



## Appendix F: COAG statement on the health workforce

### **National accreditation<sup>1</sup>**

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has agreed that, in order to simplify and improve the consistency of accreditation arrangements for education and training of the health professions, a national scheme for the accreditation of health professions' education and training be established by 1 July 2008.

The scheme would apply to the nine occupational groups that are currently subject to statutory registration in all jurisdictions, with the inclusion of other health occupations to be determined during implementation through assessment against criteria agreed by the ministerial council comprising Commonwealth, State and Territory Health Ministers. A national Multilateral Intergovernmental Agreement would underpin the scheme, setting out its objectives, governance, scope, and legislative, administrative and financial arrangements. The Intergovernmental Agreement will be finalised by mid 2007, with ongoing report back to Senior Officials prior to the establishment of the scheme.

COAG has also agreed to undertake consultation with stakeholders on its preferred model, a single cross-profession national accreditation authority that would be given effect through either a statutory body or a non-statutory

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<sup>1</sup> COAG website, [http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/140706/docs/attachment\\_c\\_health\\_workforce\\_accreditation.rtf](http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/140706/docs/attachment_c_health_workforce_accreditation.rtf) (accessed 31 August 2006).

corporate body. All governments (Commonwealth, State, Territory) would be involved in governance arrangements, including a primary policy setting, governance and implementation role for a ministerial council comprising Commonwealth, State and Territory Health Ministers, to be detailed in the Intergovernmental Agreement.

COAG has further agreed that the preferred model would facilitate expert input on professional matters for professions covered by the scheme.

The scheme would be implemented in parallel with proposed reforms to establish a national registration scheme, and would be self-funding, with establishment costs of approximately \$7.5 million over four years to be jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the States and Territories.

COAG has also agreed that implementation will be overseen by Senior Officials and undertaken in consultation with relevant stakeholders, with a report back to COAG on the consultation and the implementation approach by the end of 2006.

COAG has noted that further work will be undertaken by Health and Education Ministers by July 2007 to clarify the relationship between the proposed national accreditation model and existing arrangements vested in State Education Ministers for accrediting private non-university higher education courses

## **National registration<sup>2</sup>**

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has agreed that a national professional registration scheme for health practitioners be established by July 2008.

The scheme would apply to the nine occupational groups that are currently subject to statutory registration in all jurisdictions. A national Multilateral Intergovernmental Agreement would underpin the scheme and identify its objectives, governance, scope, and legislative, administrative and financial arrangements. The Intergovernmental Agreement would be finalised by mid-2007 with ongoing reporting back to Senior Officials prior to the establishment of the scheme. The scheme would be enacted through either incorporation by reference or complementary legislation, with the exact mechanism to be resolved as part of implementation.

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2 COAG website, [http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/140706/docs/attachment\\_b\\_health\\_workforce\\_registration.rtf](http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/140706/docs/attachment_b_health_workforce_registration.rtf) (accessed 31 August 2006).

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The inclusion under the scheme of other health occupations currently registered in a limited number of jurisdictions will be determined during implementation of the scheme through assessment against criteria agreed by a ministerial council comprising Commonwealth, State and Territory Health Ministers, and detailed in the Intergovernmental Agreement. The subsequent inclusion of new professions will also be covered by this process.

COAG has agreed to undertake consultation with stakeholders on its preferred model, a single cross-profession national registration board that would assume ongoing administration for a consolidated national health practitioner registration scheme. The scheme would maintain a presence in each State and Territory, primarily to manage receipt and investigation of complaints/notifications and disciplinary matters regarding registered practitioners. All governments (State, Territory and the Commonwealth) would be involved in governance arrangements, with a primary policy setting, governance and implementation role for the ministerial council comprising Commonwealth, State and Territory Health Ministers, to be detailed in the Intergovernmental Agreement.

In addition, the scheme would facilitate expert input on professional matters for professions covered by the scheme, to be provided through participation on profession-specific committees, panels or such other mechanisms.

Under the preferred model, the scheme would be implemented in parallel with proposed reforms to establish a national accreditation scheme, and would be self-funding, with estimated establishment costs of up to \$12.3 million over four years to be jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the States and Territories.

COAG has further agreed that implementation will be overseen by Senior Officials and undertaken in consultation with relevant stakeholders, with a report back to COAG on the consultation and the implementation approach by the end of 2006.