

Subject: SUBMISSION TO SENATE INQUIRY INTO AHPRA
Date: Wednesday, 1 June 2011

1st June, 2011

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AN APPROPRIATE CATEGORY FOR REGISTRATION OF SENIOR ACTIVE DOCTORS IS NEEDED

When the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) took over the registration of Practitioners from the State Medical Boards, it offered provision only for full registration, or total retirement. It is evidently the belief of AHPRA and MBA that this is in the interest of public safety. However, no instances of such failure of public safety have been reported. With such classification, there was no recognition of the fact that many Senior Active Doctors have chosen, very reasonably, to cut down their practices as their age advances.

We need a category of registration for Senior Active Doctors that recognises the contribution these practitioners can still make, even though not working full time. It seems clear and reasonable that a provision is needed to allow Senior Active Doctors to stage gradual withdrawal from full time medical practice, without having to fulfil all of the requirements of Continuing Professional Development, and full Professional Indemnity, until such time as each one chooses full retirement.

The Australian Doctors' Fund has formulated a 'Proposal for Senior

Active Doctors' which recognises the right of doctors to maintain their chosen level of practice by having access to graded categories of registration, with appropriate criteria to be met in order to qualify for these different grades of registration. It seems appropriate and reasonable to do so. In this way, the practical experience, wisdom, and knowledge of such a senior person can be used to the advantage of the Community, and the Profession. We are always being told that the elderly should endeavour to continue to work beyond the usually accepted 'retirement age', especially as the longevity of our population is increasing. In the case of the medical profession, it seems that the exact of the reverse of this situation is being rigorously applied.

I am quite sure that the Inquiry has received many copies of the Australian Doctors Fund proposal, so I do not enclose a copy here. However, I strongly support the principles that the Fund proposes, and I suggest that the Inquiry, after very serious consideration, should approve their proposal. Such a decision can lead to the inclusion of a category of 'Senior Active Doctors' in the registration process.

