

Standard in Focus

Standard 7.2: Welfare and Support

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- **7.2.1** *The intern training provider promotes strategies to enable a supportive learning environment*
- **7.2.2** *The duties, rostering, working hours and supervision of interns are consistent with delivering high-quality, safe patient care*
- **7.2.3** *The intern training provider has policies and procedures aimed at identifying, addressing, and preventing bullying, harassment, and discrimination. These policies and procedures are publicised to interns, their supervisors, and other team members*
- **7.2.4** *The intern training provider makes available processes to identify and support interns who are experiencing personal and professional difficulties that may affect their training, as well as career advice and confidential personal counselling. These services are publicised to interns, their supervisors and other team members.*

This standard requires the provider to demonstrate that they have the necessary provisions in place to ensure that the interns feel supported throughout their practice. It is vital that interns have access to formal structures and processes that will protect and support their development as medical professionals and that they are made aware of these during their training.

Appropriate processes should provide interns with confidence that any issues can be considered and managed in a timely manner, without recrimination and held in confidence among only those that might need to know. Interns also need to feel assured that should they need support, the provider will be able to put necessary structures in place for that individual that will reduce risks to both the medical provider and to patients.

Often when junior doctors are having difficulty in their practice, a contributing cause is a personal circumstance. This needs to be acknowledged and managed appropriately and interns need to know where and how they can access support. Furthermore, if the cause of difficulty is related to workplace behaviours of a team member, the provider is mandated to follow established procedures to identify and resolve the situation in a timely and professional manner.

Interns should be made aware of both the local processes established to protect them as well as where/to whom they can safely raise concerns throughout the duration of their employment. It can be useful to include this information in places where interns can access it independently, e.g., facility level orientation manuals, unit level manuals, communications from the Medical Education Unit and/or intranet site and Sharepoint sites if used.