

12 October 2017

Ms Kate Medwin
Director, Medical Indemnity Section
MDP 951
Department of Health
GPO Box 9848
Canberra ACT 2601

By email to: Medical.Indemnity@health.gov.au

Dear Ms Medwin

Re: First Principles Review of the Indemnity Insurance Fund and each of the schemes that comprise the Indemnity Insurance Fund

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Department of Health on the First Principles Review of the Indemnity Insurance Fund (IIF) and each of the schemes that comprise the IIF. Ensuring the availability and sustainability of these schemes is critical to the functioning of both private practice psychiatry and psychiatric services in the public sector.

The RANZCP is the principal organisation representing the medical speciality of psychiatry in Australia and New Zealand and is responsible for training, educating and representing psychiatrists on policy issues. The RANZCP has almost 6000 members, including more than 4000 qualified psychiatrists and around 1500 members who are training to qualify as psychiatrists, many of whom have specific interest and expertise in this matter.

The RANZCP recognises the importance of the IIF in ensuring the stability of the medical insurance industry and the availability of affordable medical indemnity insurance. This is essential for the psychiatric profession as well as the broader medical industry. In recognition of the critical role played by the medical indemnity insurance industry and the importance of its sustainability, the RANZCP supports the continuation of schemes under the IIF including the Premium Support Scheme, the High Cost Claims Scheme, the Exceptional Claims Scheme and the Run-Off Cover Scheme.

Medical indemnity insurance schemes for psychiatrists may be impacted by the rise of new treatment developments including neurotechnologies. It is possible that these may have an impact on psychiatrists utilising these interventions both with regard to the costs of the technologies themselves, and potential litigation risks. Although these factors will not be relevant to the practice of all psychiatrists, they should nevertheless be given due consideration by the relevant bodies.

The RANZCP also supports the recommendations from the Australian National Audit Office's review of the IIF, including the implementation and/or improvement of:

- monitoring and reporting arrangements
- key performance indicators sets
- mechanisms to improve data integrity, relevancy, consistency and accuracy
- governance and stakeholder engagement arrangements
- review of public guidance materials.

If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this submission, please contact Rosie Forster, Executive Manager, Practice, Policy and Partnerships via [REDACTED] or by phone on [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully



Dr Kym Jenkins
President

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