, and continuing professional development, while educational institutions play an important role in preparing future healthcare professionals to understand both clinical responsibilities and legal obligations. At the individual level, medical personnel remain responsible for maintaining professional competence, complying with applicable legal standards, and preserving public trust through ethical and accountable practice.

Therefore, strengthening legal protection requires coordinated institutional governance supported by continuous professional development and effective regulatory oversight.

Based on the synthesis of legal materials, policy documents, and previous studies, this research proposes a governance model illustrating the contribution of legal protection to sustainable public health. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasise statutory implementation or professional liability, the proposed model positions legal protection as the starting point of an integrated governance process linking legal certainty with institutional resilience and public health outcomes. The conceptual model developed in this study is presented in Figure 2.

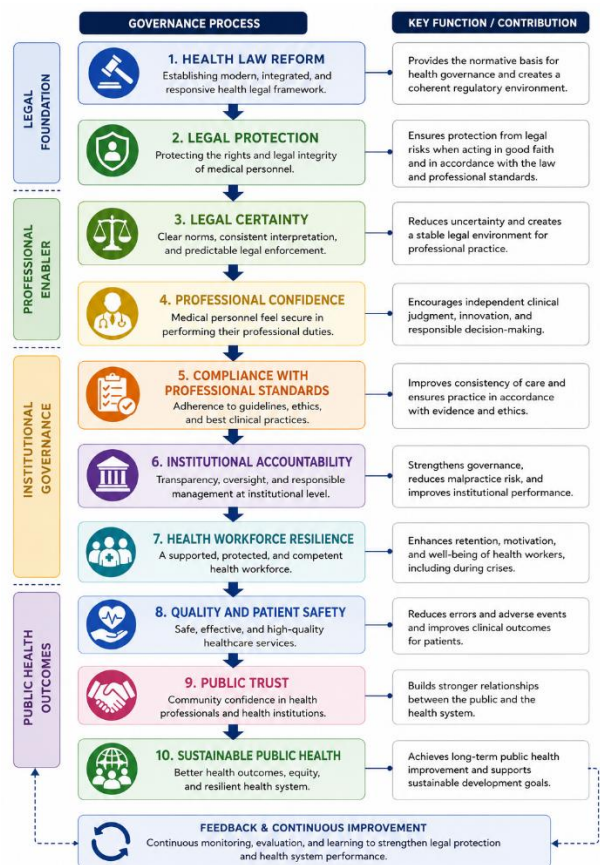


Figure 2. Governance Model of Legal Protection for Sustainable Public Health

As illustrated in Figure 2, legal protection operates as the initial driver of an interconnected governance process rather than as an isolated legal instrument. Health law reform establishes the normative foundation for legal protection, which subsequently creates legal certainty for medical personnel. Legal certainty enhances professional confidence and encourages compliance with professional standards, thereby strengthening institutional accountability within healthcare organisations. Effective institutional governance contributes to the resilience of the health workforce, improves the quality and safety of healthcare services, and reinforces public trust in healthcare institutions. Ultimately, these interconnected elements support the achievement of sustainable public health. Accordingly, the principal contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that legal protection should be conceptualised as a governance

instrument that integrates legal, institutional, and public health dimensions into a coherent analytical framework. This perspective extends previous research by explaining that strengthening legal protection is not solely a matter of improving statutory regulation but also of developing governance mechanisms capable of sustaining healthcare quality and advancing long-term public health objectives.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that legal protection for medical personnel is not merely a legal safeguard against professional liability but a strategic governance instrument that supports the achievement of sustainable public health. The analysis demonstrates that Indonesia's health law reform contributes to strengthening legal certainty, which enhances professional confidence, encourages compliance with professional standards, reinforces institutional accountability, improves health workforce resilience, and ultimately promotes healthcare quality, patient safety, public trust, and sustainable public health outcomes. The novelty of this study lies in the proposed governance model that conceptualises legal protection as an integrated mechanism linking legal, institutional, and public health dimensions, thereby extending previous studies that primarily focused on statutory implementation or professional liability. Accordingly, strengthening legal protection should be positioned as a central component of health system governance to ensure resilient healthcare services and sustainable public health.

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