



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Health and Disability Services
Complaints Office

Our Ref: STR-24-18V2

Executive Officer
Medical Board of Australia
Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
GPO Box 9958
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Dear Executive Officer

DRAFT REVISED GOOD MEDICAL PRACTICE: A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR DOCTORS IN AUSTRALIA

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the *Draft revised Good medical practice: A code of conduct for doctors in Australia*.

The Health and Disability Services Complaints Office (HaDSCO) is a Statutory Authority dealing with complaints about health, disability and mental health services provided in Western Australia and the Indian Ocean Territories. HaDSCO was established to provide an efficient and effective resolution service that contributes to system improvement and quality of service delivery.

The Office administers the *Health and Disability Services Complaints Act 1995* (the Act) and has responsibilities for the complaints functions under Part 6 of the *Disability Services Act 1993* and Part 19 of the *Mental Health Act 2014*. HaDSCO and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency both receive complaints/notifications relating to registered health practitioners.

Complaint issues include a range of matters that include (but are not limited to):

- access to medical records;
- open disclosure requirements;
- communication with patients about treatment options;
- informed consent;
- end of life care;
- advanced care planning;
- decision making in care and treatment and the inclusion of carers, relatives and partners in that process where appropriate; and
- practitioner's responsibilities to make arrangements for the ongoing care of patients if they are not available and the manner of medical practitioners during medico-legal physical examinations.

PO Box B61, Perth, Western Australia, 6838

Complaints and enquiries: (08) 6551 7600 Administration: (08) 6551 7620 Facsimile: (08) 6551 7630

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HaDSCO works with parties to settle complaints and to achieve a range of acceptable outcomes. These may include acknowledgement, apology, explanation, refund or waiver of fees, changes to policy, procedure or improvements to practice. More detailed information is available in our Annual Report which is located at www.hadscowwa.gov.au

Acting impartially, HaDSCO reviews and reports on the cause of complaints, advises on complaints management, undertakes dispute resolution through facilitative processes of negotiation and conciliation, and makes recommendations for redress for individuals and for service improvement. Investigation of complaints occurs when they raise significant concerns of public health and safety to determine whether remedial action should be taken.

Having considered the proposed options in the *Draft revised Good medical practice: A code of conduct for doctors in Australia* we note that the revised code will make explicit the standards of ethical and professional conduct expected of medical practitioners and the community, in particular, the requirement to reflect upon complaints. In this regard, HaDSCO supports Option 2 – Proposed revised code.

Please contact [REDACTED], Manager Complaints on [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED] if you have any queries in relation to the information provided in this correspondence.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

**SARAH COWIE
DIRECTOR
HEALTH AND DISABILITY SERVICES COMPLAINTS OFFICE**

1 August 2018