



# NEW SOUTH WALES MEDICAL STUDENTS COUNCIL

## **NSW Medical Students call for paid opportunities for senior students**

Following the release of NSW Health's evaluation report of the Assistant in Medicine (AiM) workforce role, the New South Wales Medical Students' Council (NSW MSC) calls for the position, and other paid workforce opportunities for medical students, to continue into the future.

The AiM position was developed as a component of the NSW Health medical surge workforce in response to COVID-19, employing final-year medical students in part-time roles supporting medical teams.

NSW Health's evaluation found that students employed as AiMs were adequately skilled and supported Junior Medical Officers in completing clinical tasks, allowing junior doctors to spend more time on patient care and clinical procedures and gain valuable teaching and supervisory experience. AiM program participants additionally felt more prepared for internship and, critically, the program financially supported medical students at a time where many had lost their jobs or were unable to work due to placement obligations.

NSW MSC welcomes the results of NSW Health's evaluation, and believes that the success of the program highlights the significant benefits of employing senior medical students in clinical positions for patients, clinical teams, and students.

"Medical students often spend long hours on clinical placement, with inconsistent class schedules and study requirements making it difficult for students to support themselves through part-time work," Isaac Wade, President of the New South Wales Medical Students' Council, said.



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“More than half of the state’s final year medical students are forced to juggle full-time placement, study, and part-time work just to pay the rent - the AiM program provided students with a valuable opportunity to support their teams, while remunerating them for their time spent in the hospital.”

“Furthermore, students employed as Assistants in Medicine during these difficult times were better equipped to enter the workforce as competent, effective junior doctors.”

Mr Wade said that medical students frequently support their teams by assisting with jobs and basic tasks, and paid employment allows medical students to learn valuable skills while fairly compensating them for their work. He also noted that in New Zealand, medical students are provided a stipend to support themselves through their final year of study.

“We appreciate the opportunity for medical students to more closely integrate themselves into the health workforce, and hope that we can work with NSW Health and other stakeholders to develop employment opportunities for students in the future, not just during pandemic scenarios.”

NSW MSC is the representative body for medical students in NSW and the ACT, representing over 5,700 students studying across 9 universities. Together with medical societies at each university, NSW MSC worked closely with NSW Health on the development of the AiM program.

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