



Medical Workforce Reform Advisory Committee

Communiqué – 17 May 2021

The Medical Workforce Reform Advisory Committee (MWRAC) met on 17 May 2021. MWRAC has continued to oversee the development of the National Medical Workforce Strategy (the Strategy).

MWRAC Co-chairs, Professor Jennifer May and Ms Penny Shakespeare, thanked members for their contributions and feedback during consultation on the draft Strategy in April 2021.

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) gave a presentation on the review of the national framework for prevocational medical training. The AMC review has been framed against other workforce and training strategies, including the Strategy, and has sought to align the prevocational framework to the Strategy's Priority Areas and cross-cutting themes. Specific linkages to the Strategy were identified in the following areas:

- Training and assessment
- Training environment and national accreditation
- National E-portfolio system – particularly connecting training pathways and ensuring cultural safety outcomes are attained
- Workforce planning and data for support and decision making
- Wellbeing and workplace culture, and
- Changing models of care, rural training opportunities, parameters around breadth and scope of generalist clinical experience.

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) gave a presentation on the allocation of medical Commonwealth Supported Places. Members discussed the need for a unique student identifier to enable tracking of medical students, and data linking.

The Commonwealth presented on measures from the 2021-22 Budget specific to the health workforce.

In discussing the draft Strategy with members Professor May identified that members had raised four (4) key themes consistently during the latest consultation, including:

- The importance of the data strategy, in terms of access and use
- The scope of governance arrangements outlined in the Strategy
- Continued work required in relation to the 'middle-grade' practitioner role, and
- Wording in relation to medical training and growing opportunities in regional and rural areas.

Dr Brendan Murphy, Secretary of the Department of Health, congratulated the Committee on its work and supported the concepts of the Strategy. He expressed that continued collaboration, strategic alignment and commitment from all stakeholders was essential to reaching agreement from Government and successful implementation of the Strategy. It was agreed that this needed to be underpinned by data and quality advice.

Members were generally supportive of the recommendations presented in the Strategy, and acknowledged the contributions and efforts of all involved in development.

There was consensus that the issues presented in the feedback regarding the 'middle-grade' role and training locations remain complex and challenging. Continued collaboration and work would be required during implementation to ensure that the right balance is achieved.

Members were advised next steps would include seeking their endorsement of the Strategy.