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**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGEING**

The Hon John Murphy MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr ~~Murphy~~

Thank you for your letter of 16 March 2011 regarding a petition submitted for consideration of the Standing Committee on Petitions, regarding medical practitioner Dr Rajendra Moodley.

The Australian Government values the significant contribution made by overseas trained doctors in the delivery of health services in Australia, particularly in rural and remote areas.

The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS) for health professions commenced on 1 July 2010 and is the result of an agreement between the state, territory and Commonwealth governments, through the Council of Australian Governments, to align the previously disparate state and territory registration schemes for health practitioners. Key aims of the NRAS include increasing public safety and providing mobility for health practitioners.

While the NRAS is a national scheme, it operates independently of the Commonwealth. It is a joint initiative of the state, territory and Commonwealth governments, undertaken through the Council of Australian Governments. Oversight of the operation of the Scheme is provided by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council), which consists of Health Ministers from the state, territory and Commonwealth governments.

Under the NRAS, there is a single national registration board for each participating health profession. Members of a national board discharge their responsibilities under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009*, known as the National Law. The national boards are supported in their role by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Authority (AHPRA), an independent statutory agency. It is not appropriate for me to intervene directly in the workings of either the national boards or AHPRA.

Under the NRAS, the previous state and territory medical registration boards have been replaced by a single national board, the Medical Board of Australia (MBA). The MBA has responsibility for the registration of medical practitioners; development of professional standards for medicine; handling notifications and complaints; and the assessment of overseas trained practitioners.

As you may be aware, an application for registration passes through stages which may include various tests or examinations. Following that process a recommendation is then made by AHPRA to the MBA.

Should a medical practitioner be refused renewal of his or her registration by the MBA, an appeals process is available. The process is set out under Part 8, Division 13 of the National Law.

It may interest you to know that the MBA has announced a review of the implementation of its assessment pathways, to make sure they are as effective as they can be in ensuring that all overseas trained doctors who have the skills, qualifications and experience to provide safe care to the community can be registered. Information regarding the MBA review of the assessment pathways are available on the MBA website at www.medicalboard.gov.au

In addition, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing is currently completing an Inquiry into and Report on Registration Processes and Support for Overseas Trained Doctors. More information on the Inquiry can be found on the Parliament of Australia website at [www.aph.gov.au /house/committee/haa/overseasdoctors/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/haa/overseasdoctors/index.htm)

I note from the AHPRA website that Dr Moodley is registered to practise. Dr Moodley has a condition placed on his registration 'limited to practise only in an area of need position under supervision arrangements approved by the Medical Board.'

I trust that the above information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

NICOLA ROXON

27 JUN 2011