

18 April 2018

## *Royal Australian College of General Practitioners’ response to the External review of the specialist medical colleges’ performance – specialist international medical graduate assessment process*

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to Deloitte Access Economics’ *External review of the specialist medical colleges’ performance – specialist international medical graduate assessment process*.

The RACGP offers the following update to the facts relied upon in the report.

“RACGP also noted in the consultation as part of the review that currently once a SIMG has been awarded an FAEG, they are able to claim the higher Medicare rebate. Under the new process, a substantially comparable SIMG will be required to undertake a period of peer review prior to applying for Fellowship. This would result in the SIMG not being able to access the higher Medicare rebate during the period of peer review. RACGP is working to resolve this issue.”

*RACGP, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners; SIMG, specialist international medical graduate; FAEG, Fellowship ad eundem gradum*

*Deloitte Access Economics - External review of the specialist medical colleges’ performance – specialist international medical graduate assessment process, 2018; p. 150.*

The RACGP is committed to implementing the new specialist pathway and increasing its compliance with the Medical Board of Australia’s requirements in 2018. The RACGP grants Fellowship to 250-300 substantially comparable specialist international medical graduates (SIMGs) each calendar year. These SIMGs play an important role in meeting workforce requirements for general practitioners in Australia. As summarised in the report, there is no satisfactory mechanism for these SIMGs to access higher Medicare rebates while working toward Fellowship of the RACGP (FRACGP).

As an interim action to maintain the ability of substantially comparable SIMGs to come to and work in Australia, the RACGP will continue to award Fellowship *ad eundem gradum* (FAEG) to SIMGs in this category. However, the RACGP is deliberating measures that would encourage SIMGs holding FAEG to complete peer review in compliance with the Board’s guidelines, including the possibility of awarding FRACGP to SIMGs who hold FAEG and successfully complete their post-FAEG requirements. The RACGP also acknowledges its obligation to report non-compliant SIMGs to the Board for further action. This allows the RACGP to more closely align with the Board’s requirements while it continues working toward a permanent solution to this issue.