



Workplace aggression in Australian clinical medical practice

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Workplace aggression in health care

- **Primarily nursing studies:**
 - International and Australian
- **Aggression in medicine:**
 - UK, Europe, USA and Canada
 - Mainly small-scale studies
 - Mostly patient aggression
 - Few Australian studies (eg Tolhurst, Magin)
- **A feature of clinical medical work:**
 - Limited knowledge of scope and effects





Contemporary policy responses

- **High profile incidents and negative outcomes:**
 - Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED)
 - Zero tolerance to violence (ZTV) policies and programs
 - Screening for aggression
 - Restraint techniques
- **Limited evidence**



Research

- **Aims:**
 - Extent and impact of workplace aggression
 - Implications for the profession, communities and governments
- **Research questions:**
 - Prevalence
 - Prevention and minimisation
 - Effects
 - Protective and risk factors



MABEL Survey

- **Longitudinal study of clinical doctors (~10,000)**
- **Workforce participation patterns and determinants**
 - Wave 1 (2008) – data now publicly available
 - Wave 2 (2009) – finalised for internal use
 - Wave 3 (2010) – includes aggression research

<https://mabel.org.au>

Medicine in Australia:
Balancing Employment and Life





Workplace aggression

- **Forms:**
 - Verbal and physical
- **Sources:**
 - Patients, relatives & carers, co-workers, others
- **Prevalence:**
 - Experienced last 12 months
- **Prevention:**
 - Policies and procedures
 - Alerts, incident reporting and training
 - Environmental management and design



Impact and outcomes

- **Personal characteristics**
- **Work environment**
- **Health and well-being**
- **Job satisfaction**
- **Workforce participation intentions:**
 - Change hours of work
 - Reduce clinical workload
 - Leave medicine.



Wave 3 pilot data

- **320 usable responses**
- **New and returning survey participants:**
 - GPs (116)
 - Specialists (139)
 - Hospital Non Specialists (32)
 - Specialists In Training (33)



Policy implications

- **Protective and risk factors**
- **Outcomes:**
 - Job satisfaction
 - Workforce participation intentions
 - Access to medical services
- **Policy and standards:**
 - Evidence based



Thank you

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MABEL data access enquiries

<https://mabel.org.au/data.html>