



AFRM POSITION STATEMENT

Endorsement: Developed by the Rural and Remote Special Interest Group in May 2008. Endorsed by the Education Committee on 7 November 2008, the Policy and Advocacy Committee on 10 November 2008 and by Faculty Council on 21 November 2008. Revised Policy and Advocacy Committee August 2009.

Title: Rehabilitation Medicine Physicians and CPD Obligations.

Background:

Rehabilitation Medicine physicians have a responsibility to maintain a broad range of Rehabilitation Medicine skills. To maintain these skills, the physician is obligated to attend appropriate professional development programmes. Such activities also need to be undertaken at appropriate frequency. It is noted that such obligations could at times bring the Rehabilitation Medicine physician into conflict, on the one hand facing the obligation and responsibility of maintaining professional skills, and on the other hand facing concerns of leaving his/her clinical practice. Rehabilitation Medicine physicians working in rural and remote areas often are required to maintain a range of skills that extend beyond the usual practice of Rehabilitation Medicine. In the rural setting absences required to maintain such skills often mean that patient care is delegated to others with little or no Rehabilitation Medicine training.

The Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine is of the opinion that all of its Fellows are obligated to maintain professional skills relevant to the requirements of their clinical and administrative practice. The AFRM also note that many medical registration boards obligate clinicians to maintain professional development activities. The AFRM facilitates professional development by organising a range of professional development activities relevant for Rehabilitation Medicine physicians, and also facilitating the recording of level of CPD participation.

The AFRM also notes that any employers of AFRM Fellows (eg, hospitals or health services) also have a requirement that their employed physicians are active participants in appropriate CPD activities.

AFRM Position: Noting the overt implications of both clinical responsibility and registration obligations, the AFRM supports the position that all of its Fellows have a responsibility and obligation to participate in CPD activities, and as such attend appropriate learning activities, including conferences. The AFRM also has the understanding that any employer of its Fellows understands these requirements, is aware of them at the time of employment, and acknowledges the responsibility of the employer to facilitate participation in CPD activities in the employment contract. It is the sole responsibility of the Fellow to identify which activities are prioritised, and when, with regard to clinical implications as well as CPD responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the employer to facilitate these activities to the best of their ability.