

23 July 2026

Universities call for medical students to receive Prac Payments

The President of Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand (MDANZ), Professor Kirsty Forrest, today called for the Government to make urgent changes to include medical students in its plan to extend Commonwealth Prac Payments to allied health students.

“Medical students complete about 2,000 hours of unpaid clinical placements – the highest requirement for any health professional degree,” Professor Forrest said.

“Over 61.4% of these students are working paid jobs alongside their studies, income that has to stop the moment they go on placement, creating student poverty at exactly the point they can least afford it.”

An increasing proportion of students from diverse backgrounds are now studying medicine: from lower SES backgrounds, first in family to go to university, First Nations students, and over one third of students are from a rural background. MDANZ's 2026 National Data Report shows that 54.9% of medical students rely on government assistance to get through the degree.

“Ensuring medicine is a profession that is open to all, no matter their background or financial position, is an important change we have been working to bring about and want to continue. It’s vital that medical students receive assistance while on mandatory clinical placements and unable to work.

“We commend the Government’s plan to extend the Prac Payments now available to nurses and midwives to include several allied health professions, and we urge the Government to include medical students in this vital initiative.”

Please direct all enquiries to

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Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand Inc. represents and supports the 24 medical schools across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand in their cutting-edge medical education, work-integrated training, and research to recruit, develop and nurture outstanding medical graduates to enable our communities to continue to access world-class health services.

Medical Deans [annual survey of medical graduates](https://medicaldeans.org.au/) provides valuable information and insights on the make-up of our future doctors, including demographics, education, experience, and future career preferences.

<https://medicaldeans.org.au/>