

CPAC Council Communique

Meeting 14 & 15 October, 2015

CPAC Council held its second meeting of 2015 on 14 and 15 October. Nineteen Council members participated in a positive and active discussion on current and emerging policy issues, setting the strategic direction for the College's policy and advocacy activities for 2016. A summary of the day and of the decisions made are outlined below.

On Wednesday 14 October CPAC Council explored the following topical issues.

- CPAC Council participated in a consultation workshop with the Health Issues Centre (HIC) on the College's consumer engagement project. This project ties in well with CPAC's work on integrated care, and also highlighted the importance of cultural competency and safety. The importance of role modelling and mentoring in the medical profession was raised. Mechanisms to include the consumer perspective in the College's policy and advocacy work were also discussed. HIC will incorporate the views of the Council in their report to the Board on the interrelationship between the College's Policy and Advocacy activities and the College's commitment to patient centred care and consumer engagement.
- Prof Geoff McColl from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) outlined PBAC's decision-making process in relation to allowing substitution of biosimilar medications. This is an issue of concern to some members due to the unknown impact of switching, possible multiple times, between biologic medicines. However, it was recognised that there needs to be the ability to ensure the availability of approved biosimilar medicines to increase therapeutic choice and drive down the costs of products once they are off-patent. The importance of physician input and expertise as this policy area develops was recognised and the CPAC agreed this was a policy area the College should prioritise.
- Peter Lewis from Essential Media presented findings from their review of current engagement with the College's Policy Reference Group (PRG). Options for greater engagement were explored, and the recommendations of the final report will inform ongoing Fellow engagement.

On Thursday 15 October CPAC Council reviewed the year's work to date and agreed on their 2016 priorities:

- The New Zealand Committee will continue to lead on obesity advocacy, with input from CPAC and Australian Fellows.
- A working party will be established to develop a College position on euthanasia, and will be asked to recommend a consultative process for developing that position.
- Further scoping work will be undertaken to determine how to progress involvement with biosimilars policy, including the consideration of establishing a working party.

- The 2016-17 Strategy for the EVOLVE initiative was approved, as well as the proposed outline for the 2016 EVOLVE Forum.
- The Australasian Chapter of Sexual Health Medicine will lead work on sexually transmitted infections in Indigenous communities, in collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Committee and relevant State and Territory Committees.
- Two subgroups of the Policy Reference Group will be established to enable timely responses and access to relevant expertise for the topics of e-health and medicinal cannabis.
- Opportunities for the College to support the issue of violence against women will be scoped.
- Work will continue on established priorities of integrated care, end of life care, specialist access for Indigenous Australians, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, climate change, alcohol policy, refugee and asylum seeker health and telehealth.