

18 May 2009

Specialist Arrangements
Attention: Practitioner regulation Subcommittee

nraip@dhs.vic.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professions

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Lay Committee of the RCPA was not able to tender a submission by the due date. We apologise for the delay and kindly request consideration of our late submission as part of the community consultation on this matter.

The Lay Advisory Committee is a Committee of The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia, that provides advice and support to the RCPA Council on issues which impact on the general community. This Advisory Committee supports the Council by engaging with the community to promote an awareness of the importance of pathology in the delivery of high quality medicine in the community.

It is the view of the Lay Advisory Committee that that the proposal by the Federal Government to adopt a national registration and accreditation scheme be treated as two distinct initiatives on the basis we believe there is considerable merit in one and considerable risk in the other.

The Lay AC supports the view that national registration within Australia would provide institutional efficiencies through the amalgamation of state medical boards and the inclusion of selected allied healthcare and medicine disciplines. These changes would enhance productivity, skills and knowledge transfer as well as transparency.

This Committee, does not, however, support the proposal for a National Accreditation Scheme to move away from a peer review model, currently vested in the Australian Medical Council. The Committee sees this as potentially detrimental to the public good in that the Australian Medical Council, independent of Governments, holds its peers to account following rigorous scrutiny when accrediting training programs and international practitioners. It is feared that administrative drivers would significantly influence the process and therefore unduly influence, medical outcomes. In short, this Committee would advocate for the separation of functions and powers on the basis of avoiding conflicts, having good governance embedded in a process upon which practitioners, the community and the government all have a shared interest in transparency and independence. It is important to have Australia remain aligned with International standards in this regard.

Yours sincerely



Ms Roseanne Healy
Chairman, RCPA Lay Advisory Committee