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**AMA PROPOSES STRONGER SUPPORT AND STANDARDS FOR  
 INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES (IMGs)**  
*AMA Position Statement on International Medical Graduates 2015*

The AMA today released its new *AMA Position Statement on International Medical Graduates 2015*, which replaces the *AMA Position Statement on Overseas Trained Doctors 2004*.

International Medical Graduates (IMGs) are doctors who have completed their primary medical degree overseas.

The new Position Statement sets out the AMA’s policy on IMGs, particularly those IMGs who are yet to establish themselves in the Australian medical workforce, and recommends priorities for recruiting, assessing, training, and supporting IMGs.

AMA Vice President, Dr Stephen Parnis, said today that IMGs have made an enormous contribution to the Australian health system in recent decades, especially in providing care in under-serviced communities.

“IMGs are a critical part of the medical workforce,” Dr Parnis said.

“Over one quarter of doctors working in Australia are IMGs.

“Without their valuable contributions, many Australians – especially in rural and remote communities – would find it much harder to get access to medical care.

“The new Position Statement emphasises the need to better support IMGs in their professional careers, but also to help them and their families gain access to community services such as health and education.

“IMGs are often recruited to work in some of the most professionally challenging clinical environments in Australia, but in many cases they have inadequate preparation for the demands of these positions.

“It is not their fault. It can be difficult for them to get access to the resources, supervision, and mentoring that they need to perform effectively.

“This can make it harder for them to participate in necessary up-skilling and continuing professional development programs.

“In their private lives, many IMGs get only limited support for their own or their family’s medical and educational requirements.

“Unlike their Australian-trained counterparts, IMGs cannot get access to Medicare-funded health services or equal access to public education for their children.

“The AMA is calling for an end to this inequity. There must be appropriate educational and community support for IMGs and their families.”

Dr Parnis said that it is important to maintain strong standards of assessment for IMGs for their clinical skills and their English language standards.

“IMGs must be treated fairly in assessment processes, and appropriate recognition must be given to their overseas qualifications.

“With growing numbers of domestic medical graduates, Australia will, over time, be able to reduce its reliance on IMGs.

“In the meantime, we must properly support and recognise the valuable contributions that IMGs and their families make to local communities around Australia.”

“As Australia’s reliance on IMGs lessens, governments must fund adequate numbers of training positions for local graduates so that we can become more self-sufficient, and ensure that local graduates can work in the communities and specialties where they are needed.”

Dr Parnis said the *AMA Position Statement on Overseas Trained Doctors 2004* had been a catalyst for winning improved conditions for IMGs over the last decade.

“Today we have nationally consistent standards for assessing and supervising IMGs; a clear and mandated role for medical colleges when assessing applicants for specialist positions; far better processes used by the Australian Medical Council, such as the availability of an offshore screening exam; better access to bridging programs for IMGs, and better information for IMGs, including a dedicated website to inform IMGs about working in Australia,” Dr Parnis said.

“Our new Position Statement aims to build on those successes to provide IMGs with an even more rewarding professional and personal experience of living and working in Australia.”

The *AMA Position Statement on International Medical Graduates* is at:

<https://ama.com.au/position-statement/international-medical-graduates-2015>

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