



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

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Evolution in the Medico-Legal Landscape

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Advice to the Government

**Policy Priorities to enable Health Services
to meet the Healthcare needs of all Australians**

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Key Messages for Government – Newer Models of Care



- Explore options for better use of specialist physicians in alternative models of integrated community based health care outside hospitals, possibly linked with primary care support.
- Uphold commitment to fund National Rehabilitation Program with Comcare (announced May 2013):
 - ❖ Work as part of rehabilitation program
 - ❖ New approaches to 'fit for work' assessment
 - ❖ Resources for GPs supporting recovery of worker
 - ❖ Define national vocational rehabilitation policy to ensure standards for workplace-based rehabilitation



Key Messages for Government – Improve Care



- Open a community dialogue on 'end of life' care:
 - ❖ Awareness raising educational campaigns
 - ❖ Toolkits for aged care homes and families
 - ❖ Consider legislation to clarify the rights of terminally ill patients
- Support National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes and increase access to specialist services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- Act on the findings of the Senate Committee report on Social Determinants of Health.
- Uphold funding commitment for dental care for children, low income adults and people living in the bush (including \$2.7b for child oral health).



Recommendations to Government



1. that the Government adopt the WHO Report and commit to addressing the social determinants of health relevant to the Australian context.
2. that the Government adopt administrative practices that ensure consideration of the social determinants of health in all relevant policy development activities, particularly in relation to education, employment, housing, family and social security policy.
3. that the Government place responsibility for addressing social determinants of health within one agency, with a mandate to address issues across portfolios.
4. that the NHMRC give greater emphasis in its grant allocation priorities to research on public health and social determinants research.
5. that annual progress reports to Parliament be a key requirement of the body tasked with responsibility for addressing the social determinants of health.

Key Messages for Government – Improve Care for Children & Adolescents



- Develop national healthcare standards for incarcerated adolescents.
- Release refugee children in detention into community care.
- Tailor dedicated Quality Use of Medicines strategy to the needs of the paediatric population.
- Develop transition plans for children with disability from family-oriented to independently oriented adult services.

Key Messages for Government – Medical Workforce



- Continue funding Commonwealth Specialist Training Program (STP).
- Fund national rollout of a dual trained physician model in rural, regional and remote areas.
- Reverse decision to cap tax deductions for work-related self-education expenses at \$2000.



Key Messages for Government – Maximise the Uptake of E-health



- Rollout of the Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record (PCEHR) platform.
- Introduce incentive payments to encourage specialist Telehealth consultations in remote, regional and outer metropolitan areas.
- Introduce funding to allow specialist physicians to upgrade their practice IT systems in order to access e-health technologies.

Key Messages for Government – Better Use of Funds



- Overseas studies suggest that waste may constitute up to 30% of healthcare activity.
- Review Medical Services Advisory Committee processes to facilitate a more proactive programme of disinvesting in the 150 + MBS items which are likely to no longer be cost effective on the basis of the most recently available evidence. This would lead to the cessation of clinical interventions which are unnecessary or even harmful & release funds for other activities.
- Support national Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Prevention and Containment Strategy.

