

9 January 2014

Medicare Local Review Panel
Department of Health
Australian Government
GPO Box 9848
Canberra ACT 2601

MLreview@health.gov.au

Dear Professor Horvath

Stakeholder submissions for Review of Medicare Locals

As you are aware Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand Inc (Medical Deans) is the peak national and cross -Tasman professional body representing entry-level medical education, training and research in Australia and New Zealand. The organisation's membership comprises the Deans of Australia's current 18 medical schools and the two New Zealand schools.

Medical Deans works in partnership with organisations across the medical workforce continuum such as the Confederation of Postgraduate Medical Education Councils and Committee of Presidents of Medical Colleges, with medical students through the Australian Medical Students' Association, with Indigenous Health organisations such as the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association, the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation and Te ORA, and with workforce organisations such as Health Workforce Australia.

On behalf of Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand Inc. we provide the following submission covering the particular terms of reference outlined below:

Other related matters

1. Clinical training and building primary medical care workforce capacity

Issues

- HWA 2025¹ identifies general practice as an 'in need' specialty
- There is a large pipeline of Australian medical graduates (3284 in 2012) and a predicted 3519 in 2014². Thus the demand for quality clinical training at entry level and importantly at the prevocational and vocational period is growing rapidly.
- Clinical supervision capability for all level of learners in the medical training continuum in many primary care settings is reaching capacity
- The Mason Review³ identified the need for evidence based policy particularly related to programs that address workforce mal distribution both geographically and by

¹ HWA 2025

² Medical Deans Data Collection 2013

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specialty. It also identified a large number of Government funded projects in this space.

Medical Deans support:

- Nationally and regionally coordinated clinical training across the continuum. This includes medical schools working with their local Medicare Local and regional training provider to provide strong networks for clinical training provision. This is particularly important in regional and rural settings where rural clinical schools have essential infrastructure and networks to support these developments and partnerships.
- Building additional capacity in the service sector for longer term clinical placements in primary care. There is increasing evidence that longer clinical placements in general practice, particularly in regional and regional settings, increases career choice for primary care/general practice.⁴ Medicare locals are well placed to work with local medical schools to build this capacity.

2. Medical Research

Issues

- Medicare Locals, through their role and partnerships, have the potential to facilitate robust primary health care and population research.

Medical Deans support

- Building formal academic research collaborations with their local universities and research institutes. eg the GP referral for obesity study run out of the Eastern Sydney Medicare Local and University of NSW

3. Partnerships

Issues

- Medicare Locals occupy a new space in the health care system being neither a traditional funder nor provider but with an expectation to improve patient access to primary care services and improve the patient pathway between primary and secondary care. To achieve this objective, development of partnerships with all relevant stakeholders is critical. Education and training providers are key to supporting this system and pathways.

Medical Deans support

- Identifying shared opportunities for board/committee representation at the Medicare Local and university/ school level
- Reducing duplication of educational/CPD activities by engagement of local educational/training expertise
- Facilitation of joint appointments in the service and education sector to strengthen the education, training and research agenda in primary care
- Engagement of local education and training networks to assist in building stronger pathways/collaborations with the local LHNs

³ Mason J. Review of Australian Government Health Workforce Programs 2013

⁴ Data from MSOD 2013

In summary Medical Deans believe that support for training of our future medical workforce is critical to a sustainable health care system, particularly in primary care. Thus we support national and regional structures that assist in building the key networks of partners needed to realise this outcome in the most efficient and cost effective way.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Smith', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Professor Peter Smith
President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judy Searle', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Professor Judy Searle
Chief Executive Officer

cc Allan Groth, Universities Australia