



Clinical Placements Reform Forum

Professor Nicholas Saunders

Chair, CPAG and Vice-Chancellor of the University of
Newcastle

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Universities Australia



- Formed out of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee in 2007 as the peak industry body
- Promoting the value and benefits of higher education
- Committed to ensuring Australia's reputation as a highly innovative and educated nation
- Active player in the determination and formulation of public policy

The UA Working Group on the Health Workforce



- A Working Group was created following the Productivity Commission report on the Health Workforce in 2005
- Worked collaboratively with government agencies to ensure that the university voice was heard on clinical education and workforce matters
- Assisted collecting data from universities on clinical placements in 2007/08 – at best a partial success

The CPAG (2008)

- Name change reflected new emphasis on provision of advice on clinical education to:
 - UA membership
 - NHWT and other agencies
- CPAG also interested in work relating to:
 - National Registration and Accreditation Scheme
 - National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission

The Clinical Placement Advisory Group - Membership



The CPAG consists of a number of senior academics in Allied Health, Medicine and Nursing, namely:

- Professor Nicholas Saunders (Chair), Vice-Chancellor, The University of Newcastle
- Professor Lesley Barclay, Professor, Health Services Development, Charles Darwin University
- Professor Allan Carmichael, Dean of Health Science, The University of Tasmania
- Professor John Catford, Dean of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Studies, Deakin University
- Emeritus Professor John Daly, Dean of Nursing, Midwifery and Health, University of Technology, Sydney

Membership continued

- Professor Michael Hensley, Dean of Medicine, The University of Newcastle
- Professor Newell Johnson, Foundation Dean of Dentistry and Oral Health, Griffith University
- Professor Clare Pollock, Head of School of Psychology, Curtin University of Technology
- Associate Professor Gillian Webb, Associate Professor (Physiotherapy), The University of Melbourne
- Professor Jill White, Dean of Nursing, The University of Sydney
- Professor Ian Wronski, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Medicine, Health and Molecular Biology), James Cook University

Many CPAG members are here today. Make yourselves known to them.

The CPAG – Key Messages



- Universities educate the bulk of the health workforce
- Increasing difficulty in accessing enough adequate clinical placements
- Needs to be a more organised approach to the allocation and funding of clinical placements
- Cooperation required to prevent clinical training falling between health and education portfolio silos

The Working Group's Data Collection Exercise



- In 2007/08 the Working Group attempted to collate information from universities about clinical placements in order to assist NHWT
 - Number of students
 - Clinical hours required per student per year
 - Details on the clinical places, including number, cost to universities (direct and indirect) and the providers used
- Disciplines chosen were Medicine, Nursing, Clinical Psychology, Physiotherapy, Podiatry and Dietetics

The Lessons Learned

- Information is not readily available
- Approximately half of all schools did not respond
- From those that did, we discovered
 - That universities use widely different terminologies and systems of record
 - Wide divergence in the number of hours of clinical placements required in equivalent programmes
 - Limited evidence to suggest that schools are experiencing shortfalls between required and achieved numbers of clinical placements

UA Reaction to the COAG Initiatives



- Universities Australia provides in-principle support to the COAG decisions.
- \$500M for clinical training should improve the ability and willingness of health care providers to provide places for students.
- The devil is in the detail

Hopes for the Forum

- Enable a useful two-way discussion:
 - What is working in the current system
 - What isn't
 - How to best keep the good and fix the bad, without creating something ugly
- Encourage the creation of an Agency that will serve the needs of current and future students, university and health care agencies, and the community