



# National Medical Workforce Strategy 2021–2031



Investing in our medical workforce to meet Australia's health needs

## MEDICAL WORKFORCE ADVISORY COLLABORATION

Communique – 7 February 2025

The Medical Workforce Advisory Collaboration (MWAC) met on 7 February 2025 in Canberra. Associate Professor Mathew Coleman and Ms Penny Shakespeare co-chaired the meeting.

Ms Natalie Bekis (Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care) updated the committee on the NMWS Evaluation Foundations Project Reference Group established under MWAC. The reference group will advise the Department and an independent consultant on evaluating the National Medical Workforce Strategy 2021-2031 (NMWS) throughout its term and beyond.

Members gave updates on organisational initiatives that align with the NMWS. The Australian Medical Council (AMC) presented on the AMC's work to review the Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Specialist Medical Programs; and work to enhance assessment processes for International Medical Graduates. The Victorian Department of Health presented on the Victorian Government's program providing 800 grants to support new entrants to general practice specialty training, and the Victorian Basic Paediatrics Training Consortium to increase rural training opportunities.

MWAC discussed workplace culture and cultural safety, in the context of the NMWS cross-cutting themes of improving cultural safety and improving doctor wellbeing. This was informed by presentations on:

- First Nations Medical Workforce, by the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA)
- 'A Better Culture' project, by the CEO of 'A Better Culture'
- *Every Doctor Every Setting (EDES) Action Plan*, by the Australian Medical Association, National Doctors Health & Wellbeing Leadership Alliance.

MWAC and presenters identified actions to improve workplace culture and cultural safety, including:

- Organisations better utilising codes of conduct, embedding mentoring programs and supporting First Nations workforce to influence in health leadership positions.
- Organisations signing up to the EDES Action Plan and implementing specific actions to improve culture in their workplaces.



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The Australian Department of Health and Aged Care presented psychiatry supply and demand modelling with representatives of the Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists in attendance. RANZCP and MWAC identified areas of opportunity to increase and enhance the psychiatry workforce pipeline, including:

- Addressing workplace culture and retention
- Lowering barriers to entry into specialty training, including for First Nations people
- Supporting more opportunities for training and supervision, particularly in the private sector
- Recognising and encouraging a more generalist specialist workforce including through broadening scope of practice and models of care across the health workforce.

These actions and opportunities will inform MWAC's advice to the Health Workforce Taskforce, and the work of the Clinical Supervision Working Group and the Generalism Working Group. MWAC member organisations and specialist medical colleges are encouraged to consider what actions they can initiate to progress the priorities of the NMWS and provide updates at future meetings.

The next MWAC meeting is proposed for mid-June 2025 in Melbourne. For further information and enquiries please contact: [MWAC@health.gov.au](mailto:MWAC@health.gov.au).