

Department of Health and Human Services

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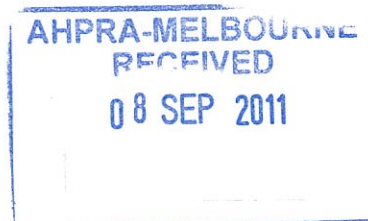
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Dr Joanna Flynn
Chair
Medical Board of Australia
GPO Box 9958
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SCANNED



Dear Dr Flynn

Subject: Proposed Registration Standards for Interns

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) welcomes the opportunity to comment upon the Medical Board of Australia (MBA) draft standards for internship, released in July 2011.

DHHS supports the move away from terms in 'general medicine' and 'general surgery' towards 'experience in medicine and surgery'. This will increase the numbers and diversity of terms available for interns to gain valuable experience. Similarly, the move to allow part time internships will provide greater flexibility for trainees to continue their training at their own pace and with consideration of their individual circumstances.

DHHS would like to note, however, that there are a number of areas in the draft standards which require significant clarification. More detail regarding the nature and type of experience gained in each of the mandatory core terms will be needed in order for the appropriate terms to be identified and accredited. An explicit statement of knowledge, skills and competencies to be obtained in each of the terms would aid this process.

Similarly, there is no mention of how the interns would be assessed in order to ensure that they have achieved the requisite standard of practice for the purposes of general registration. The adoption of a curriculum for intern training, linked to appropriate assessment tools, would facilitate this. In the same way, the process for sign off of satisfactory completion of intern training needs to be stated in a more detailed and explicit fashion. The draft standards mention the requirement for satisfactory supervisor reports. This requirement needs to be more detailed, outlining what constitutes 'satisfactory' and how this is to be measured. Similarly, there should be guidelines for supervisor training in order to equip them with the requisite knowledge and skills to be able to effectively supervise and assess interns

DHHS recognises that, in order to support ongoing arrangements in some other States and Territories, the requirement for a term in Emergency Medicine can be met by undertaking a placement in approved General Practices. We would like to see clear guidelines developed to accredit such practices, in order that the exposure to a wide range of emergency presentations is not compromised.

Whilst we welcome the support for part time internships, there is no mention of the nature of such an internship, e.g. maximum time spent away from clinical training within the two years, or how to decide which interns would be eligible to undertake such training.

Finally, the standards refer to 'approved accreditation bodies' when specifying that the terms need to be accredited. It is not stated who these bodies will be or how they will be accredited. Currently, intern terms in Australia are accredited by the individual State and Territory Postgraduate Medical Education Councils or equivalent. If these bodies are to continue in this role, the process and timelines for them gaining accreditation from the MBA or AMC needs to be outlined.

Yours sincerely



Dr Craig White
Chief Health Officer

30 August 2011