



College Policy & Advocacy Council

Communique: Meeting of 28 April 2021

We met on 28 April 2021, with nearly all 29 College body member representatives present via Zoom.

Key items from the meeting



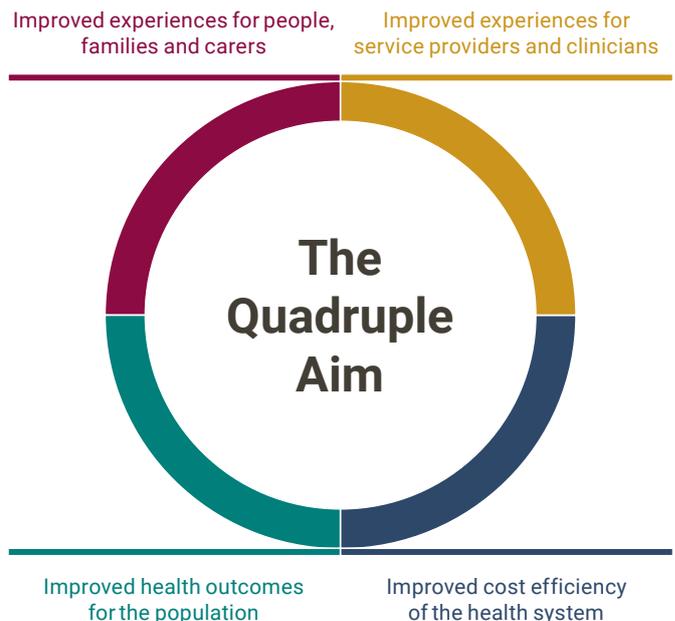
Policy and Advocacy Strategy – Strategic Framework

We want the College's policy and advocacy activities to have a more strategic focus.

An Advocacy Strategy requires the identification of an evidence-based, whole of health system, underlying framework.

We were presented with the Quadruple Aim (QA) framework as one to guide policy and advocacy direction setting, discussed the aims and resolved to adopt them as a strategic framework.

We have resolved to adopt the QA as a strategic framework, with member feedback welcomed as part of the member consultation process over the next few months.





Policy and Advocacy Strategy – Strategic Plan Development

We are seeking more engagement with CPAC’s Policy Reference Group (a member-wide open interest group) and College members in general in the development of a Policy and Advocacy Strategic Plan and specific priorities for CPAC to consider.

The strategic plan would look to articulate:

- a vision, values and principles
- a key focus over the life of the plan, and link to the RACP Strategic Plan 2021
- guide the development of yearly CPAC workplans, identify key stakeholders and support stakeholder management
- provide an environmental scan of the health policy and advocacy
- a SWOT analysis to position the College within that policy and advocacy.

We have approved the development of a Policy and Advocacy Strategic Plan, which would undergo consultation at a number of key times prior to being presented for approval at the November 2021 CPAC meeting.



Governance review of CPAC Reference Groups

Following the College-wide review of governance undertaken by Effective Governance, the Board is looking to implement improved governance structures across all College Bodies that undertake duties on behalf of the College and its specialty groups.

A number of policy Reference Groups (RG) report to CPAC and these provide important support and leadership to College policy and advocacy activity. A short survey of the RGs was conducted with some key highlights being:

- over 80 per cent agree that being a member of the RGs is a good opportunity to engage with the College’s policy and advocacy
- 67 per cent indicated that they most valued being able to contribute their expertise, while 43 per cent indicated they most valued being able to interact with others with similar interests
- 89 per cent thought that the QA would be a useful framework for the College.

We felt that the current arrangements in place worked well. Once the Strategic Plan is finalised, there will be a review of the RGs to ensure that they support ongoing priorities.

We also approved the current model and governance of RGs and a detailed review of the current RGs with a proposal to be presented to the November 2021 CPAC meeting.



Policy and Advocacy Communication Strategy – communicating and promoting the College’s policy and advocacy work

The Manager, Marketing & Communications presented on current communications approaches, what is envisaged for the future and improvements to accessibility and engagement.

We discussed improved policy and advocacy communications, and the different types of approaches and styles depending on audience – internal or external, physician, minister or general public.

The Marketing & Communications team will develop a suite of communication resources and a proposal for consideration at the November 2021 CPAC.

Alcohol is harming Australians

Alcohol is one of the most harmful drugs in Australia when prevalence of use, harm to the user and harm to others are accounted for. Yet over a quarter of Australians consume alcohol at damaging levels at least once a month.

Alcohol use is the sixth leading contributor to disease, making up 4.5 per cent of the total disease burden.

Alcohol is a factor in over 30 diseases and injuries:

- + alcohol use disorders
- + eight types of cancer
- + chronic liver disease
- + coronary heart disease, and
- + 12 types of injuries (e.g. road traffic injuries, suicide and self-inflicted injuries).

What is minimum unit pricing on alcohol?

Minimum unit pricing (MUP) sets a floor price for a defined unit of alcohol. A unit cannot be sold for less than the minimum price as set by the State or Territory.

The goal of MUP is to make stronger drinks more expensive. The policy mostly targets drinks that are

available at unacceptably low prices, taking into consideration the impact drinks with high alcohol content may have on drinkers, their families and the community.



One in six
Australians

consume alcohol at levels placing them at lifetime risk of an alcohol-related disease or injury.



24 per cent
of Australians
over 14 years old

have been a victim of an alcohol-related incident.



35 per cent
of all substance-related treatment episodes

are related to alcohol, making it the most commonly treated drug in Australia.

The effects of minimum unit pricing

Alcohol is economically similar to other commodities – the volume of alcohol sold decreases with a higher price. Increasing the price of alcoholic beverages is an effective intervention to reduce alcohol misuse and related harm. Evidence from modelling and observational studies shows that MUP can protect health and save lives.

MUP has a bigger impact on harmful drinkers, i.e. people who regularly drink more than

recommended by the Australian Government guidelines. It has a marginal effect on moderate drinkers because they tend not to buy the cheapest alcohol that maximises their drinking.

The biggest beneficiary of MUP is the community because of improved health and wellbeing and reduced crime. Modelling shows that MUP also saves money on healthcare and welfare services and cuts back on crime and policing costs.



Consumer Involvement in Policy and Advocacy

Consumer Advisory Group (CAG) member and CAG CPAC representative Ms Debra Letica, and COVID-19 Expert Reference Group consumer member Mr Hamza Vayani presented to us on their roles as consumers on College bodies and consumer involvement in College policy and advocacy.

Thank you both for your insightful presentation.

CPAC and the College hope to continue to work with you and our other consumer members to ensure we improve consumer engagement and patient centred care across the RACP and consider the consumer perspective in what we do.

“The importance of genuinely engaging with members is a key component of the strategic planning process, to ensure the future focus of Policy and Advocacy reflects the priorities of the membership.”



Reports from P&A College bodies: COVID ERG, PPAC and HRRG

Dr Lucy Burr FRACP, Chair of the COVID-19 Expert Reference Group (COVID ERG), Dr Pat Tuohy FRACP, Chair of the Paediatric Policy and Advocacy Committee (PPAC) and CPAC member, and Dr Tony Mylius FRACP, member of the Health Reform Reference Group (HRRG) and CPAC member presented on recent policy and advocacy activity of their respective College bodies.

Dr Burr provided an overview of the COVID ERG and matters considered by the group since its establishment at the start of the pandemic in March 2020, including advocacy on:

- access to appropriate PPE
- telehealth expansion and extension of MBS items
- COVID-19 vaccination program
- providing advice on the Congress 2020 and 2021 COVID-19 Vaccine Webinar series, the RACP virtual Town Hall with Health Minister the Hon Greg Hunt MP, and to the range of RACP documents and guidelines relevant to COVID-19.

Dr Tuohy presented on the PPAC's development and release of their three position statements which underpin the College's support for child health and wellbeing:

1. Inequities in Child Health (2018)
2. Early Childhood: The Importance of the Early Years (2019)
3. Indigenous Child Health in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (2020).

Work is underway in developing a child health advocacy strategy to build on these.

Dr Mylius provided an overview on the HRRG and its role as an advisory group on health reform-related matters. He spoke of matters considered by the group, including:

- input to submissions such as the Royal Commission into Aged Care Safety and Quality, the RACP Pre-budget submission, National Preventative Health Strategy, and Specialist MBS telehealth items – Department of Health
- RACP Clinical Ethics Position Statement.

Thank you to everyone who attended and participated in the discussions and decisions.

Next CPAC 2021 date:

Wednesday, 3 November face-to-face in Sydney (with virtual facilities)

DR JACQUELINE SMALL

Chair, College Policy and Advocacy Council
President-Elect, RACP

Get involved in developing the CPAC strategic work

If you are interested in getting involved in the consultation processes for the CPAC strategic work, get in touch with the Policy and Advocacy team via CPAC@racp.edu.au.



RACP
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EDUCATE ADVOCATE INNOVATE

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