



PMCT
POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION
COUNCIL OF TASMANIA

PMCT Research Opportunity

Junior doctor perceptions and experiences of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination

The Postgraduate Medical Education Council of Tasmania (PMCT) is the organisation responsible for undertaking accreditation of the prevocational medical terms in public hospitals and some general practices in Tasmania. Accreditation ensures that prevocational medical doctors receive high quality education, training, assessment and support. Prevocational doctors are those who have not yet commenced vocational training with a college (usually doctors in their first two to three years post qualification).

PMCT has a strong interest in the welfare of prevocational doctors and the promotion of quality improvement in junior doctor training.

PMCT has allocated funding of up to \$40,000 for a research project relating to junior doctor perceptions and experiences of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination, and the identification of strategies to address these behaviours.

Bullying, harassment and/or discrimination are common workplace experiences in the medical profession, particularly for junior doctors. Leisy and Ahmad (2016) identified that the prevalence of bullying and sexual harassment among junior doctors ranged from 30% to 89% in international cross-sectional surveys. In Australia, the 2021 Medical Training Survey (MTS) found that 35% of trainees reported that they had experienced and/or witnessed bullying, harassment and/or discrimination (including racism) in training. Further, 67% of trainees who experienced these behaviours did not report the incident and only 58% of trainees who reported it were satisfied with the follow-up (MBA, 2021).

While the MTS has provided data on the prevalence of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination among junior doctors, there is little information on junior doctor perceptions and experiences of these behaviours, and their perceived reluctance to report their experiences.

The aims of this study are to extend our current understanding of junior doctors'

- a. perceptions of what constitutes bullying, harassment and/or discrimination
- b. experiences of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination (experienced or observed)
- c. awareness of reporting mechanisms available
- d. barriers to reporting incidents of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination.

The outcome of the research will be a succinct analysis of the current situation in relation to each of the key points, with corresponding identification of priority areas of focus and strategies to address the problem of bullying, harassment, and/or discrimination of junior doctors.

It is anticipated that the study will utilise descriptive qualitative research methods. Junior doctors in their prevocational training across the 4 hospitals in Tasmania will be invited to participate in the study.

The research proposal will be submitted to the Tasmanian Health and Medical Human Research Ethics Committee (Low Risk).

Available funding

PMCT anticipates supporting one project requesting up to \$40,000.

The successful investigator/s must submit and obtain an ethics approval from the Tasmanian Health and Medical Human Research Ethics Committee (Low Risk). Governance approval must also be obtained.

Project funding will be released in 4 stages on receipt of approved progress reports.

Research funding must be spent, as outlined in the application, by the project close date. Unspent funds will be reclaimed.

No part of the funding is to be used for conference attendance.

Eligibility

Researchers from all faculties and institutes of the University of Tasmania, departments within Tasmanian hospitals and the Department of Health are eligible to apply. External applicants will also be considered.

Individuals or research teams are eligible to apply for funding.

The project is seeking to fund a new project, not to co-fund projects already in receipt of funds from other granting bodies.

Intended Key Dates

Applications open: early November 2022

Applications close: 20th December 2022

Successful applicant advised: end January 2023

Project commencement date: February 2023

Project completion date: February 2024

The term of funding is for 12 months and the project, including the final report, is to be completed within this timeframe.

Assessment Process

Applications must be submitted using Appendix 1.

Applications will be reviewed by the Project Steering Committee who will individually assess, score and rank applications. Applications will be assessed on the quality of the research proposal, including feasibility and budget (75%) and research capacity, including track record (25%).

The Steering Committee will meet to moderate and then consolidate scores and rankings. A funding recommendation will be put forward by the Steering Committee to the PMCT Executive for approval.

Reporting

Progress reports will be required quarterly. A final report is due in February 2024. The final report should include a brief literature review, an overview of the methodology, results, conclusions and recommendations.

References

Leisy, H & Ahamd, M. Altering workplace attitudes for resident education: discovering solutions for medical resident bullying through literature review. BMC Med Educ 2016: 16,127.

Medical Board of Australia and Ahpra Medical Training Survey. 2021,
<https://medicaltrainingsurvey.gov.au/>

Note: PMCT is a not-for-profit organisation, which is independent of the Tasmanian Department of Health (DoH), but which receives the majority of its funding from this Department.

Appendix 1

Application Template

Chief Investigator	
Name	
Highest qualification	
School/faculty/department where project is to be conducted	
Phone	
Email	

Other team members (if applicable)	
Name	
Highest qualification	
School/faculty/department where project is to be conducted	
Phone	
Email	
Name	
Highest qualification	
School/faculty/department where project is to be conducted	
Phone	
Email	

Attach separately:

1. Project plan (75%) – 3 page maximum

Describe how you expect to collect and analyse the data.

Describe the proposed sample population.

Provide an anticipated timeline for the project including likely outputs within the 12 month funding term.

Research budget including personnel (salary and on-costs), equipment and consumables.

2. Research significance and innovation (25%) – as attachment to the project plan

Include an overview of the Chief Investigator (and team if applicable) research outputs including significant publications and/or other research related achievements.