

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 3 August 2023

Breaking down the barriers to achieving gender equity in healthcare leadership

Australian Medical Association leaders will meet today with Monash University's Advancing Women in Healthcare Leadership (AWHL) team, to present progress on a national partnership in breaking down the barriers that prevent women taking on leadership roles.

AMA state and territory leaders will join federation leaders to progress work to achieve gender equity for women and diversity at the AMA and across the sector.

The workshop will set priorities to inform an action plan, implementation, and evaluation strategy to support women to take on leadership and representative positions within and beyond the AMA.

AMA President Professor Steve Robson said the AMA was committed to achieving its gender diversity targets by 2024.

"Today's workshop will further guide us as we work to deliver on our promise to drive gender equity for women across the AMA and beyond, and it has enormous support in the federation, as demonstrated by the turnout to this important workshop," Professor Robson said.

Workshop lead and AWHL's Chief Investigator, Professor Helena Teede said one in four women in the Australian workforce work in health and social care.

"Women make up the majority of the healthcare workforce yet are significantly underrepresented in healthcare leadership," Professor Teede said.

"This presents both a social justice workforce issue and perpetuates inequity in healthcare delivery and outcomes. Greater diversity in leadership improves equity in the workforce and optimises health outcomes."

Professor Teede said themes that emerged through research, including evidence synthesis, interviews and an AMA survey, would be addressed in the workshop, including unconscious bias.

"We will be busting key myths such as the misperception that affirmative action undermines merit or the 'best person for the job' and rethinking the notion of merit, which is often applied to legitimise and perpetuate privilege, entrenching gender inequity," Professor Teede said.

"Building on this work, our team will facilitate the AMA through the evidence generated to date on what works, what matters, what implements and what impacts. We will partner with the AMA in their priority setting process on evidence-based interventions for delivering and championing gender equity outcomes at the AMA and more broadly across the medical profession."

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Professor Robson said the evidence for the benefits of having women in leadership roles was clear.

“The evidence is crystal clear that organisations increasing their share of women in leadership perform better overall and we are committed to increasing women’s representation in the AMA leadership and representation structure and promoting this across the medical profession.

“I look forward to advancing the priorities set by today’s workshop at the AMA as we strive to support women in leadership and to reach our overall gender diversity target of women holding 50 per cent of federal AMA representative positions and lead and advocate for equity more broadly.”

Read the [AMA’s Diversity report – Gender 2022](#)

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