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4 December 2020

Committee Secretary
Education, Employment and Small Business Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
Via email: eesbc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary,

Thank you for providing AMA Queensland with opportunity to contribute further to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020.

The practice of medicine is not only a physically demanding profession, it is also mentally demanding. Every doctor is exposed to unfortunate sights and outcomes for patients. Therefore, we believe that all AHPRA registered doctors should be covered under the new Workers' Compensation Amendment Bill 2020. Below is a case study of how an ear, nose and throat specialist, who does not work in the areas listed in the Bill, encountered a traumatising event.

Case study

A non-emergency specialist was witness to a patient who was brought into hospital after attempting to commit suicide on a railway line. This patient had a crushed pelvis and significant internal injuries. The surgeon who does not normally work in emergency or intensive care witnessed the patient die and was left with this traumatising image for years after.

There are many other Queensland doctors who do not work in the units listed in the Bill witnessing these kinds of traumatising events. Below are two examples of how a doctor not working in the areas listed in the Bill may suffer from PTSD:

1. Doctors working in rural and remote areas

Doctors working in rural and remote areas may be prone to developing PTSD due to being overworked and under-resourced.¹ While this may not cause PTSD alone, the constant stress, the feeling of isolation and the sight of traumatising events can undoubtedly lead to PTSD.

2. Doctors in Training

Doctors in training can also be prone to developing PTSD through bullying, discrimination and sexual harassment. According to AMA Queensland's Resident Hospital Health Check 2020, 28% and 35% experienced and witnessed bullying, 18% and 23% experienced and witnessed discrimination, and 6% and 10%

¹ Lazarus, A. "Traumatized by Practice: PTSD in Physicians." <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25807606/>

experienced and witnessed sexual harassment. Of those people who experienced or witnessed bullying, discrimination or sexual harassment, only 29% reported it and only 65% felt that when reported, the incident was adequately dealt with.²

AMA Queensland wishes to emphasise the importance of protecting our doctors as doctors are also patients. Making the process of a PTSD claim as easy and streamlined as possible can reduce that added stress associated with making a PTSD claim.

Thank you for providing AMA Queensland with the opportunity to provide feedback on this important issue. If you require further information or assistance in this matter, please contact Mr Jeff Allen, AMA Queensland Policy Manager on 3872 2262.

Yours sincerely



Dr Brett Dale
Chief Executive Officer
AMA Queensland



Professor Chris Perry
President
AMA Queensland

² AMA Queensland, "2020 Resident Hospital Health Check survey."
<https://qld.ama.com.au/advocacy/resident-hospital-health-check>