



NEW ZEALAND RESIDENT DOCTORS' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 7 November 2018

NZRDA Health & Wellbeing Conference: 8 and 9 November

The New Zealand Resident Doctors' Association (NZRDA) Conference on Health & Wellbeing is being held over the next two days, November 8 and 9. The Conference venue is SkyCity Auckland Convention Centre. The agenda is available [here](#).

The aim of this conference is to advance and promote good health and wellbeing for Resident Doctors across New Zealand – a very important and timely issue. The conference was recently profiled on Radio New Zealand ([Doctor burnout tackled in upcoming national conference](#)), when NZRDA Vice President Dr Kat Foster talked to Jesse Mulligan about this critical matter. Dr Foster will also talk with Duncan Garner on The AM Show on Thursday morning.

The risk of burnout and fatigue is a very real one for Resident Doctors, and is putting their health and wellbeing – as well as the health of their patients – in jeopardy. See [this article](#) in the Sydney Morning Herald, in which the President of the Royal Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists talks about his personal experience with poor mental health.

This conference brings together experts on all matters related to health and wellbeing for doctors and will have a practical focus, including workshops during which conference attendees will acquire and develop their skills in this area. Key topics will include stress management and preventing burnout, the application of mindfulness techniques, and psychological first aid.

The Hon Dr David Clark, Minister of Health, will open the conference. Other speakers include sleep specialist Dr Tony Fernando, Dr Karyn O'Keeffe of the Sleep-Wake Research Centre, and Dr Peter Lim of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Australia.

The conference will be chaired by Dr Kyle Perrin, Consultant at Wellington Hospital, and Michael Frampton, Chief People Officer at Canterbury DHB.

Further information on the conference is available on the NZRDA website www.nzrda.org.nz/nzrda-health-and-wellbeing-conference-2018/

Commenting on the conference, NZRDA Vice President Dr Kathryn Foster said, “Resident Doctors (RMOs) by and large became doctors to help those in need, to sit with and work for others on their darkest days, and to try to make those dark days better. We value the privilege of caring for the health of New Zealanders, and care deeply for our patients. However, we sometimes lose sight of caring for ourselves. Long hours, shift work, loss, grief, trauma, and stress can conspire to exert a heavy physical and psychological toll on RMOs – we are doctors, yes, but we are also humans, as vulnerable to the same physiological and emotional struggles as anyone else. To have the opportunity to help RMOs effectively manage their health and wellbeing is a valuable chance to improve the health and wellbeing of us all.”

Contact

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Resident Doctors

Resident doctors (RMOs, or Resident Medical Officers) are registered medical practitioners, and range in experience from first-year qualified doctors to those with more than 12 years’ experience. They primarily work in the public sector, where they are employed by all 20 District Health Boards. Resident doctors staff New Zealand’s public hospital system, delivering 24/7 care to patients, and also utilise this time to gain specialist qualifications as surgeons, physicians, paediatricians, etc. Resident doctors are also employed in general practice as GP trainees.