

Specialists Arrangement Submission

19/02/2009 11:52 AM

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The proposal reflects the tension between professional standards and workforce concerns that is central to the NRAS. It would give effective control over specialties and standards to the Ministerial Council. This will undermine the international standing of Australian specialist qualifications, since independence from Government is generally seen as a fundamental requirement for adequate professional standards.

Any shortage of dental specialists in Australia arises, not from any suppression of opportunities within the profession, but from either:

- a shortage of candidates; or
- a shortage of academics to train them.

It should be noted that the need for any new specialty is far more likely to first detected by the profession than by any external agency. Recent evolution of new dental specialties (such as Special Needs Dentistry) confirms this view.

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