

## Question on Notice

No. 1395

Asked on 14 November 2023

**MR S BENNETT** ASKED MINISTER FOR HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND AMBULANCE SERVICES AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN (HON S FENTIMAN)—

### QUESTION

With reference to a recent review of Junior Doctors in the Queensland Health System by the Australian Medical Association Queensland revealing that 100 percent of Bundaberg Hospital Junior Doctors were concerned that there might be negative consequences for reporting bullying, discrimination, and sexual harassment—

Will the Minister undertake to review whether a culture of bullying and intimidation is present within Bundaberg Hospital management?

### ANSWER

I am advised that Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service (Wide Bay HHS) have a zero tolerance of bullying, discrimination, and sexual harassment in the workplace and regularly promotes the clear and confidential process for anyone to raise any concerns including bullying, sexual harassment, or discrimination. I have asked the Hospital and Health Service to work with staff to build a positive and supportive culture.

Wide Bay HHS continue to encourage doctors to share any issues and are committed to fully addressing all concerns raised. In the recent Working for Queensland survey;

- 40 per cent of staff responded with a 12 per cent improvement in employee engagement achieved, and there was a 6 per cent reduction in the number of staff experiencing bullying.
- 93 per cent of staff said they had not experienced sexual harassment.
- Fair and equitable treatment and employee wellbeing seen as being valued demonstrated the highest areas of improvement of between 13 to 16 per cent, compared to 2022.

Bundaberg Hospital is in a unique and privileged position to be able to enhance the wellbeing of doctors in training through having a dedicated Medical Education and Wellbeing Registrar. This has resulted in a number of initiatives to support doctors in training by improving their experience in the clinical environment, enabling tailored education opportunities and personalised career progression.

In July 2023 the Wide Bay HHS Workforce Strategy 2023-2026 was released and Nurture; Strengthen, and Future Proof our Workforce are key themes for the HHS.

Medical Officer Wellbeing has been identified as a high priority, and in the last three months significant bodies of work have been progressed at both state and local levels. Surveys such as the Resident Hospital Health Check, together with the Working for Queensland Survey and the Medical Board of Australia's Medical Training Survey, are instrumental in the identification of workplace issues at local, state, and national levels

and provide the opportunity to make improvements. All HHSs across the state have been working proactively to engage with junior doctors and implement a range of wellbeing initiatives including collaborating with junior doctor societies.

The Department of Health has established a statewide Medical Workforce Wellbeing Reference Group which is chaired by the Chief Medical Officer to promote a positive workplace culture that prioritises the health and wellbeing of medical practitioners and medical students. This reference group includes representation from the AMAQ Committee of Doctors in Training. The group convened a Strategy Workshop on 6 October 2023 to identify new ways to better support the wellbeing of the Queensland Health medical workforce, particularly at an organisational level. The outcomes of this workshop will guide the group's ongoing priorities into the new year. The group is also conducting an environmental scan and research in relation to wellbeing initiatives offered in other jurisdictions within Australia with view to develop further programs in Queensland.

The Department of Health has also partnered with Mater Education Limited to develop an online wellbeing education and training program designed specifically for junior doctors working within Queensland Health facilities. Having sought feedback from junior doctors the team is currently making improvements to the Mind(re)set program. The proposed changes include real-life reflections as well as broader discussions regarding relevant supports for junior doctors. Adaption and adoption of significant learnings from a limited body of work in two HHS that have implemented Medical Wellbeing Registrars (WBHHS, CQHHS).