INTRODUCTION

In 2018, AMA Queensland surveyed Resident Medical Officers (including those in Intern, Junior House Officer and Senior House Officer grades) to evaluate the state of Resident Medical Officer employment in Queensland, and subsequently compare hospitals across the state. Overall, 4,456 junior doctors, representing approximately 27% of the total number of Resident Medical Officers working in Queensland, completed the survey. This is the third consecutive year the survey has been conducted. The questions were similar to the 2016 and 2017 surveys, so that results could be compared across the three years. Where insufficient data was obtained from a single hospital to make a fair assessment of that hospital, the data was merged based on geography and which Hospital and Health Service (HHS) the hospital belonged to. This year’s survey achieved a 10% increase in participants compared with the 2017 survey.

KEY FINDINGS

Access to Leave

Almost one-in-five of respondents (18.8%) were either not satisfied or slightly satisfied that their preferences for annual leave had been taken into consideration.

Professional Development Leave (PDL)

In 2018, only 19.7% of respondents had applied for professional development leave, which was down to 26.4% of these applicants. A lack of host staff was cited as the major difficulty encountered when applying for PDL, cited by 18.3% of respondents. Lastly, 55.9% were satisfied that their clinical rotation preferences had been accommodated and 34.7% were satisfied with opportunities to be involved in research and auditing.

Pay and overtime

In 2018, AMA Queensland, in partnership with the AMA Queensland Council of Doctors in Training, ran a campaign to encourage junior doctors to claim overtime. We are pleased to announce that fewer doctors in Training respondents reported not being paid for claimed overtime (22.7% in 2018 down from 30.6% in 2017). Only 26.7% of respondents claimed all of their overtime pay, with 28.2% reporting they had been advised not to claim overtime by an Administrative Officer or a Senior Medical Officer (SMO). And 51.0% believing that claiming overtime would lead to a negative assessment from SMOs.

Wellbeing and workplace culture

Importantly, 27.4% of respondents reported that there had been no increase at work, and almost half of survey respondents (49.3%) reported they had been concerned about making a clinical error due to fatigue and related to long work hours. Just over half of respondents were satisfied with the hospital facilities (54.8%) and the quality of the teaching and training (52.3%) on offer.

Bullying, harassment and discrimination

Among all the respondents, 53.9% had personally experienced bullying, harassment or discrimination, while 64.7% had witnessed a colleague experience bullying, harassment or discrimination. Among those reporting to have experienced or witnessed bullying, harassment or discrimination, only 16.5% reported the incident, while 60.8% said there was nothing they could do about it.

If you are experiencing any of the issues outlined above, contact the AMA Queensland Workplace Relations Team on (07) 3872 2222 or email workplacerelations@amaq.com.au. We can help you with confidential workplace relations advice and support.
TOP 6 PRIORITIES IN QUEENSLAND

The following are the 6 highest ranked domains in order of priority from 1 being the highest ranked.

1. Clinical rotation preferences
   - 55.9% were quite to extremely satisfied

2. Annual leave process
   - 28.2% not satisfied
   - 9.7% slightly satisfied
   - 9.2% moderately satisfied
   - 10.9% quite satisfied
   - 34.7% extremely satisfied

3. Being appropriately paid for unrostered overtime
   - 10.1% did not get paid
   - 13.4% got paid some
   - 76.5% got paid all

4. Personal safety at work
   - 45.9% satisfied
   - 27.4% moderately satisfied

5. Residency education programs
   - 20.2% extremely satisfied
   - 32.1% quite satisfied
   - 25.8% moderately satisfied
   - 14.9% slightly satisfied
   - 7.1% not satisfied

6. Working a 76 hour fortnight
   - 3.9% 76 hours
   - 29.9% 77-80 hours
   - 41.9% 81-90 hours
   - 9.7% 91-100 hours
   - 4.7% 100+ hours

DISCLAIMER

The AMA Queensland Resident Hospital Health Check survey was completed on a voluntary basis by Queensland doctors in training (including those at intern, junior House Officer and Senior House Officer). The purpose of this document is to assist graduating medical students as well as current interns and residents with their decision making process when deciding on which hospitals to apply for in the upcoming intern and RMO campaigns.

This information is provided in good faith and should only be used as a guide, it is intended to be general in nature and is made available on the understanding that the AMA Queensland and the AMA Queensland Council of Doctors in Training do not make any express or implied warranties or representations as to accuracy, adequacy, completeness or suitability of the information provided by participants in this survey and cannot be responsible for any loss or damage arising from use of this information. AMA Queensland and the AMA Queensland Council of Doctors in Training do not take any responsibility for the outcomes published in this survey.

Comparison of results among hospitals/units must be made with caution, as the survey did not involve a probabilistic sampling frame, but instead was open to the entire QLD RMO population, achieving a response rate of 27%. Further, as RMOs were not randomly allocated to hospitals differences in attitudes and expectations of respondents cannot be adequately controlled. This introduces biases into the results which cannot be accounted for.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the AMA Queensland CDT Resident Hospital Health Check survey in greater detail, please email workplacerelations@amaq.com.au and a member of the Team will get back to you.

The AMA Queensland Industrial Relations Team also provides confidential, assured advice to Doctor in Training members on employment terms and conditions, and any aspect of your employment that is causing you concern. You can contact the Team on (07) 3872 2222 to discuss.

Not a member of AMA Queensland? You can join at ama.com.au/join-ama to receive advice and guidance on employment matters in addition to a range of professional development programs, services and benefits to support your journey in medicine.

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