

The role of the AMA in trainee disputes with Colleges

2017

1. The AMA supports the role of the Colleges in setting training standards, accrediting training sites, and training, assessing and examining candidates against College standards within the broader accreditation framework established by the Australian Medical Council (AMC).
2. The AMA supports the role of the AMC in assessing and accrediting the specialist medical education, training and professional development programs run by the Colleges, and addressing complaints that are systemic in the conduct of a College training program. The AMC Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Specialist Medical Education Programs provide an excellent basis to assess college processes more broadly, and complaint processes more specifically, and to make recommendations for improvement as appropriate.
3. From time to time the AMA receives questions and/or complaints about training programs and/or decisions and/or employment conditions. These complaints may come from trainees, trainee organisations and other stakeholders.
4. The Federal AMA has a valuable and influential role to play in working productively with other stakeholders, leveraging relationships to ensure a quality training environment, and more specifically, encouraging best practice in dispute resolution and complaints management. The Federal AMA will often choose to act as a mediator on behalf of trainees and/or supervisors where it believes the principles of transparency, fairness and/or natural justice have not been upheld.
5. Equally, State AMAs play an important role in providing confidential advice to its members, and assisting trainees and supervisors, to manage training and/or industrial disputes. This is a valuable and tangible benefit to members and core business for State AMAs.
6. State AMAs may also play a valuable role in providing counselling and support to trainees and supervisors who have raised concerns. This may include providing phone support, peer mentoring, and/or assistance programs.
7. The AMA can also play a role in providing trainees and supervisors with training and/or materials to help them avoid and/or resolve training and industrial disputes wherever possible. This includes providing training and/or resources on general issues such as discrimination, performance management and communication skills, as well as training and/or resources on specific issues such as complaints mechanisms and appeals processes.
8. The AMA supports a national and ongoing process to collect and review feedback from trainees, supervisors and Colleges on the quality of their training experience, including complaints and appeals processes, as an enabler of best practice in this area.