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**Nepean doctor wins AMA’s Doctor in Training Award for advocacy**

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A Nepean hospital doctor, who played a key role in establishing the annual Hospital Health Check survey and in introducing an online claiming system for unrostered overtime in NSW, has won the Australian Medical Association’s Doctor in Training of the Year Award.

Dr Sanjay Hettige was presented the award by AMA President, Dr Omar Khorshid at the association’s gala dinner in Sydney last night following the first day of the AMA’s annual conference.

Dr Khorshid told the dinner the AMA is committed to fostering the next generation of Australia’s medical leaders with the award recognising the outstanding achievements of doctors in training in leadership and advocacy and encouraging the development of leadership skills.

Dr Hettige, who received the award for his outstanding contribution to leadership and advocacy, has been a member of the AMA since he was a medical student and an advocate for doctors-in-training in NSW throughout his medical career, Dr Khorshid said.

“He served as the NSW representative of the AMA Council of Doctors in Training from 2016–2018 and played a key role in establishing the annual Hospital Health Check survey.

“Currently a radiology registrar at Nepean Hospital, Dr Hettige is committed to improving working conditions for all doctors-in-training. Through the AMA (NSW) Hospital Health Check survey, he played a significant role in helping doctors-in-training claim for unrostered overtime.

“And as a direct result of his meetings with the Health Minister, NSW Health introduced an online claiming system in NSW. In 2017, 11 per cent doctors-in-training reported they were paid for all of the unrostered overtime they worked. By 2021, that figure had risen to 74 per cent.

“With levels of burn out and bullying increasing during the pandemic, Dr Hettige is now focused on introducing measures such as setting fatigue standards and establishing a Bullying Forum.”

Dr Khorshid said each nominee should take with them a sense of achievement and personal pride that stems from their excellent work as an advocate for doctors in training and improved health care outcomes.

The other nominees for the award were:

Dr Ashna Basu  
 Dr Brad Macdonald

Dr Sanjay Hettige  
 Dr Tahnee Bridson

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