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SUPPORT NEEDED FOR MEDICAL PARENTS IN TRAINING
AMA Position Statement on Medical parents and prevocational and vocational training

The AMA is challenging the medical profession and Government to change how we support parents in medical training on International Women’s Day.

Releasing the *AMA Position Statement on Medical parents and prevocational and vocational training*, Chair of the AMA Equity Inclusion and Diversity Committee, Dr Helen McArdle, said that the medical profession had made considerable advances in promoting the careers of women doctors. Still, more can be done, especially in supporting parents and carers.

“The AMA is proud of the achievements of women doctors, and we pay tribute to the profession for its approach towards achieving fairness and gender equality,” Dr McArdle said.

“However, there is still a lot to do within the medical profession to achieve gender equity and support women to continue with their careers on the same trajectory as men, especially after giving birth.

“Within the medical profession, there remains an entrenched culture that women will assume child-rearing responsibilities.

“As a profession, we need to ensure women have safe and encouraging workplaces and rewarding careers as doctors by supporting parental leave among a suite of other measures.” Dr McArdle said.

The AMA is calling on the Government to commit to and work with the medical profession to support parents in medical training by providing funding to increase access to:

- equal and reasonable paid parental and carers leave entitlements for each parent to empower men to seek an equal share of the parenting responsibility;
- flexible work arrangements for each parent, so that women can participate in the workforce without comparative disadvantage;
- domestic and family violence support (including ten days paid leave); and
- flexible and affordable childcare so that parents can return to the workplace.

AMA NSW President, Dr Danielle McMullen, said that committing to providing equal and reasonable paid parental and carer’s leave entitlements for each parent is one small step Governments can take to support women to return to the workforce.

“In NSW, the AMA and State Government have formed a gender equity working group to look at how to provide public health sector employees with equal access to paid parental leave,” Dr Danielle McMullen said.

“The commitment to work with the medical profession made by the NSW Government is an essential and positive step towards achieving gender equity in the workplace.

“Periods of pregnancy and parenthood are a common source of gender-based bias and discrimination.

“Within the medical profession, policies to support parental leave at an employer and college level are highly variable.

AMA's Position Statement on Medical parents and prevocational and vocational training provides guidance on strategies to support parenting alongside medical training to promote gender equity in all aspects of medicine and is available here

- <https://ama.com.au/articles/medical-parents-and-prevocational-and-vocational-training>

Background:

- In 2020, 55 per cent of medical trainees who completed the [2020 NSW Hospital Health Check](#) rated their access to maternity leave (14 weeks paid, up to 52 weeks unpaid) as very good/good compared to 67 per cent in 2019.
- Only one in three medical trainees rated their access to paternity leave (one week paid, one week unpaid) as very good/good (down from 53 per cent in 2019).
- Almost 40 per cent of medical trainees rated their access to paternity leave as very poor/poor, compared to 27 per cent in 2019.

- In 2019 in Western Australia, 22 per cent of trainees who completed the [2019 AMAWA Hospital Health Check](#) feared for their job security if they took parental leave.
- Thirty-seven per cent reported having access to breastfeeding facilities.
- Ninety-four per cent said they wanted to access part-time training as part of their specialist training program.

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