

Medical Board of Australia consultation on the funding of external doctors' health programs

Submission received from: **Anonymous**

Question 1: Is there a need for health programs?

Do you see any value in, or need for external health programs for medical students and/or doctors? Please explain your reasoning

Yes, most definitely.

Such programs encourage an ill doctor to seek early advice/treatment in a non threatening environment.

Whilst it is not the intent of the Board to be punitive, the non regulatory role of the health programs may be seen by the ill doctor as safer(more personal), less judgemental and more likely to lead to long term cure than management by the regulatory body.

The flow on effects have been outlined in the information given in pages 1-4 but most importantly, the community is best protected by earlier detection and treatment of a potentially impaired doctor

Question 2: Preferred model for external health programs

Of the existing models in Australia as described above, is there a model that you would prefer to see adopted nationally? Is there an alternative model that you would like to see adopted nationally?

The VDHP model as it is most comprehensive and provides services to all needs in this group of illnesses.

Question 3: The role of the Board in funding external health programs

Do you believe that it is the role of the Board to fund external health programs?

Yes, most definitely.

Question 4: Range of services provided by doctors' health programs

What services should be provided by doctors' health programs. In addition to the ones you have selected, what other services (if any) should be provided by doctors' health programs?

Telephone advice available 24/7

Referral to expert practitioners for assessment and management

Develop and maintain a list of practitioners who are willing to treat colleagues

Education services for medical practitioners and medical students to raise awareness of health issues for the medical profession and to encourage practitioners and students to have a general practitioner

Programs to enhance the skills of medical practitioners who assess and manage the health of doctors

Case management and monitoring (including workplace monitoring) the progress of those who voluntarily enter into Case Management agreements (or similar) with the service

Follow up of all participants contacting or attending the service

Assistance in finding support for re-entry to work and rehabilitation

Research on doctors' health issues

Publication of resources – maintaining a website, newsletters, journal articles

Question 5: Funding

How much of an increase in registration fees is acceptable to you, to fund doctors' health services?

>\$40

Question 6: Other comments

Do you have any other comments or feedback about external health programs?