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More than money needed for Queensland Hospital fix

Queensland doctors are calling for an overhaul of the public service culture in state hospitals to improve the delivery and quality of health care.

The call for a culture shock followed today's release of the 2018 *AMA Public Hospital Report Card*, an annual assessment by the AMA of the nation's public hospitals.

The report showed in Queensland only 60 per cent of urgent patients were seen within the recommended time and a quarter of emergency patients were waiting too long for ED treatment.

AMA Queensland President Dr Bill Boyd said change would only come when all hospitals became positive, supportive and productive workplaces.

"Instead of imposing unrealistic goals, hospitals need to be workplaces where workloads are achievable for doctors and staff and where employees feel they are genuinely supported, both mentally and physically," Dr Boyd said.

"Queensland Health and Queensland hospitals should follow in the footsteps of hundreds of law firms across Australia and become a signatory to the Tristan Jepson workplace guidelines, specifically designed for professionals, help to manage workload, balance work and private lives, protect physical and psychological safety and develop professionally."

Dr Boyd said the unacceptably high levels of bullying and harassment of junior doctors in major public hospitals pointed to an urgent need for cultural change.

"AMA Queensland data collected last year revealed 47 per cent of junior doctors employed by Queensland Health had witnessed bullying, discrimination or sexual harassment in the workplace," he said.

"More than half of these junior doctors worried about negative consequences to themselves if they reported the behaviour."

The data also found 90 per cent of junior medical officers were working unrostered overtime each week with more than half advised by senior staff not to claim the hours.

"Our ageing population, increases in chronic medical conditions and the cost of new technologies are all making matters even more stressful for our medical professionals in public hospitals, Dr Boyd said.

"If we don't make fundamental change to the way our hospitals operate as workplaces and treat staff, we can not expect to see improvements in service delivery."

The *Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation Workplace Foundation: Best Practice Guidelines* aim to create work environments with:

- An organisational culture based on trust, honesty and fairness
- Support for employees' psychological and mental health concerns
- Clear expectations of what they need to do
- Civility and respect
- Encouragement of interpersonal and emotional skills
- Recognition and reward in a timely manner
- Employee inclusion in decision making
- Realistic workloads
- Recognition of the need to balance work and private lives
- Protection of the physical and psychological safety of employees

More information at: <http://www.tjmf.org.au/the-guidelines/>

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AMA Public Hospital Record Card

Queensland 2016-17

- 60% of urgent emergency presentations seen on time (compared with 66% nationally).
- 73% of emergency patients left emergency within 4 hours (down from 77% in 2014-15)
- 96% of Category 2 elective surgery patients admitted within 90 days.