



MEDIA RELEASE

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Trusted reporting systems and accountability needed to tackle racism in healthcare

Improved accountability and systems to ensure doctors who experience racism are supported in a safe and trusted environment are needed to tackle racism in Australia's healthcare system, the Australian Medical Association said today.

AMA President Professor Steve Robson said the results of the 2023 National Medical Training Survey showed 54 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainee doctors reported having experienced or witnessed bullying, discrimination and harassment, including racism, compared with 21 per cent of all trainees nationally.

Research has also found that international medical graduates frequently report high levels of racism, discrimination, and prejudice from patients and colleagues, including microaggressions, and that racist behaviour is directed at doctors from second or third generation migrant families even though they were born and have grown up in Australia.

"It is distressing to hear about the racism being experienced by doctors in Australia," Professor Robson said.

"Racism — which is unacceptable in all its forms — can have terrible impacts on individuals, families and communities."

Professor Robson said the [AMA's Anti-racism position statement](#), released today, calls for everyone in the healthcare system, including leaders, to take responsibility for tackling racism and ensuring systems are in place to deal with racism in a culturally safe way.

"We need to act as allies and advocates to support professionals who experience racism," Professor Robson said.

"This requires a commitment from everyone, including those in executive and senior leadership roles, to create systems and processes that ensure individuals and groups are held responsible for their decisions and actions and ensure people who experience racism have access to reporting systems that are trusted and safe."

Professor Robson said cultural safety and racial equity must be embedded in governance and leadership processes and should be guided and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other culturally and racially marginalised people.

"We know that systems that are informed by those who are impacted by an issue are more effective.

"Doctors should also be aware of the codes, guidelines and policies that regulators have set condemning discrimination and racism; their obligations under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law to provide healthcare that is culturally safe and free from racism; and what is reportable to Ahpra."

Professor Robson said the AMA was taking a strong leadership role and working on strategies to tackle racism in the healthcare sector, through its Equity Inclusion and Diversity Committee, Taskforce of Indigenous Health, and International Medical Graduate Working Group.

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[Read the AMA's Anti-racism position statement](#)

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