

29 August 2012

Dr Richard Grant
Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Email: corporations.joint@aph.gov.au

Dear Dr Grant

RE: Tax Laws Amendment (Special Conditions for Not-for-profit Concessions) Bill 2012

I understand the Committee will shortly consider the proposed 'In-Australia' legislative changes for charities. I write to confirm earlier discussions on the proposed changes and to re-affirm our position on the issue.

The George Institute for Global Health is a world-class medical research facility that undertakes critically important clinical research into the causes, prevention and treatment of the most common diseases affecting Australians, including heart disease, stroke and kidney conditions. Through this work we aim not only to improve the health of Australians, but also that of people around the world. Through our research we are addressing the global epidemic of chronic disease on a scale that puts Australian medical research on the global health map.

Our discussions to date indicate that the proposed changes are not intended to target medical research institutes. As I understand it, our concerns have been recognised and as part of the proposed legislation, grandfathering will be offered to existing institutes and a mechanism provided for future organisations to be approved to undertake work outside Australia.

We would like to reinforce how important it is to have this provision.

Reliably ascertaining the causes of disease and the effects of various interventions requires large numbers of participants in studies and trials. This means the most important of these will typically need to be run internationally to gather the greatest knowledge and insights, and most high-impact research requires some form of international activity or collaboration.

Our institute has been successful at obtaining funding support from public funding bodies, such as the National Health and Medical Research Council, commercial entities in Australia and around the world and also from donations. This has allowed us to grow such that we now employ more than 350 people, most located in Sydney, with an annual turnover of

approximately 50 million dollars. The success of our work and growing reputation has led to increasing requests for international collaboration and activities, a recognised marker of success in research, and a strategic priority for the National Health and Medical Research Council and the ongoing McKeon review of medical research.

Studies by Australian medical institutes into preventing and treating disease can make a real difference to people's lives through the delivery of better healthcare. Some of our most significant breakthroughs, which improved the health of millions of Australians, came from global trials involving thousands of people in many different countries.

Whether this research is about kidney disease, heart disease, diabetes, road injuries or back pain, and whether trials are conducted in New Delhi or Newcastle, researchers use the results to help people in Australia treat or prevent these illnesses or injuries.

Chronic diseases, major trauma and lifelong disability pose one of the greatest risks to the global economy, with financial consequences that are estimated to be of similar magnitude to the bailout costs associated with the global financial crisis. These are global issues and Australia can show real leadership in the search for sustainable healthcare alternatives for a global benefit.

Your ongoing support is crucial in ensuring this is achieved.

Best wishes,

Professor Vlado Perkovic MBBS PhD FRACP FASN
Executive Director, Australia

Affiliated with



The University of Sydney