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MEDIA RELEASE

Several Key Causes of Stress for Early Career General Practitioners

The President of General Practice Registrars Australia (GPR Australia), Dr Melanie Smith today announced that results from recent national research quantify the major causes of stress for those embarking on a career in general practice.

“Close to half of all GP registrars find coping with study and examinations to be “very stressful”,” said Dr Smith.

“While this is not unexpected, as it is a challenge that all registrars face, we should not lose sight of the fact that they are seeing patients while under heavy stress and must maintain the high standards of patient care expected of Australia’s general practitioners.”

“Stress or not, registrars must not create risks for the practice hosting them or for the patients of that practice while they are preparing for difficult exams,” she said.

“The solution to this problem is to ensure that GP registrars receive high quality supervision and support and also have adequate time for study and self-care.”

“Unfortunately, over 15% have endured a level of stress as result of being bullied on the job, almost 20% have encountered a threat of violence, and over 20% have endured stress as a result of difficult relations in their training practice or with their GP supervisor,” she said.

“These are alarming signals that some general practice arrangements provided for new registrars are not situations of support and learning. Rather they are situations of poor management and exploitation. “

“The whole GP training environment needs a rigorous review and genuine steps must be taken to address a large number of significant concerns for GP registrars.”

“While this review is being undertaken, we need to investigate why over 50% of registrars feel stressed they have too much work to do, over 40% are stressed due to long working hours and over 30% are stressed by having to do work for which they are not paid,” said Dr Smith

ENDS

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