

8 March 2018

## Doctors Meditate on More Mindful Practice

Doctors will swap their stethoscopes for relaxation mats on Saturday when AMA Queensland stages its first mindfulness seminar to help doctors navigate the growing pressures and challenges of their jobs.

Rising rates of burnout and attempted suicide among doctors are some of the reasons AMA Queensland, in partnership with Queensland Doctors' Health Programme (QDHP), has commissioned leading mindfulness expert, Monash University Associate Professor Dr Craig Hassed, to stage the seminar.

AMA Queensland President Bill Boyd said the seminar had sold out.

"We know that doctors experience significantly higher rates of depression and anxiety than any other profession in Australia<sup>1</sup>," Dr Boyd said.

"AMA Queensland's focus is on equipping doctors with the skills and tools they need to keep themselves healthy in both mind and body."

Dr Hassed said understanding mindfulness and its applications could help doctors improve patient care.

"As a doctor, you are constantly juggling multiple patients and responsibilities and it's easy to get distracted," Dr Hassed said.

"Mindfulness is about being present in the moment, learning to block out distractions and dealing with stress in a constructive way. Ultimately, this leads to better care for our patients."

Dr Geoff Hawson, AMA Queensland Council and oncologist with 40 years' experience, said he had first-hand experience of the benefits of practicing mindfulness.

"I started practicing mindfulness about 20 years ago and have found that it allows me to be calmer and temper my responses to situations both at work and at home," Dr Hawson said.

"I've also introduced many of my patients to the techniques and I know it has helped them manage their anxiety and, at times, their pain."

Dr Boyd said the mindfulness seminar was one part of AMA Queensland's program to help doctors stay mentally and physically fit.

"We also offer other wellbeing programs specifically targeting junior doctors, such as our upcoming *Thrive in your junior doctor years* seminar on 22 March, and the AMA Queensland *Resilience on the Run* program, which we are currently delivering for interns across all Queensland hospitals" he said.

An Introduction to Mindfulness for Health Practitioners will be held at AMA Queensland on March 10.

**Media contacts: Tammy Shipperley, Sequel PR - 0403 090 914;  
Chiara Lesèvre, AMA Queensland - 0419 735.**

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.beyondblue.org.au/docs/default-source/research-project-files/bl1132-report---nmhdms-full-report\\_web](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/docs/default-source/research-project-files/bl1132-report---nmhdms-full-report_web)