



The Royal Australasian  
College of Physicians

From the President

27 February 2012

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: [community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Committee Secretary

### **Palliative Care in Australia**

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs inquiry into Palliative Care in Australia.

The RACP has prepared a submission to the inquiry that specifically addresses the following Terms of Reference:

- (b) the funding arrangements for palliative care provision;
- (d) the effectiveness of a range of palliative care arrangements;
- (e) the composition of the palliative care workforce; and
- (g) advance care planning.

The RACP makes the following comments and recommendations to the inquiry, specifically that:

1. The coverage and mix of palliative care services across Australia must meet the diverse needs of the population;
2. Palliative care services must be properly established and funded based on comprehensive, national data and evidence as to local population needs;
3. Palliative care services must be transparently funded and funding arrangements must facilitate the delivery of care in the setting that is most appropriate for the patient, which may include in their own home and in residential aged care facilities;
4. Specialist palliative care must be available and accessible to patients with complex care needs in the location that best suits their needs and preferences;
5. The palliative care workforce must be well trained and educated, with capacity to meet the current and future needs of patients with a life limiting illness; and
6. Advance care planning is an important tool but should only be one aspect of a comprehensive palliative care strategy.

The RACP would be pleased to provide further information to the Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs inquiry into Palliative Care in Australia. Should you require further information, please contact Sarah Barter, Policy Officer on (02) 9256 9671 or email [sarah.barter@racp.edu.au](mailto:sarah.barter@racp.edu.au).

Yours sincerely

John Kolbe

Attachment: Submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs inquiry into Palliative Care in Australia.