



Inquiry into the Health Workforce Australia (Abolition) Bill 2014

June 2014

The Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA) is the national association of the dietetic profession with over 5500 members, and branches in each state and territory. DAA is a leader in nutrition and advocates for better food, better health, and wellbeing for all. DAA appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback to the Inquiry into the Health Workforce Australia (Abolition) Bill by the Community Affairs Legislation Committee.

Contact Person: Annette Byron
Position: Senior Policy Officer
Organisation: Dietitians Association of Australia
Address: 1/8 Phipps Close, Deakin ACT 2600

DAA interest in this consultation

DAA is the national association of the dietetic profession with branches in each State/Territory. The Association has over 5500 members constituting approximately 80 percent of the dietetic workforce in Australia. DAA accredits dietetic training courses in Australian universities and is the assessing authority for dietitians trained in other countries.

The interests of dietitians are broad and derive from training in three dominant areas of practice i.e. individual case management of medical nutrition therapy (clinical care), community and public health nutrition, and food service management. Dietitians work in diverse settings including hospitals, disability, private practice, public health, community health, food service, food industry, research and teaching.

The Accredited Practising Dietitian (APD) program is the foundation of DAA as a self regulated profession with 98 percent of eligible members participating in the program. The APD credential is recognised by Medicare, the Department of Veterans Affairs, private health funds and for access to the Healthcare Identifiers Service.

Summary or key messages

DAA considers that regardless of which agency is responsible for workforce issues, the Australian government must ensure that there are systems in place to monitor the health workforce. This is essential to the maintenance and development of the workforce to meet current and future needs.

Systems must be in place with a form and function to support entry level training and continuing development of the health workforce to ensure safety and quality in all health care settings.

The Australian government must be inclusive in its approach to the management of challenges in the workforce, with the involvement of public, private and non-government organisations. It should also ensure that self regulated professions are considered alongside the professions registered under the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency so that Australians have equity in access to healthcare.