

**Australian Medical Association Limited**  
**ABN 37 008 426 793**

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604  
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499  
 Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



**Doctors are also patients and entitled to same natural justice**  
*AMA’s submission urges impartial regulation and reporting of medical practitioners*

The Australian Medical Association (AMA) made a submission to the Senate inquiry into administration of registration and notifications of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), saying doctors have grave concerns about mandatory reporting requirements.

AMA President Dr Omar Khorshid said, “Practitioners are also patients and should have equal rights to access confidential, high-quality medical treatment – just as their patients do.

“Australia’s medical practitioners desperately need legislation that does not actively discourage them from seeking medical treatment when they need it.

The release of the AMA’s submission came on Friday last week as the Australian medical community raised awareness of mental health issues for medical practitioners on [Crazysocks4docs](#) day.

“It is vital that the wellbeing and state of mind of doctors should be at the forefront of any investigations by AHPRA,” said Dr Khorshid.

Concerns about some of the recent developments with the National Scheme include a 2019 announcement by Health Ministers of new policy principles, including the direction that AHPRA and the National Boards must give at least equal weight to the expectations of the public, as well as professional peers.

The AMA agrees that the protection of the public is a critical role of the scheme, but this is already achieved under the current arrangements.

Dr Khorshid said, “The concept of public confidence is not always clear cut and often depends on perspectives. We need to ensure that regulation upholds sound medical and expert advice in any decision making.”

“There have been some positive changes to the National Scheme, with earlier clinical input into complaints, improved risk analysis and a vexatious complaints framework. But there is still much more to be done.

“It is difficult to comprehend for example, that medical practitioners who are named in a tribunal procedure are offered less protection from discrimination than a person who has served a prison term.”

The AMA believes that the National Scheme needs to uphold the principles of natural justice for all stakeholders and has been expressing its concerns about the potential for medical practitioners to suffer discrimination as a result of being named in a previous tribunal proceeding.

See the AMA’s submission here: <https://ama.com.au/articles/ama-submission-senate-inquiry-administration-registration-and-notifications-ahpra>

Ends

10 June 2021

CONTACT: Media team 0427 209 753  
[media@ama.com.au](mailto:media@ama.com.au)

Follow the AMA Media on Twitter: [http://twitter.com/ama\\_media](http://twitter.com/ama_media)

Follow the AMA President on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/amapresident>

Like the AMA on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/AustralianMedicalAssociation>