

5 December 2023

Dr Lynne Coulson Barr
Health Ombudsman
Office of the Health Ombudsman
Queensland

Ms Heather Edwards
State Manager -- Queensland
Ahpra

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By email: [REDACTED]

Subject: AMA Qld Council recommendations for improved regulatory processes

Dear Dr Coulson Barr and Ms Edwards

AMA Queensland has been contacted by several members over the past year in increasing states of distress due to receipt of notifications from Australian Government regulators or involvement in associated regulatory processes. Relevant agencies have included the Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO), Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) and Professional Services Review (PSR).

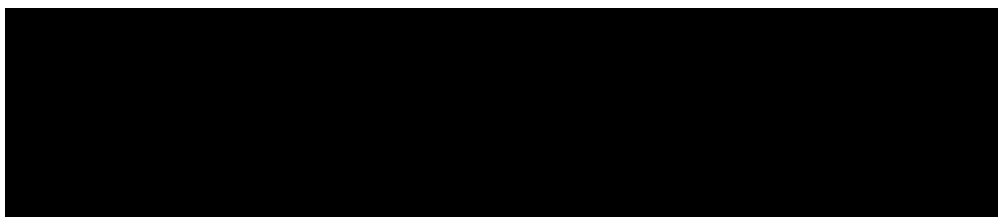
AMA Queensland Council and general members have also expressed alarm at Ahpra's recent report documenting at least 16 practitioner suicides in similar circumstances over the past 4 years. These issues were again raised at the AMA Queensland Council's last meeting on 10 November 2023.

In response, the Council resolved to formally refer several matters to our Federal AMA Council and to advise relevant regulators of these concerns and associated recommendations. Specifically, Council agreed there was an urgent need for improved supports for practitioners subject to regulatory processes, including:

- extension of the Health Management Team model to all practitioners (not just those with health impairments or otherwise assessed as at risk of self-harm), including allocation of a single case manager for all practitioners subject to a notification or other regulatory process and possible use of mentors/practitioners with lived experience of regulatory processes; and
- development of a practitioner portal so practitioners subject to regulatory action can track the progress of their matter.

We respectfully submit these recommendations to you for your agency's consideration and note some of these issues were discussed just this morning during a meeting among AMA, Ahpra and Medical Board of Australia representatives. We look forward to further engagement on these matters and are open to meet at your convenience.

Yours sincerely



Dr Maria Boulton
President
AMA Queensland

Dr Brett Dale
Chief Executive Officer
AMA Queensland