

AMA adopts policies addressing child care for physicians ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

Physicians-in-training have few affordable, accessible options for child care and a lack of paid parental leave, according to the AMA.

Since medical students are not entitled to the Family and Medical Leave Act benefits, the AMA adopted a policy that encourages medical schools to offer a minimum of 6 weeks parental leave. The AMA also plans to work with key stakeholders to advocate that those involved in providing medical training are not discriminating against students who take leave, according to a press release.

"It is essential that medical students are able to take parental leave during their medical training without fear of penalty or punishment," AMA Medical Student Board Member Drayton Charles Harvey said in the release. "We urge all medical schools to offer at least 6 weeks of parental leave to their students."

After parental leave, though, child care can be particularly challenging for health care workers. Many work long hours, often outside of a standard full-time job, but only 6% of child care centers offer overnight care, 3% offer weekend care and 2% offer child care during the evening, according to the release. So, the AMA adopted an additional policy that calls for onsite or subsidized child care for fellows, residents and medical students.

"Many physicians-in-training may become parents during their medical training, a time when their pay is low or non-existent and they're working highly unconventional hours," Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, MD, AMA president-elect, said in the release. "We believe providing onsite or subsidized child care to medical students and residents during their training will help alleviate some of the financial burden they face and offer the best possible solution to their family's child care needs."

However, the AMA also recognizes that institutions may face fiscal challenges when providing child care, and plans to work with multiple organizations "to identify barriers to providing onsite care, as well as innovative methods and best practices for implementing onsite or subsidized care that meets the unique needs of medical students, residents and fellows," according to the release.

Region: United States ^[3]

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