

Setting the Standard

AMA Victoria's Summit

Setting the Standard is the first step towards shifting the culture of our medical profession to realise its potential.

*An inclusive, fair and dynamic way of working –
for the health and wellbeing of all Victorians.*



Bullying, discrimination and harassment in medicine are widespread.

These behaviours create a culture of fear, can prevent innovation and cause workplace stress. They pose a risk to the health and wellbeing of doctors, and their patients, undermining our health system.

It is time for change. We want this behaviour to end >>>

On 21 November 2015, AMA Victoria with the support of the Minister for Health, held a summit to develop a strategy to bring about cultural change in the medical profession.

The summit was attended by doctors, medical students, hospital administrators, representatives of Colleges, medical authorities and government officials. Together it was recognised that these issues are real, widespread and an extremely damaging element of our culture.

We all need to take a stand.

At the summit, 180 people made 350 suggestions on how we can change the culture to enable more progressive and transparent workplaces, that are free from harassment and engender positive change.

From this wealth of information came four consistent themes that capture the issues and help determine the future strategy.

This strategy identifies a way forward to bring about lasting and real change >>>

The Summit Themes

»»» Awareness

- Times have changed. Behaviours that were tolerated in the past are no longer acceptable. A commitment to change and an awareness of how our behaviour affects others will set the standard for the future.
- Individually and as a profession we must make a commitment to set the standard and put an end to behaviour that has no place in modern medicine.
- We will continue the discussion with all elements of the medical profession to ensure that the culture adapts and changes for the better.
- Everyone must be responsible for their own behaviour. We must endorse best behaviour.
- We commit to raising awareness of unacceptable behaviour and its harms. Behavioural standards should apply without exceptions.

»»» Accountability & Voice

- Transparent and accountable processes are necessary in workplaces and training environments to enable the profession to raise issues of concern. All doctors need a voice and a safe and confidential environment where they can seek advice and take action without fear of recrimination or reprisal.
- Each doctor has a right to respect and dignity. Effective workplace and training environment policies and procedures are needed so matters can be raised safely without reprisal.
- It's OK to speak up and to speak out.

»»» Training & Education

- Achieving professional excellence is more than the technical application of skills and ability to solve a problem.
- As a community we will seek ways to build leadership and communication skills, bringing them into our day-to-day work environment, to optimise how we work together and promote genuine collegiality.
- Leadership and communication skills are learned and enhanced through professional development and education.
- Fair and effective communication, and openness are necessary to deliver critical feedback and strengthen the medical workforce.
- Strong leadership, dedicated mentoring and appropriate training creates safe workplaces and improved patient outcomes.

»»» Alignment

- A system-wide approach with collaboration across all areas of the health system will create a consistent response. Open discussions within and between workplaces and medical organisations must continue.
- There must be a consistent approach to creating a positive culture. No one can do it alone.

AMA Victoria Response

- AMA Victoria will lead the profession with the development of the AMA Standard. This Standard will set the benchmark for expected workplace behaviour.
- AMA Victoria commits to raising awareness about unacceptable behaviour and its harms. No doctor will be exempt from adhering to behavioural standards.
- The AMA Victoria Assurance – a pledge of respect and fairness – will start the change and enable individuals to set the profession's culture. It will also help our community to recognise those that stand against unacceptable behaviour, giving confidence and trust.
- Our ambassadors will publicly lead this change in workplaces and organisations; they will stand up and speak up and encourage others to do the same.

- Accountability*
 - We will monitor cultural change across workplaces and organisations. The AMA Assurance – a pledge of respect and fairness – will start this change and enable individuals to set the profession's culture. The AMA Standard will build on this work.
- Voice*
 - AMA Victoria's First Response Telephone Service will be available to all doctors as a first point of reference for information on bullying, discrimination and harassment, and the next steps forward.

- AMA Victoria will deliver accredited training and education on bullying, discrimination and harassment that will be known as the AMA Standard, on:
 - *Leadership*
 - *Appropriate behaviour*
 - *Delivery of feedback and understanding of performance reviews*
 - *Professionalism in communication and demeanour*
 - *Management*
- The AMA Standard will set the benchmark for expected behaviour.

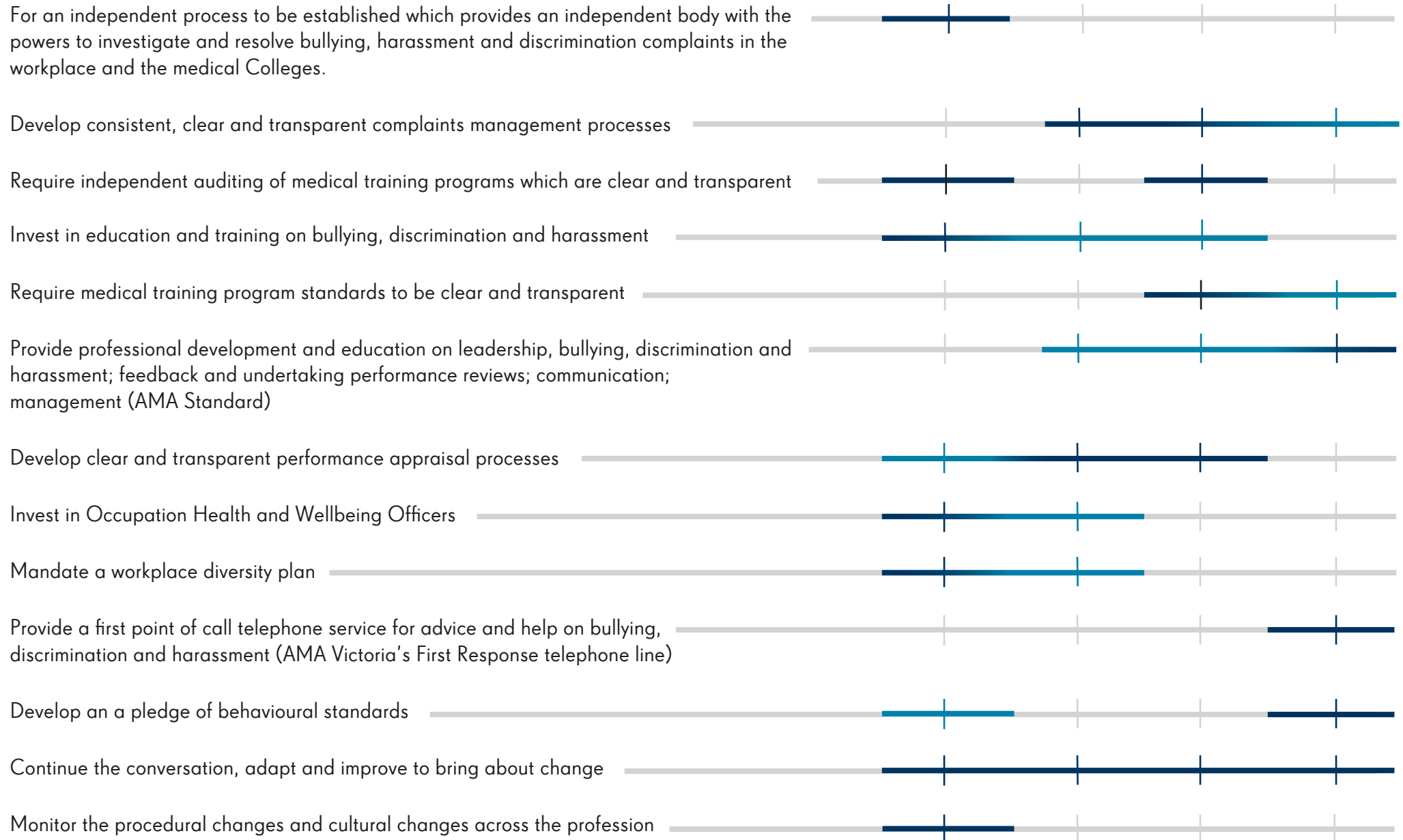
- As the peak body for the medical profession in Victoria, AMA Victoria will build and facilitate collaboration across the profession.
- We will assess progress and change within the profession and ensure a consistent approach within health workplaces and organisations.

The following actions were identified at the AMA Summit to bring about change:

Lead Responsibility

Secondary Responsibility

Actions



“No change is not an option”

Victorian Health Minister, Jill Hennessy



www.amavic.com.au

A : 293 Royal Parade Parkville VIC 3052

T : 03 9280 8736 | F : 03 9280 8786

Leads and amplifies doctors' contribution to the health and wellbeing of all Victorians.