



## **AMACDT and medical college trainee representatives discuss the review of the AMC standards for assessment and accreditation of specialist medical programs**

The first AMA Trainee Forum of the year was held on 14 March 2024. AMA Council of Doctors in Training (AMACDT) Chair, Dr Hannah Szewczyk, facilitated a discussion on *the review of the Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Specialist Medical Programs by the Australian Medical Council (the standards)*, with trainee chairs/representatives from Specialist Medical Colleges attending.

### **Reflections and Discussion**

Periodic reviews of *the standards* present a valuable opportunity for trainees to provide tangible feedback and advice based on their experiences with specialist medical training programs. *The standards* regulate a broad range of matters across the entire spectrum of trainee experience. The anticipated review of *the standards* in 2024 will be a focus of AMACDT advocacy throughout the year, with this trainee forum informing AMACDT's upcoming work on the issue.

While experiences and concerns differ between each college, trainee committee chairs broadly agreed that areas of focus for the review of *the standards* should include exam feedback, trainee wellbeing, inclusivity of training, flexible training, trainee representation on councils and committees, and financial transparency.

Trainee committee chairs agreed there is a need to ensure that standards and policies are well formulated and communicated, and effectively enforced in an accountable manner. This was particularly pertinent to standards and policies relating to access to flexible training, trainee wellbeing, and bullying and harassment. It was also acknowledged that implementation of amendments or additions to the current standards could have a financial impact on colleges, with increased costs likely be passed onto trainees themselves.

### **Areas discussed and relevant standards:**

- Trainee involvement in college governance (standard 1.1)
- Reconsideration, review and appeals processes (standard 1.3)
- Impact of dissuading subspecialisation for some training areas (standard 3.1)
- Relevance and benefits of stringent research requirements (standard 3.2)
- Flexibility of training and examination, particularly for parents or expecting parents (standard 3.4, 5.1)
- Leave and continuity of access to leave throughout training (standard 3.4)
- Teaching and learning methods, including increased reliance on programmatic assessment (standard 4.2)
- Cost of training and financial transparency (standards 5.2, 7.3)
- Exam feedback, including timeliness and detail provided (standard 5.3)

- Assistance for trainees who are not meeting outcomes early in the training process (standard 5.3)
- Wellbeing, including sexual harassment and bullying (standard 7.4)
- Equity, inclusion and diversity concerns including cultural and gender sensitivities in training (multiple standards)
- Digital health and environmental sustainability (not currently included in the standards)

**The following Medical College Trainee committee chairs/representatives attended the Forum:**

- Australian Medical Association Council of Doctors in Training
- Australian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians
- Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
- Royal Australasian College of Physicians
- Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
- Royal Australasian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
- Royal College of Pathologists of Australia
- Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
- College of Intensive Care Medicine
- Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons

**Apologies:**

- Australasian College for Emergency Medicine
- Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists
- Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists

**Previous AMA Trainee Forum communiques:**

- [COVID-19 and its Impact on Specialty Training 1 June 2020](#)
- [Examination Processes 11 Aug 2020](#)
- [Contingency Planning for Exam Technical Failures 19 October 2020](#)
- [Best Practice in Trainee Representation, Engagement and Communication 28 Jan 2021](#)
- [College Assessment April 2021](#)
- [Costs of Training July 2021](#)
- [Processes for selection into training 26 October 2021](#)
- [Training through the pandemic—lessons learnt and the way forward in 2022 7 February 2022](#)
- [Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Trainees Progress Through Training to Fellowship 28 April 2022](#)
- [AMACDT and Medical College Trainee Representatives discuss College Initiatives to Support Flexible Training February 2023](#)
- [AMA Trainee Forum on College Initiatives to Support Women in Healthcare Leadership May 2023](#)

The AMACDT Trainee Forum is designed to increase collaboration between Specialist Medical College Trainee Committees and enhance cross specialty communication. If you have any feedback or questions, please contact us at [cdt.chair@ama.com.au](mailto:cdt.chair@ama.com.au)

The AMACDT, chaired by Dr Hannah Szewczyk, represents medical trainees throughout Australia and advocates for equitable and safe outcomes for trainees and their patients.