



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

AMA (WA) BENEFITS AND SERVICES ACCESS POLICY

One of the main roles of the AMA (WA) is to protect and support the individual and collective needs of our members' workplace, industrial and medico-legal interests.

The AMA (WA) is not a government-funded organisation. The work done on behalf of members is funded by the collective annual subscriptions of the Association's membership. These funds are directed into activities and services that directly benefit members and align with the goals and objectives of the Association.

Membership subscriptions allow the Association to employ skilled and experienced staff who protect members' interests, defend their rights and improve their workplace terms and conditions. There are no resources available to help doctors who have not joined the Association.

Clearly, most WA doctors are aware that non-members benefit from many of the Association's activities. These include important representations such as the improved pay and conditions that come from AMA (WA) negotiated salaried agreements and securing government funding for improved private practice infrastructure.

However, non-members are not eligible to receive AMA benefits and services. These include the invaluable service of one-on-one assistance when a member encounters problems in the workplace. At some time in their career, most WA medical practitioners face a workplace dispute or problem of some sort. This could be a bullying colleague or manager, an error in pay or leave entitlements, an unjust accusation, issues with management directives, undergoing Medicare review, private practice partnership issues or a range of contractual disputes. Only AMA members have the security of knowing they can access the Association's expert staff and extensive resources to deal with such a problem.

As the Association does not provide assistance to non-members, it is in your interests to join before a problem arises. In the same way that no one expects to buy insurance for a car that has already been written off, there should be no expectation that the AMA (WA) will assist in resolving a pre-existing problem. If you join in good faith and a workplace, industrial or medico-legal issue subsequently arises, you will receive the Association's full support – even if you have been a member for only a short time. There is no waiting period for problems that arise after you join.

New members joining with pre-existing problems:

The AMA (WA) Council, while encouraging all medical practitioners to join the Association and enjoy the benefits that membership provides, is committed to imposing strict limits on the access to membership services of those who seek to join the AMA with pre-existing problems and unresolved disputes.

The AMA (WA) Benefits and Services Access Policy provides guidelines which ensure that the highest standard of workplace, industrial and medico-legal advice is provided on an equal basis to all financial members.

1. Non-members are not eligible for assistance.
2. Non-members are not eligible to access any member benefits or services.
3. Where a medical practitioner joins the AMA and a problem develops after the date of joining, then the member shall be entitled to advice and assistance immediately.
4. Where a medical practitioner joins the AMA, that member is eligible to access all member benefits other than the Fellowship Examination discount on the membership subscription (which requires 3 years' prior membership).
5. Where a non-member seeks advice about an existing problem or a member seeks assistance in relation to a problem that arose prior to the time they joined the AMA, no assistance will be granted (save that advice may be given in exceptional circumstances), subject to the provisions of Point 6 below.
6. In the interests of progressing the objectives of the AMA, a special exemption may be granted at the discretion of an authorised Executive staff member whereby Point 5 may be waived in whole or in part.

New members with pre-existing problems and disputes will be offered the following options for assistance:

1. Initial advice through consultation with an AMA (WA) Executive Officer.
2. Referral to an appropriate outside agency, if one exists.
3. Full or partial assistance may be provided at the discretion of an authorised Executive staff member in special circumstances where more than one member is affected by a workplace, industrial or medico-legal problem, or where other circumstances are evident (e.g. mental health), depending on the nature of the issue.

For Point 3 above to be considered, it is incumbent upon the non-member to disclose the nature of any existing problems or disputes at the time of making application to membership. Failure to do so may result in any subsequent approach to an authorised Executive staff member, under the provision of Point 3 above, failing a discretionary ruling.

Unfinancial Members

Unfinancial members are not entitled to any workplace, industrial or medico-legal assistance or access to any member-only benefits or services until such time as they pay the annual subscription and any arrears.