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"Registration Arrangements Submission. Attention: Practitioner Regulation Subcommittee"

I suggest that the Practitioner Regulation Subcommittee consider a change to the registration categories for medical practitioners to put to the National Registration and Accreditation Implementation Team. If change were to be made to the categories, the implementation of a national register would be an appropriate time to do it.

There is no justification for the concept that general practitioners are any less "specialised" than specialists. This is a perception that is held not only by a significant number of "specialists" but also by too many general practitioners and the community, including the general public and the media.

There is good reason to seriously consider replacing the general practitioner label with an alternative such as Primary Care Provider. This should be recognised by the profession as a whole and the regulating authorities such as the Medical Board, the HIC, and Health Service Providers.

The term specialist is anachronistic and should be abandoned.

The categories could be e.g. Primary Care_ procedural, Primary Care_ non-procedural, Physician_ internal medicine, Physician_ cardiology, Surgeon_ general, Surgeon_ cardio-thoracic etc.

The present referral regulations should be maintained with a referral from a Primary Care Provider needed for consultations with other categories to qualify for refunds from Medicare and the Medical Funds.

This would encourage_

- More people to use the services of primary care doctors,
- Reduce unnecessary specialist referrals, and
- Stop cross referral by specialists to other specialists

Primary Care Providers who are trained and accredited for performing procedures should receive the same fee as specialists for doing those procedures. This will reduce the cost of health services, as it will eliminate unnecessary specialist consultations and the fees for the consultation that would be charged as well as the procedure.

Yours sincerely,



Don Kane
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cc. RDQA, ACRRM, GP Alliance

nraip@dhs.vic.gov.au by COB 29 October 2008.