



Drs for Drs: **Strategic Plan 2022-2025**

**Strategic plan for Doctors Health Services
Pty Ltd**

**Supporting doctors and medical
students to care for themselves, their
colleagues and their patients**

February 2022

DRS4DRS

Strategic Plan

The new strategic focus for Doctors Health Services Pty Ltd:

Our vision is for healthy doctors and medical students caring for themselves, their colleagues and their patients.

Doctors Health Services Pty Ltd is a national umbrella organisation supporting doctor health service providers to deliver timely access to appropriate medical support for doctors and medical students. Doctors Health Services Pty Ltd promotes proactive health and wellbeing practices of doctors and medical students, and will newly advocate for healthy medical workforce practices and culture.

The four strategic priorities for 2022 to 2025 of Doctors Health Services Pty Ltd are:

1 – To engage early

We will enable support for medical students, doctors in training and early career doctors to ensure they “graduate” into medical careers with positive health and wellbeing, strong personal care practices, a trusted GP relationship and awareness of doctor health service options.

2 – To support throughout career

We will encourage doctors to maintain a trusted GP relationship, to access specialised services when needed and particularly during career transitions and significant life events, and actively promote positive culture and healthy practices for doctors at every career stage.

3 – To build evidence and advocacy

We will help build the evidence-base supporting effective interventions for better health and wellbeing of doctors and medical students, and utilise this evidence to advocate for improvements to workplace culture, policy, regulation and funding to doctor health service providers to advance doctor health and wellbeing.

4 – To work through partners

We seek to improve health and wellbeing of doctors and medical students by supporting doctor health service providers, and by new engagement with medical colleges, universities, medical workplaces, researchers, government policy-makers, government and charitable funders.

Priority 1: To engage early

We will enable support for medical students, doctors in training and early career doctors to ensure they “graduate” into medical careers with positive health and wellbeing, strong personal care practices, a trusted GP relationship and constructive awareness of doctor health services.

Initiatives over the life of the 2022 to 2025 strategy

Coordinate review of the university student health and education system in partnership with Australian Medical Students Association; plan improved future response; engage university partners; solicit resources; publish proposed systemic improvements; advocate for proposed improvements.

Coordinate review of the doctors in training health and education system in partnership with Council of Doctors in Training; plan improved future response; engage medical colleges and employers; solicit resources; publish proposed systemic improvements; advocate for proposed improvements.

Develop public health styled communications campaign to promote medical students and doctors in training to maintain their GP relationship and to engage when needed with doctor health services providers.

Implement *Every Doctor, Every Setting* national framework with engagement of medical students and doctors in training.

Priority 2: To support throughout career

We will encourage doctors to maintain a trusted GP relationship, to access specialised services when needed and particularly during career transitions and life events, and actively promote positive culture and healthy practices for doctors at every career stage.

Initiatives over the life of the 2022 to 2025 strategy

Create an “every doctor has a GP” public health styled communications plan, incorporating advocacy and awareness campaigns.

Foster expectation of regular health checkups for all doctors and medical students, particularly at career transition points.

Enable Expert Advisory Committee to plan service responses for identified at-risk groups and for specific career stages.

Implement, monitor, and report and continuously improve on doctor health service delivery and funding contract obligations to the satisfaction of funding bodies.

Priority 3: To build evidence and advocacy

We will help build the evidence-base supporting effective interventions for better health and wellbeing of doctors and medical students and utilise this evidence to advocate for improvements to workplace culture, policy, regulation to advance doctor health and wellbeing.

Initiatives over the life of the 2022 to 2025 strategy

Maintain and promote use of a repository of local and international effective doctor health and wellbeing interventions.

Enable Expert Advisory Committee to develop three year research plan, and facilitate fulfillment of that plan from committed MBA funding and newly sourced philanthropic funding.

Establish capacity for Doctors Health Service Pty Ltd to conduct planned public policy advocacy, with objectives to and utilize evidence for improved medical workplace culture and to address barriers to doctor and medical student help seeking behaviors.

Priority 4: To work through partners

We seek to improve health and wellbeing of doctors and medical students by supporting doctor health service providers, and by new engagement with medical colleges, universities, medical workplaces, researchers, government policy-makers, government and charitable funders.

Initiatives over the life of the 2022 to 2025 strategy

Support the capacity development of doctor health service providers.

Enable Expert Advisory Committee to identify its new service funding priorities, and inform government advocacy for new funding resources.

Engage with universities and medical colleges to increase awareness and utilization of doctor health service providers.

Implement *Every Doctor, Every Setting* national framework with engagement of wider medical profession.

Establish Doctors Health Services Pty Ltd as eligible to seek charitable trust and foundation funding support for doctor health research projects.

Developing and implementing this plan

Plan development

This 2022-2025 strategic plan of Doctors Health Services Pty Ltd was developed with input from multiple stakeholders. Stakeholders included the Doctors for Doctors Expert Advisory Committee, representatives of doctor health service providers, the AMA Council of Doctors in Training, the Australian Medical Students Association, and the Doctors Health Service Pty Ltd Board of Directors. The method by which stakeholders contributed to the plan's development was by:

- Provision of a discussion paper to stakeholders, accessible [here](#).
- An anonymous survey, accessible [here](#), which revealed stakeholders believed:
 - regulator and employer notification, fear and stigma combine as the key reason for some doctors and medical students not seeking medical care;
 - service providers can expand service reach by centralising some shared services;
 - Doctors Health Services Pty Ltd can support service providers by moving to become a new national medical voice of advocacy for needs of better doctor health.
- Participation in three externally facilitated zoom meetings over six weeks.
- Receipt of comment on an initial draft, specifically through input of representatives of doctor health service providers, prior to adoption by the Doctors Health Service Pty Ltd Board.

Plan implementation

Doctors Health Service Pty Ltd will adopt an operational plan to fulfil the aspirations of the strategic plan. The operational plan will sequence the identified initiatives over the life of the strategic plan, balanced against fulfilment of its existing contract obligations to:

- The Medical Board of Australia for funding of doctor health service providers;
- The Department of Health for funding of the tele-psychology program;
- The Department of Health for funding of the *Every Doctor, Every Setting* program.

The strategic plan will be published at www.drs4drs.com.au. Monitoring reports on fulfilment of the strategic plan will be made on a quarterly basis to:

- The Expert Advisory Committee;
- The Medical Board of Australia;
- The Department of Health;
- The Doctors Health Service Pty Ltd Board.

www.drs4drs.com.au

enquiries@drs4drs.com.au