



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians

Paediatrics & Child Health Division

**Paediatric Policy & Advocacy Committee
END OF YEAR COMMUNIQUÉ
DECEMBER 2015**

Improving the health of children and young people is a priority for Paediatrics & Child Health Division of the RACP. The PPAC continues to contribute to this goal by planning and overseeing policy/position statement development, maintaining advocacy on key issues in line with PPAC/PCHD annual plans and by supporting or participating in the PCHD's responses to emerging and important child health issues.

Dear Fellows and trainees,

The PPAC continues to be very busy developing policies and position statements and supporting the PCHD in advocating on key health issues for children and young people. I am pleased to advise that this year three position statements were launched under the direction of PPAC. I would like to thank each working group for their contribution and hard work in completing the position statements, a large amount of time, effort and expertise is required to achieve this level of work. [Protecting Children is Everybody's Business: Paediatricians Responding to the Challenge of Child Protection](#) position statement was launched by Dr Terry Donald in Auckland in April 2015. The working group consisted of:

- Professor Dawn Elder
- Dr Anagha Jayakar
- Dr Geraldine Goh
- Dr Jan Connors
- Dr J. Anne S. Smith
- Dr Louise Martin
- Dr Susan Marks
- Dr Lisa Dive

[Newborn Screening in Australia](#) position statement was launched by Dr Nicki Murdock, PCHD President and Dr Jim McGill at the RACP Congress in May 2015. The working group consisted of:

- Dr Janice Fletcher (Chair)
- Ms Susanne Hendricks
- Dr Barry Lewis
- A/Prof Helen Liley
- Dr Dianne Webster
- A/Prof Esko Wiltshire
- Dr Melanie Wong

[Sexual and Reproductive Health Care for Young People](#) was launched by Dr Andrew Kennedy and Dr Sarah Martin in Melbourne in November 2015. The working group consisted of:

- Dr Sarah Martin, Lead Fellow
- Dr Bridget Farrant
- Dr Andre Schultz

- Dr Rachel Skinner
- Dr Adelaide Withers
- Dr Philip Bergman

Two other working groups are currently working on the following position statements:

- The Role of Paediatricians in Mental Health Care of Children and Young People – a new position statement led by Dr Chris Pearson. We hope to launch this policy at Congress 2016.
- Inequities in Child Health - a new position statement led by Dr Sue Woolfenden and A/Prof Sharon Goldfeld

An EOI seeking interest in participating in the development of a new policy statement focusing on the health of indigenous children has commenced. This work will be undertaken in consultation with the College's Maori Health Committee (MHC) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Committee (ATSIHC).

PPAC is also looking to update the breastfeeding policy and finalising an early childhood policy in 2016.

The Committee has contributed to several PCHD policy & advocacy outcomes during 2015, including:

- An open letter to Emeritus Prof Gillian Triggs, President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, extending support to Prof Triggs and the Commission following the Australian government's rejections of the report on children in detention, *The Forgotten Children*. A letter to the Attorney-General encouraging the Australian Government to take up the recommendations of the report.
- Input to an RACP submission to the National Framework for Health Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Families.
- Input to an RACP submission to the Sexual Orientation Gender Identity & Intersex Rights Snapshot Report consultation.
- Input to the RACP submission on the 5th periodic report to the United Nations on New Zealand's progress under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Advocacy addressing sugar-sweetened beverages in New Zealand that will ultimately contribute a wider plan around obesity.
- Meetings with the National Lead of the National Disability Insurance Scheme to discuss paediatric concerns.
- Contribution to a range of topics including a consumer parent and carer resource, preventative activities, National Disability Insurance Agency quality and safeguarding, the third action plan for protecting children, use of photo and video imaging in child sexual abuse cases, female genital cosmetic surgery, newborn bloodspot.
- Division representation on behalf of the College at external meetings including: ASCIA primary immunodeficiency resource development; ARACY Annual General Meeting; Newborn bloodspot screening policy framework – consultation; National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children: Third Action Plan Consultations; National Community Child Health Council; Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQH) Australasian Clinical Indicator Report.
- Determined new Division representation on behalf of the College on: the FASD Diagnostic Instrument Trial and Implementation project Steering Group; and the Australia Pacific Paediatric Association (APPA) Advisory Board.
- For more information please see [Policy & Media outputs 2015](#).

The PPAC remain involved in advocacy work and have contributed to a number of key areas such as refugee child health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Families, National Disability Insurance Scheme, the third action plan for protecting children and female genital cosmetic surgery. Paediatricians are also making valuable contributions to whole of College work, such as Alcohol, End of Life and medicinal cannabis issues.

I would like to thank the [PPAC Committee](#) for their involvement and hard work for the year, without their continued effort the Committee could not achieve what we do each year.

If you would like to contact the PPAC Chair please email paed@racp.edu.au

Dr Jacqueline Small
Chair
PCHD Policy & Advocacy Committee