

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

6 May 2024

### **Psychology students ignored in paid placement scheme**

The Australian Association of Psychologists (AAPi) said it was disappointing that psychology students had been ignored in the Federal Government's paid placement scheme, and that

given the significant shortage in the psychology workforce, exclusion from this scheme will further entrench this shortage.

AAPi Executive Director Tegan Carrison said student placements provide valuable clinical experience but being unpaid puts them at a disadvantage.

"Psychology students can do up to 1000 hours unpaid labour for their placements which pushes them into placement poverty, impacts their mental health and wellbeing, and is a deterrent for many who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds to be able to participate in higher education," she said.

"Given the mental health workforce needs to grow rapidly to care adequately for the country's mental health needs - psychologists are only meeting 35% of the Federal Government's psychology workforce goal - we are calling for the urgent inclusion of psychology students in this scheme.

"As healthcare professionals in training, they should be given equal consideration."

### **About AAPi**

*AAPi is a not-for-profit peak body for psychologists that aims to preserve the rich diversity of psychological practice in Australia. Formed in 2010 by a group of passionate grassroots psychologists, AAPi's primary goal is to address inequality in the profession and represent all psychologists and their clients equally to government and funding bodies. Its primary mission is to lobby for equitable access for the Australian public to professional psychological services such as Medicare Better Access Scheme and the National Disability Insurance Scheme.*

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