

Media release

For immediate release

Monday 16 August

Medical colleges launch Wellbeing Charter for Doctors

Four medical colleges have come together to form a Wellbeing Charter for Doctors that defines wellbeing and sets out the shared responsibility for supporting doctors' wellbeing.

The charter is a collaborative effort by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS), Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM), Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RANZCOG).

The charter is endorsed by the Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC), the unifying organisation for specialist medical colleges of Australia.

"We all have a part to play to support the wellbeing of doctors – medical colleges, individuals, colleagues, managers, hospitals and health jurisdictions," said Dr Ruth Bollard, Chair, RACS Wellbeing Working Group.

"Doctors who maintain and maximise their health and wellbeing can manage the physical and emotional demands of medicine and the charter seeks to promote the importance of wellbeing for doctors.

"Doctors are encouraged to practice self-care, including prioritising their mental health so they can provide the best care for patients. Everyone needs help at some point and it can be as simple as sharing a problem with a trusted friend or seeking professional support.

"The four colleges have been firm supporters of our members having a general practitioner that they visit frequently, and we provide wellbeing resources and external support so our members have a shoulder to lean on when they need it."

"Wellbeing is a collective responsibility," said Dr John Bonning, ACEM President. "We have a duty to support and advocate for workplaces and systems that promote wellbeing and empower individuals to access solutions that work for them.

"Workplaces have an enormous influence on doctors' wellbeing and we need to make sure doctors' health and wellbeing is recognised as a patient safety issue. The Charter gives teams and managers the opportunity to reflect and discuss how we can all advance doctors' wellbeing," said Dr Bollard.

It is important that doctors thrive in all aspects of life, not only in medicine, and this is a key principle for the charter.

RANZCOG President Dr Vijay Roach said: "Fatigue, burnout, physical illness, anxiety and depression are all more prevalent within our profession. Doctors' wellbeing is a shared responsibility between individuals and system partners. We acknowledge that medical colleges must support both the wellbeing of doctors and provide safe, accessible and inclusive workplaces."

ANZCA President Dr Vanessa Beavis said: "This charter marks a watershed for this group of medical colleges as it acknowledges the importance of doctors being mindful of their own wellbeing and recognising the signs of burnout, stress and poor mental health in either themselves or their colleagues."

"We are proud to be part of this important charter that acknowledges we must care for ourselves, and each other, as we care for our patients," said Dr Bonning.

[Access the charter online.](#)

Media enquiries:

Cordelia Alfred (RACS) +61 424 560 333

Andrew MacDonald or Melissa Howard (ACEM) media@acem.org.au

Carolyn Jones (ANZCA) +61 408 259 369

Andre Khoury (RANZCOG) +61 448 735 749