

Inquiry into Registration Processes and Support for Overseas Trained Doctors: Public hearing of 25 February 2011

Questions on notice

1. What proportion of the AMC and Medical Board members currently or more recently hold or held senior positions in the medical college? If no figure is available, is there a feeling that it would be a majority? (Hall on behalf of Irons Transcript at HA 56)

Members of the Medical Board of Australia who hold/ have recently held senior positions in the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP).

Two Medical Board of Australia members are Fellows of the RACP and hold advisory positions on College committees.

Members of the Australian Medical Council who hold/ have recently held senior positions in RACP.

Based on Australian Medical Council advice, three directors of the AMC are Fellows of the RACP.

The AMC also advised the RACP regarding AMC Committees. Two AMC chairs are Fellows of the RACP with current advisory positions in the College.

2. Which legislation are you covered under for training? (Wyatt Transcript at HA 57)

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) is a not-for-profit organisation, registered as a public company limited by guarantee and has been incorporated since 1938.

The RACP is recognised by the *Health Insurance Act 1973* (Cth). Section 3D recognises a medical practitioner as a specialist for the purpose of the Act if a "relevant organisation" states that the medical practitioner meets the criteria for a specialty. These include that the medical practitioner:

(b) is a fellow of a relevant organisation in relation to the specialty; and

(c) has obtained, as a result of successfully completing an appropriate course of study, a relevant qualification in relation to the relevant organisation.

"Relevant organisations" and "relevant qualifications" are set out in Sch 4 of the *Health Insurance Regulations 1975* (Cth). At items 102 – 105, the RACP is listed as a "relevant organisation" (together with its divisions, chapters and faculties) as are its qualifications (that is, FRACP, FACHPM, FACHAM, FACHSHM, FAFOEM, FAFRM and FAFPHM).

The RACP is indirectly governed by the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law*. This is a uniform law providing for the regulation of various health professions including the medical profession. The RACP's role in training is covered by legislation as follows:

1. Section 31 establishes National Boards, including the Medical Board of Australia;
2. Section 35 requires the National Boards to approve accredited programs of study and to oversee the assessment of the knowledge and clinical skills of overseas trained applicants;
3. Section 43 allows National Boards to appoint an external accreditation authority to carry out their accreditation functions. These functions include:
 - (a) *developing accreditation standards for approval by a National Board; or*
 - (b) *assessing programs of study, and the education providers that provide the programs of study, to determine whether the programs meet approved accreditation standards; or*

- (c) *assessing authorities in other countries who conduct examinations for registration in a health profession, or accredit programs of study relevant to registration in a health profession, to decide whether persons who successfully complete the examinations or programs of study conducted or accredited by the authorities have the knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes necessary to practise the profession in Australia; or*
- (d) *overseeing the assessment of the knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes of overseas qualified health practitioners who are seeking registration in a health profession under this Law and whose qualifications are not approved qualifications for the health profession; or*
- (e) *making recommendations and giving advice to a National Board about a matter referred to in paragraph (a), (b), (c) or (d).*

4. The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is the external accreditation authority appointed by the Medical Board of Australia.
5. The AMC accredits providers of specialist medical training such as the RACP and their specialist training programs which lead to qualifications for practice in recognised medical specialties.
6. The RACP and its training is regularly audited by the AMC for the purpose of allowing it to advise the Medical Board of Australia on matters of training, assessment and recognition of qualifications. The RACP is next due for auditing in 2014. An overview of recent reviews and reports relating to the AMC's accreditation of the RACP is available at <http://www.racp.edu.au/page/about-racp/australia>.