



**Paediatric Policy & Advocacy Committee
END OF YEAR COMMUNIQUÉ
DECEMBER 2016**

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,

It is a great achievement to have launched [the role of paediatricians in the provision of mental health services to children and young people](#) in October this year. The statement highlights:

- the role paediatricians play in combatting the significant mental health burden carried by Australia and New Zealand's children and young people; and
- the importance of paediatricians working with mental health professionals, such as child and adolescent psychiatrists, to improve strategic planning and delivery of coordinated mental health services.

Dr Chris Pearson led the working group consisting of Dr Giles Bates, Dr Andrew Court, Dr Daryl Efron, Dr Richard Haslam, Dr Bradley Jongeling, Dr Jane Son, Dr Michael McDowell, A/Prof Donald Payne, Dr Sally Poulton, Dr Jenny Proimos, Dr Jacqueline Small, and RACP staff member Mr Alex Lynch. Thank you very much to everyone involved for their contribution to this important statement.

Working groups are established for following position statements with activity at various stages of progress:

- Inequities in Child Health - a new position statement led by Dr Sue Woolfenden and A/Prof Sharon Goldfeld
- Indigenous Child Health – a new position statement led by Dr Danny de Lore
- Early Childhood – a review of the *Early Childhood Position Statement (2003)* led by Dr Pat Tuohy

Looking ahead to 2017 the PPAC is keen to update the *Breastfeeding Position Statement (2007)* and *Circumcision of Infant Males Position Statement (2010)* as well as review a number of other statements for currency.

The Committee has contributed to numerous policy and advocacy activities including contributing to submissions and consultations on harm being done to Australian children through access to pornography on the internet, regulation of infant formula, smoke-free playgrounds, protection and detention of children and young people in the Northern Territory, the review of the NSW *Guardianship Act 1987*, parenting and caregiving practice and behaviours with regard to the social and emotional development and wellbeing of infants, the Queensland Sexual Health Strategy 2016-2021, use of antidepressant medications in children and adolescents, essential elements for safe and high-quality paediatric end-of-life care, mental illness, and vitamin K administration to newborn infants.



Advice has been sought regarding Division representation on behalf of the College at external meetings including The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care Consultation Workshop on Clinical Quality Registries, [Australian] National Community Child Health Council, The Australian Human Rights Commission talk on the progress of Child Rights in Australia and the launch of CRC25 - the Australian Child Rights Progress Report, [Australian] National Coalition on Child Safety and Wellbeing, Asia Pacific Paediatric Association Business Meeting, International Paediatric Association Meeting, Support And Resources to Assist Hesitant parents with vaccination (SARAH project), and 2016 NSW Innovation and Health Symposium.

Further, advice has been sought to determine Division representation on behalf of the College to a number of external bodies including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders diagnostic instrument steering group, [Australian] National Tuberculosis Advisory Committee, Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand Policy Committee, Autism Spectrum Disorder Diagnosis Guideline Steering Committee, and various NSW Health Scopes of Clinical Practice working groups.

The PPAC have contributed to a number of College statements including update to the 2013 position statement on Climate Change and Health, position statement on Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare, position statement on the Health Benefits of Mitigating Climate Change.

Paediatricians are also making valuable contributions to whole of College work, such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Euthanasia and Physician Assisted Death, alcohol policy, refugee and asylum seeker health, and medicinal cannabis.

For more information please see [Policy & Media outputs 2016](#).

Finally, I would like to thank the [PCHD Policy & Advocacy Committee](#) for their ongoing contribution to discussion and planning as well as to the many incoming matters that arose during the year. In particular thank you to Dr Stuart Dalziel and Dr Victoria Ward, whose term concluded in May, for their participation. And welcome to Dr Alison Vogel and Dr Julie Chen!

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

**Dr Jacqueline Small
Chair
PCHD Policy & Advocacy Committee**