



11 June 2009

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs
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Re: Health Workforce Australia Bill 2009

The SA Health & Community Services Skills Board (SAHCSSB) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Health Workforce Australia Bill 2009.

SAHCSSB is one of nine Industry Skills Boards established in South Australia to, amongst other things, provide industry intelligence and strategic advice to government on current and emerging skill and workforce development needs, particularly in relation to the workforce trained through the vocational education and training (VET) sector. SAHCSSB is a separately incorporated, not for profit organisation with a Board comprised of nominees of major employer groups and unions within the health and community services industries in South Australia.

SAHCSSB agrees that there is a need to develop a more coordinated national approach to health workforce training, planning and policy development and welcomes the establishment of a Health Workforce Agency (HWA) with this aim.

It is in the Board's view critical that in order to achieve effective coordination the roles of existing bodies, including state-based industry advisory bodies such as the SAHCSSB and particularly the national Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council (CSHISC), need to be taken into account. The large number of stakeholders involved at all levels of health workforce planning and strategy makes this a complex environment and is an ongoing issue that requires continuing facilitation. It is important that the creation of the HWA does not further complicate matters by replicating existing arrangements but is instead able to draw together the stakeholders in a manner that is productive and progresses the reform process. Given the broad scope of responsibilities proposed for HWA, SAHCSSB urges that the functions and governance arrangements of the new agency take these matters into consideration.

Yours sincerely

Alison Arblaster
Chief Executive Officer

