

31 May 2013

Medical Board of Australia
Dr Joanna Flynn
Chair, Medical Board of Australia
G.P.O. Box 9958
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Dr Flynn,

Consultation on proposed changes to the competent authority pathway and specialist pathway for international medical graduates

The Consumers Health Forum of Australia (CHF) welcomes the opportunity to provide comments in response to the consultation on proposed *changes to the competent authority pathway and specialist pathway for international medical graduates*.

CHF is the national peak body representing the interests of Australian healthcare consumers. CHF works to achieve safe, quality, timely healthcare for all Australians, supported by accessible health information and systems.

CHF's primary concern is in ensuring that consumers have access to health practitioners who are trained in a way that is consistent with the needs of the Australian health system and who are competent to practice safely under supervision as interns.

Health consumers face many challenges in accessing skilled health professionals. This is a significant concern, particularly for consumers in regional and remote areas. CHF therefore welcomes these changes, which are aimed at simplifying registration processes and supporting overseas trained doctors, while also ensuring that Australian standards continue to be applied.

In particular, CHF supports the following proposals:

- The twelve month period of supervised practice, which is consistent with requirements for international medical graduates in all other pathways to registration, enabling orientation to the Australian healthcare system and confirming safe practice
- The elimination of specific rotations in competent authority pathway for international medical graduates
- Administrative changes to the specialist pathway, aimed at streamlining the process for assessment of specialist international medical graduates and making the process more transparent.

Overall, CHF considers that the proposed changes to the competent authority pathway are aligned to the consumer interest of increasing health practitioner availability across Australia while maintaining quality of care. We hope that the proposed changes will eliminate duplication and ensures that appropriately trained and qualified international medical graduates are granted provisional registration.

CHF looks forward to the outcomes of this consultation. If you would like to discuss this submission in more detail, please contact CHF Policy Manager, Ms Maiy Azize.

Yours sincerely

Carol Bennett
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER