

MEDCHI, MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 18-19

INTRODUCED BY: MedChi Medical Student Section; Mary Melati, Ian Qian, Yixuan Wang,
University of Maryland School of Medicine

SUBJECT: Supporting Culture Transformation Initiative at University of Maryland
School of Medicine and University of Maryland Medical Center

Whereas, Sexual harassment is described by unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment¹; and

Whereas, A meta-analysis of 51 studies published over a 24-year period (1987–2011) found that 59.4% of medical trainees had experienced at least one form of harassment or discrimination during their training, most commonly perpetrated by individuals more senior to them²; and

Whereas, Women in medicine who experience harassment report a negative effect on confidence in themselves as professionals, a negative effect in their career advancement, and have lower mental health, job satisfaction, and sense of safety at work³⁻⁴; and

Whereas, The American Medical Association Code of Medical Ethics 9.1.3 states that sexual harassment in the practice of medicine is unethical, and encourages physicians to promote and adhere to strict sexual harassment policies in medical workplaces; and

Whereas, University of Maryland School of Medicine (UMSOM) and University of Maryland Medical Center policies state a commitment in providing a working and learning environment free from all types of sex and gender-based discrimination and harassment⁵⁻⁶; and

Whereas, Yet in August 2018, a lawsuit made by the plaintiff was filed against USMOM for ignoring sexual harassment complaints of unwanted advances from a colleague in a higher position over the course of three years, and upon further investigation it was found that three other women had similar complaints⁷; and

Whereas, A survey of 180 current UMSOM medical students found that 37% have witnessed or experienced disparaging or inappropriate comments from a superior during their time at UMSOM, and 25% reported feeling afraid to report an event due to fear of retaliation from a superior⁸; and

Whereas, Current UMSOM students rate their level of confidence that University of Maryland, Baltimore would appropriately and ethically handle a report of sexual harassment as an average of 5.2/10⁸; and

Whereas, The Culture Transformation Initiative (CTI) was formed to create a diverse, inclusive respectful and professional environment, to ensure diverse, effective, and accountable leadership that is committed to reducing and eliminating harassment, discrimination, and retaliation, to improve transparency and accountability, to monitor the impact of CTI, and to commit to scholarship⁹; and

Whereas, MedChi policy opposes sexual discrimination and harassment, and advocates for Maryland physicians and medical students; therefore be it

Resolved, that MedChi communicate support for the Culture Transformation Initiative at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and University of Maryland Medical Center.

As amended and adopted by the House of Delegates at its meeting on November 2, 2019.

References:

1. Facts About Sexual Harassment. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. <https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/publications/fs-sex.cfm>.
2. Fnais N, Soobiah C, Chen MH, et al. Harassment and Discrimination in Medical Training. *Academic Medicine*. 2014;89(5):817-827. doi:10.1097/acm.000000000000200.
3. Jagsi R, Griffith KA, Jones R, Perumalswami CR, Ubel P, Stewart A. Sexual Harassment and Discrimination Experiences of Academic Medical Faculty. *JAMA*. 2016;315(19). doi:10.1001/jama.2016.2188.
4. Vargas EA, Brassel ST, Cortina LM, Settles IH, Johnson TR, Jagsi R. #MedToo: A Large-Scale Examination of the Incidence and Impact of Sexual Harassment of Physicians and Other Faculty at an Academic Medical Center. *Journal of Womens Health*. September 2019. doi:10.1089/jwh.2019.7766.
5. UMB Policy Prohibiting Sexual Misconduct and Sex and Gender-Based Discrimination. University of Maryland, Baltimore. <https://www.umaryland.edu/policies-and-procedures/library/administration/policies/vi-160a.php>
6. Sexual and Other Harassment. PDF. University of Maryland Medical Center. Baltimore.
7. Richman T, Bowie L. Lawsuit claims University of Maryland medical school ignored sexual harassment complaints. Baltimore Sun. Published November 13, 2018.
8. UMB SOM Student Report: Misconduct & Harassment: Data and recommendations for achieving a “Just Culture”. February 27, 2019.
9. Culture Transformation Initiative. University of Maryland School of Medicine. <https://www.medschool.umaryland.edu/CTI/>