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Ms Naomi Bleeser
Committee Secretary
Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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Dear Ms Bleeser

National Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2010

The AMA welcomes the opportunity to provide a supplementary submission to the Committee on this Bill. We have two issues to raise further to our submission of 19 August 2010.

Regulatory interaction of government bodies

In our first submission, the AMA argued that all legislation supporting the establishment of the new bodies under the National Health and Hospitals Network (NHHN) should be considered together.

The AMA notes that the Treasury's view of the NHHN reforms accords with the AMA's submission. We draw the Committee's attention to page 68 of the Treasury's Incoming Government Brief (Red Book):

To maximise the benefits of the NHHN reforms, implementation should ensure that mechanisms are put in place that allow the new national governance authorities to work together effectively. Effective links between authorities are needed to ensure the right balance between efficiency, safety and equity in the health system.

It will not be possible to ensure that such 'mechanisms' and 'links' are in place if the legislation to establish the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare, the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority, and the National Performance Authority is not able to be considered concurrently by Parliament.

Board membership

One of the platforms of the Government's health reform agenda is to increase clinician engagement in decisions about health care delivery. Accordingly, clause 20 of the NHHN Bill should be amended to require that a practising medical practitioner is included on the Board of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. This will ensure medical input is provided to important safety and quality initiatives.

Yours sincerely

Dr Andrew Pesce
President

15 October 2010

D10/5833