

Friday, 24 March 2023

UK report provides more evidence of the strain Australia's GPs are under

Only 8 per cent of Australian GPs say they enjoy their work and do not have any symptoms of burnout, and more than half of Australia's GPs surveyed said their job was extremely/very stressful according to a new report out of the UK.

Australian Medical Association President Professor Steve Robson said the crisis facing general practice was reflected in the results of the UK Health Foundation report: [Stressed and Overworked](#) and if something is not done Australia could face a further exodus of GPs.

Less than half of Australia's GPs are 'extremely' or 'very satisfied' with practising medicine, with this number having fallen from over 60 per cent in 2019.

"While this report is very much focused on the impact of the survey results for UK GPs, it provides further evidence of just how difficult things are for our GPs," Professor Robson said.

"It's clear Australia's GPs are facing increased burnout from the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, growing patient demand, and increasing financial and sustainability issues. This will only get worse if action isn't taken."

The Health Foundation worked with the internationally respected Commonwealth Fund to survey primary care physicians across 10 high-income countries between February and September last year.

"Our GPs who worked so tirelessly during the pandemic, are still seeing more patients than ever and many are feeling burnt out," Professor Robson said.

"The results of this survey are no surprise given how difficult it has been to maintain a practice in the face of rising costs, poor Medicare indexation and workforce issues. The most recent Report on Government Services released by the Productivity Commission revealed that government expenditure per person on general practice had fallen in real terms despite growing demand and the increased complexity of GP services.

"They reflect Australian research by the RACGP that found concerning themes relating to general practice sustainability, such as unsustainable workload, burnout, mounting administrative burden and inadequate remuneration."

"The [AMA's Plan to Modernise Medicare](#) campaign includes a seven-point plan outlining practical and implementable solutions to help GPs who are under enormous pressure.

"While we have seen a welcome commitment of nearly \$1b over 4 years to support general practice from the federal government, along with the recommendations of the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce, this does not make up for the years of neglect from successive governments that have left general practice in a parlous state. This is why we are calling for the May budget to be a health budget."

Contact: AMA Media: +61 427 209 753 | media@ama.com.au

Follow the AMA Media on Twitter: twitter.com/ama_media

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

Like the AMA on Facebook facebook.com/AustralianMedicalAssociation