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To
The Secretary of the Committee
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Please note about my submission- Identifying data to be removed.

CC

Ref- Inquiry into Registration Processes and Support for Overseas Trained Doctors

Sub Ref: Moratorium on provider number and unclear regulations

I really appreciate the Federal Govt MPs, for taking initiatives to look into the problems of OTDs

Summary of my situation-

OTD from India, Started to work in NT Alice springs RFDS as retrieval medical officer from Sept 2005 till January 2007 and there after RFDS Kalgoorlie WA and continuing as such till to date.

Passed FRAGP in 2007 and got permanent residency in 2008.

Thanks for selecting me as mentor for IMGs during year 2010 which gave me an awareness of IMGs recurring issues.

One of my main concern, which am sure many OTDs/IMGs, are facing in remote Australia is summarised as follows.

1] No clear cut answers or system to answer the queries and grievances of specific situations of OTDs in regard to reduction of period for unrestricted provider number other than general rules. There is no central body to assess specific situations and give clear information on the reduction of moratorium period.

2] I have repeatedly contacted Medicare and Rural health west regarding my specific situation regarding moratorium on provider number. Please see my repeated emails to Medicare Australia, and RHW .This is true for many OTDs

There is no formal Federal system to assess my past 66 months of work in Alice Springs[15 months] and Kalgoorlie [48 months] to give me an assurance, that by working in present location, by which year I will be eligible to get unrestricted provider number.

3] If I was under 5 year OTDs program of Rural health West, from Sept 2005 & worked in Kalgoorlie [Alice springs is more remote], then I would have been eligible for unrestricted provider number by Sept 2010. I was unaware of that program and no one told me during my initial years in Australia. But I have full filled all required criteria similar to GP under 5 year OTD program and I am not considered equal to my next door GP [who is under 5 year OTD program].

My concern is colleague who came together with me and was under 5 year OTD program got unrestricted provider number and for me [because I did not know about the program and did not take any benefit from 5 year program!!]-**working in similar condition [to be honest in most unfriendly situation], in same place is not considered for same benefit. The reason rural health and Medicare says is there is no system to assess the benefit retrospectively.**

4] I did not get any incentives from rural health for my training and passed my fellowship exam in 2007. I am worried, why my hard works in Kalgoorlie is not retrospectively considered for 5 year program and made me **eligible for unrestricted provider number by September 2010**

5] Please note that more than 80% of retrieval doctors working in remote area RFDS in WA is OTDs. 4 out of 5 RFDS base in WA is in rural area. OTDs service in Emergency medical retrievals and primary health care in rural remote WA is remarkable.

6] Please note the exceptionally difficult working scenarios in single engine propeller plane with single pilot in most unfriendly time and situations. It is natural that if the work is not recognised and rewarded properly, the agony can affect the doctor and family including the professional work in the most difficult scenarios both on remote grounds and on plane.