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5 April 2012

Mr. Martin Fletcher  
Chief Executive Officer  
AHPRA  
GPO Box 9958  
Melbourne 3001  
medboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au

Dear Mr. Fletcher,

### **Consultation on the Board Funding External Doctors' Health Programs**

The Australian Society of Anaesthetists (ASA) is the peak body and leading voice representing the professional interests of Australian anaesthetists. Our members are committed to raising the profile of the profession by promoting the best practice, contributing to policy development and upholding professional standards.

As such, the ASA is grateful for the opportunity to review and reply to the Medical Board of Australia's (MBA) consultation paper '*Board funding external doctors' health programs*'.

The ASA recognises the importance of and sees the value in the existing state based programs which aim to support medical practitioners and medical students who have health concerns.

Primarily, the ASA supports in principle any proposal which could enhance the existing external health programs in each state and territory. At a minimum, this could be through funding secured by a levy on registrants.

Furthermore, the ASA would propose that any such external health programs be operated by bodies independent of MBA / Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), as advised by the existing services and the profession.

There is no evidence available to us which suggests the need for any new, including federal, external health programs, as opposed to the existing state based bodies. Accordingly, we would note the interest of the existing bodies in this matter.

The ASA would also recommend that there should be absolute transparency in any funding change, including transparency at the level of the AHPRA and the MBA

The ASA would appreciate being kept informed of any developments in relation to external doctors' health programs.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Andrew Mulcahy  
**President**