

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY COALITION SENATORS

1.1 Coalition Senators acknowledge those of the medical profession who were sufficiently courageous to expose some of the limitations of the Professional Services Review process.

1.2 There is no doubt in the minds of the Coalition Senators that the processes were deficient and led to unjust outcomes. This in turn must detract from people joining or remaining in the medical profession at a time when there are very real shortages.

1.3 Whether some concerns were exaggerated or as elegantly advocated as they may have been is a matter for judgment. What is not a matter for judgement is the genuine deep concerns of many in the medical profession about the process and procedures.

1.4 But for the courageous advocacy by some and their willingness to litigate many of the deficiencies would not have been so widely exposed.

1.5 Coalition Senators believe the issue of the PSR is an issue in which partisan politics plays no role. Indeed we expressed our concerns and asked questions with a view to ventilating the issues to achieve a more acceptable, fairer, and efficient methodology for the oversight of taxpayer's money in an area where government is rightly concerned to protect the integrity of the Commonwealth Medicare benefits and pharmaceutical benefits programmes.

1.6 In March 2011 changes were made to the PSR and with them Coalition Senators trust a new confidence and acceptance. A review in 12 months time will allow for ongoing monitoring.

1.7 Coalition Senators urge the soon to be appointed personnel of the PSR to take a more consultative approach in the performance of their functions and ascertain methodologies whereby fairness to all can be transparently observed. This is especially important for those in the emerging areas of speciality. This will go a long way to restoring confidence by the profession in the operations of the PSR.

Senator the Hon Eric Abetz

Senator Chris Back

Senator Judith Adams

Senator Bridget McKenzie