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MEDIA RELEASE

COVID-19 screening tests must be expedited for all frontline medical staff

General Practice Registrars Australia (GPR Australia) President Dr Sama Balasubramanian has today called on the Federal Government and the Department of Health to ensure the national response expedites the standard COVID-19 PCR testing for all frontline medical staff, including GP trainees and their supervisors.

"The recently announced expansion of the national COVID-19 testing guidelines to include any doctor or healthcare worker who has developed cough or flu-like symptoms is a really positive step," said Dr Balasubramanian.

"I now call on Minister Hunt and the Department of Health to introduce effective measures to immediately expedite COVID-19 PCR testing for all frontline medical staff."

"GPR Australia has received a number of reports from GP trainees having to wait for more than three days to receive their COVID-19 test result. GP trainees have quite limited paid sick leave to cover this time out of practice. If their COVID-19 test is found to be negative they must be supported in their return to work when deemed safe, according to our evolving public health criteria".

"Rapid turnaround of COVID-19 PCR tests for GP trainees and their supervisors - and all medical practitioners - is essential. It means that, in the case of a negative COVID-19 test result, the time spent in self-isolation will be minimised and doctors can get back to supporting their communities."

"GP trainees care deeply about the health and wellbeing of the communities in which they serve; it is in the best interests of their local community, the GP trainee, their practice and the wider healthcare system that test results for all frontline medical staff are delivered as quickly as possible."

ENDS

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