



Medical Workforce Reform Advisory Committee

Communiqué – 16 November 2020

The Medical Workforce Reform Advisory Committee (MWRAC) met via videoconference on 16 November 2020. While MWRAC has continued to collaborate on the medical workforce impacts of the COVID-19, this represented the first formal meeting of MWRAC this year.

Professor Jennifer May and Ms Penny Shakespeare assumed the roles of co-chairs at this meeting following Dr Brendan Murphy's promotion to Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The Commonwealth provided a briefing on the current directions, priority areas of the National Medical Workforce Strategy (the Strategy) and discussed the approach to seeking endorsement of the Strategy in the first half of 2021. Members discussed the importance of addressing the need for improved data coordination and use for workforce planning purposes and the best approach to improving medical workforce generalist skills and capabilities.

Members discussed and considered the impact of COVID-19 on medical workforce training and accreditation and received briefings from:

- The Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges and the Australian Medical Council on their collaboration to review the impact of COVID-19 on medical training and accreditation programs.
- NSW Health on their Assistant in Medicine role which was developed and is being piloted as part of the response.

Members also recognised the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and the need for ongoing monitoring of the impact on the workforce pipeline.

The Group of Eight Universities (Go8) presented their proposal to strengthen Australia's clinical research capability through the introduction of a formal training and career framework for clinician researchers. Members agreed clinician research opportunities need to be considered as well as opportunities to support diversified medical careers.

NSW Health briefed members on the two year transition to work program and members agreed to consider this program in more detail at a future meeting.

The final agenda item saw members receive updates on progress in the development of the:

- Primary Health Care 10-Year Plan; and
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan.

Members discussed and considered common themes and areas of cross-over between the strategies including the need to increase the General Practice workforce to support primary care and the need to grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical workforce.

The next meeting of the MWRAC will be held in early-mid February 2020.