

CPAC Council Communique

Meeting 30 March 2017

On Wednesday 30 March 2017 the College Policy and Advocacy Council met for their first meeting of the year.

Fifteen Council members attended and participated in vigorous discussions on value-based funding, physician assisted dying, medicinal cannabis and the College's achievements since the last meeting, in September 2016. During the course of this meeting members discussed the following:

- Why value-based funding is being considered by a range of groups and its implications for the health system, patients, the College and its members. Key points raised were around the need for a definition of 'value' articulated from a College perspective; which is patient-focused and does not adversely impact the disadvantaged. Council members agreed to the development of a discussion paper to engage the wider membership in this important issue and to ensure the College is recognised as a stakeholder in this area.
- Members noted the NZ policy and advocacy activities including progress of the Obesity Working Party's consultation paper, now released for cross-College feedback, as well as an update from the Māori Health Committee including the planning for the Māori Health Hui, in Auckland on 9 November 2017.
- Members noted CPAC AC activities from the last reporting period of September 2016 to February 2017, where the group considered a total of 117 policy and advocacy related matters during the 5 month period.
- Council members approved the revised *Advocacy Framework*. This document provides a structure to help determine and to support new and ongoing advocacy work.
- There was a productive discussion on the Euthanasia & Physician Assisted Death Working Party's (EPAD WP) draft submission to the [Victorian Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill](#), which has now been finalised and provided to the Victorian Government.
- The P&A Unit provided CPAC with a summary of the policy and advocacy activities to date, highlighting key achievements and progress on major projects such as:
 - Climate Change & Health - The Climate Change and Health Working Party released [three position statements](#) in November 2016. At the conclusion of the Working Party's term, members were invited to continue on as an informal reference group to assist with the College's ongoing advocacy in this area.
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme - The online [NDIS Guides](#) were progressing for launch at Congress, now available online, and the College's position statement is undergoing cross-College consultation.
 - Medicinal Cannabis - a number of submissions on draft legislation, Regulations and Standards have been made by the College to various jurisdictions in Australia and New Zealand and several members of the Reference Group were invited to speak at a session on medicinal cannabis held at the RACP Congress 2017
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health - work is continuing on the Medical Specialist Access Framework. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Committee continue to engage across the College with the PCHD and the Indigenous Child Health Working Party; the AChSM and the Sexual Health in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities Working Party; the

Māori Health Committee; and other areas such as Congress, education and workforce.

- EVOLVE – as at February 2017, 30 specialties are actively engaged in the EVOLVE initiative. 15 lists were finalised and published on the [EVOLVE website](#) and the development of another 15 were underway. A number of articles on or referring to EVOLVE have been published and a session on challenging conversations was held at Congress 2017. EVOLVE continues to help the College in its work on the government's MBS Review and other health quality and safety matters.
- Digital health – the e-Health Reference Group continues to contribute to a range of issues; including the College's submission to the Australian Digital Health Agency National Strategy co-design consultation. RACP members have been appointed to a number of ADHA committees.
- Harms of Alcohol - in December 2016, measures to reduce the harms of alcohol were the focus of preventive health recommendations contained in the RACP's 2017-18 Pre-Budget Submission: *Healthy People, Healthy Lives*. Identified priorities included reducing the exposure to children of alcohol advertising in sport, increased funding for alcohol treatment and prevention services, and taxation reform.
- Refugee & Asylum Seeker Health – the College's advocacy has been focused on the release of children from immigration detention, ending offshore detention and repealing the secrecy provisions of the Australian Border Force (ABF) Act, which led to a win for the College, when in October 2016, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) amended the ABF Act to exclude doctors and other health professionals from the controversial secrecy provisions of the Act. In November 2016 the RACP made a [submission to a Senate inquiry into Serious allegations of abuse, self-harm and neglect of asylum seekers in relation to the Nauru Regional Processing Centre, and any like allegations in relation to the Manus Island Regional Processing Centre](#).

The Divisions, Faculties and Chapters (DFaCs) have continued to lead and input into College policy and advocacy work. Activities from the DFaCs were presented to Council, including;

- Widespread media coverage was received regarding the media release '[It's just not cricket - alcohol sponsorship impacting children](#)', with PCHD President Dr Sarah Dalton speaking out on national news on the matter. PCHD also published a position statement, [The role of paediatricians in the provision of mental health services to children and young people](#)'.
- EVOLVE 'top 5' lists are being developed with some DFaCs; AFOEM has finalised and published its [list](#), and AFRM are continuing to develop their Rehabilitation Medicine recommendations.
- The development of a letter from the College President to relevant NSW Ministers highlighting the College's ongoing support for the Kings Cross Medically Supervised Injecting Centre in September 2016, was led by AFPHM; which also took a leading role in developing a cross-College [submission to the Victorian Parliament's Inquiry into Drug Law Reform](#) in collaboration with the AChAM and the Victorian State Committee.

State and Territory Committees' ongoing and vital contributions to jurisdictional matters as well as cross-College activities were highlighted in the meeting, including;

- Support for the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) NSW Branch proposal for a NSW network for children and young people experiencing gender dysphoria.

- Members contributed to the development of the Queensland Health Strategy in the areas of Capacity to Train and Selection into Training.
- A Western Australian Department of Health working group on Medicinal Cannabis is to be chaired by Prof Charles Watson, AFPHM member and member of the WA State Committee.
- Members input to College submissions to the [Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory](#) and to the [Victorian Drug Law Reform Inquiry](#).
- Council were asked to note the approaching end to the CPAC Advisory Committee members' terms, and the process to invite members to apply and be selected and appointed to the Committee for the period August 2017 – August 2020.
- Council ended with a discussion regarding the increasing number of requests for feedback from external bodies with an inadequate timeframe to undertake appropriate cross-College consultation, or to develop and approve a submission. Members agreed that when the timeframes did not allow for a College response, the external body should be given clear feedback on the issue with a request that any further consultations allow adequate time.