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Welcome support for medical students' mental health

The Australian Medical Students' Association (AMSA) and Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand (Medical Deans) welcome the Australian Government's investment into mental health first aid (MHFA) training for medical students, as a key step in supporting the wellbeing of the nation's future doctors.

"Our students have told us how this training helps them learn to recognise early signs of mental health distress in themselves or their friends and peers, and teaches them how and where to reach out. This is a vital aspect in supporting the health of our students, who face a range of pressures and stresses, and we thank the Australian government for their continued support" said Professor Richard Murray, President of Medical Deans.

"Medical students continue to be in an extraordinarily vulnerable position in the healthcare system with compounding academic, financial and professional stressors placing their risk of mental illness and suicidality significantly higher than many other young people," said Tish Sivagnanan, AMSA President.

The internationally recognised training developed by Mental Health First Aid Australia has been adapted specifically for medical students and is consistently highly rated, with participant feedback including comments such as "I feel more confident in my abilities in a mental health crisis", "extremely valuable, practical" and "Absolutely worth the time and effort! I am much more knowledgeable of mental health issues and the appropriate responses".

"Free and direct access to MHFA training will ensure another generation of healthcare students will have the access to invaluable strategies allowing early intervention to mental health crises in themselves, their colleagues and their wider patient population," said Ms Sivagnanan.

AMSA is the peak representative body for Australia's 18,000 medical students. The mental health of Australian medical students, doctors and healthcare workforce is a national priority for AMSA.

Medical Deans is the peak body representing the 24 medical schools across the two countries, whose focus is on planning for, developing and supporting the medical graduates our communities need.

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