

Friday 12 November, 2010

**Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee, Reference: National Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2010**

Senator Moore (Chair)

Dear Senator,

In response to the comments of Senator Boyce (CA 15 Tuesday, 9 November 2010) seeking the measure from “associates and colleagues who support your view on this particular aspect of the bill” we submit the following.

The ACHS wrote an email (copy attached) to our Councillors (n35), Members (n1400) and Surveyors (n400) requesting a simple advisory ‘yes’ be given to a statement outlining the ACHS’s position in relation to the Bill.

As of 2pm today, of the 1,835 emails sent, 1,205 were received. Responses were received from a total of 31% (n371) of those emails delivered. There was a failure rate of 23% (n417) ‘undeliverable’ with a further 12% (n213) ‘out of office’.

The majority of respondents (98%) indicated support in favour of the ACHS’s statement, four of the State Health Departments specifically declined to respond because of stated conflict of interest, and one said outright they did not support the statement. The survey was conducted in a compressed timeframe.

Respondents	Yes	No	Partially	Neutral	Conflict*	Out of Office	Undeliverable	No Responses
Councillors	20	1			5			
Members	213		2	1		192	417	
Surveyors	129					21		
<b>Total</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>834</b>

*It should be noted that as surveyors are clearly committed to ACHS (mostly in a volunteer capacity), the view of Councillors and members carry more weight in this context.*

*\* Conflict of Interest*

Many respondents provided additional comments to support their own personal views, and these are being compiled and evaluated separately.

We enclose the key findings from our 2009 Members Satisfaction Survey. “Overall, member perceptions of the ACHS are very positive. The vast majority of respondents indicated that ACHS’ accreditation program adds value to their organisation and most respondents expressed satisfaction with the relationship their organisation has with the ACHS. Respondents are particularly satisfied with ACHS staff in general and the surveyors more specifically. They also gave positive feedback on most ACHS services and products.”  
ACHS 2009 Member Satisfaction Survey Consultation Report, ARTD Consultants, 7 September 2009

In response to the statement “Overall, where would you rate your current level of satisfaction with the ACHS Clinical Indicator Program, 66% of respondents provided a rating “Satisfied to Extremely Satisfied”.

Should the Senate Committee require further information, or clarification I may be contacted on 041887124 (M) or 07 3240 7589.

Yours sincerely

Associate Professor Peter Woodruff  
President  
The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS)

**From:** communications@achs.org.au [mailto:communications@achs.org.au]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 10 November 2010 4:34 PM  
**To:** ceo@heathcotehealth.org  
**Subject:** ACHS Request for Senate Inquiry, Respond Today (C3 - surveyors)

Dear Surveyor

The ACHS is writing to all Members and stakeholders today to make an urgent request for support following a submission to a Senate Community Hearing yesterday in Canberra to the Senate Community Affairs Committee, regarding the Inquiry into the National Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2010. We ask that you read the following email and give a **Return Email Response** (instructions below).

Key points made to the Inquiry were:

Over the last 36 years, ACHS has extensively developed and implemented the areas outlined in Part 2, Section 9, Section 10 and Section 11 in the National Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2010. The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare function, as outlined in the Bill, could be strongly supported by ACHS resources, which could form the foundation for many of the areas still needing to be developed by the Commission.

ACHS seeks to ensure that the wording of the Bill does not exclude the Commission adopting ACHS standards, guidelines, clinical indicators, accreditation systems and processes. In addition, ACHS has well developed infrastructure that could support the Commission with data collection, analysis and reporting.

Great benefit can be derived from minimising duplicated processes, building upon existing systems, and working together to achieve higher levels of safety and quality in the provision of health care services.

Following a wide-ranging discussion on the ACHS's support for the Network Bill, and the establishment of the Commission, the Senate Inquiry yesterday invited ACHS to compile a list of its stakeholders who support ACHS's stance. Specifically they asked the ACHS to provide a list of such supporters of this aspect of the Bill **by cob this Friday, 12 November.**

To expedite this request we would ask that you show your support for the ACHS by indicating your agreement to the following statement with a reply email that says '**Yes, I agree to the above statement provided**'. You are also very welcome to add further comments if you wish, but our first need is to gain a clear indication of the range of support from our stakeholders.

#### **Statement Supporting ACHS in the Inquiry to the Inquiry into the National Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2010**

"As a member/councillor/surveyor of the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS), I can confirm my support for the ACHS in regard to their current submission to the Australian Senate Community Affairs Committee Inquiry into the National Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2010. I understand ACHS supports the establishment of a set of national healthcare standards, allowing national healthcare services to report against a single and consistent set of standards.

“In my view the ACHS should remain the service provider to the health industry and the Commission’s future role should be to monitor the delivery and development of them, and record ongoing results, instead of delivering or developing another set of accreditation services.

“I agree with the ACHS’s view that the adoption of an existing set of standards (that would still meet the Commission’s objectives) as the national standards would be preferable to introducing a whole new set of standards.

“I understand that the ACHS supports the pursuit of a nationally consistent framework for accreditation and looks towards engaging with the Commission to continue developing and maintaining either standards, guidelines or indicators relating to safety and quality matters’ in health.”

**Yes, I agree with the above statement provided.....**

Name: .....

Title: .....

Name of organisation represented: .....

Further comments or statement supporting the ACHS, if desired

.....  
.....

*(I understand that the above statement in no way holds or binds me to ACHS beyond existing contracted arrangements)*

If you are interested in reading the Inquiry’s transcript from yesterday, please click on:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/senate/commtee/S13333.pdf>

We will have a full update and breakdown of the Inquiry in the December issue of the ACHS newsletter.

Thank you in advance for your interest and support in this request to assist this Senate Inquiry. I look forward to keeping you informed of the matter in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Johnston



**Chief Executive**

**The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards**