



From the President

3 July 2024

Dr Anne Tonkin AO
Chair, Medical Board of Australia
GPO Box 9958
Melbourne Victoria 3001

Via Email: SIMGPathwaysReview@ahpra.gov.au

Dear Dr Anne Tonkin AO

Re: Consultation on the draft revised Registration standard: specialist registration and the proposed expedited pathway

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Medical Board of Australia's (MBA) draft revised Registration standard: specialist registration and the proposed expedited specialist pathway.

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) trains, educates and advocates on behalf of over 21,000 physicians and 9,000 trainee physicians, across Australia and New Zealand. The RACP represents a broad range of medical specialties including general medicine, paediatrics and child health, cardiology, respiratory medicine, neurology, oncology, public health medicine, infectious diseases medicine, occupational and environmental medicine, palliative medicine, sexual health medicine, rehabilitation medicine, geriatric medicine, and addiction medicine. Beyond the drive for medical excellence, the RACP is committed to developing health and social policies which bring vital improvements to the wellbeing of patients.

The RACP is very aware of the ongoing inequity of access to comprehensive healthcare for Australians, especially for those living in regional, rural and remote areas. We are developing professional development resources that are available to all of our Fellows to support their lifelong learning. We are concerned without continued involvement from the specialist medical colleges engaging with internationally qualified medical specialists, this opportunity for learning, professional development including cultural awareness specific to physician practice will be fractured. The RACP agrees there is a need to attract more internationally qualified medical specialists to Australia as quickly as possible and are supportive to finding solutions that support the provision of high-quality care to our communities.

Please find attached the RACP submission to the MBAs consultation questions.

In summary, the RACP has concerns regarding the maintenance of quality and safety standards if formal assessment by specialist medical colleges is removed as proposed. The RACP Overseas Trained Physician (OTP) assessment process already provides an efficient, holistic, transparent, procedurally fair and safety focused approach that extends well beyond a desk-top checking of qualifications. The RACP strongly advocates for continued responsibility for critical elements of the assessment process including recognition of qualifications, training, assessment and experience against the standard of an RACP specialist as well as supervision/work-based assessment. It is also noted that the proposed model also risks creating a disconnect between some of the most vulnerable specialists and the specialist medical colleges that exist to support them.

The RACP would like further discussions, consideration and clarification from the MBA regarding some of the perceived impacts and implications of the proposed expedited pathway raised in our submission. The RACP would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this further and how we can work together to achieve a streamlined but comprehensive fast-track pathway.

Should you also welcome the opportunity to meet with us to discuss our submission, please contact Dr Louise Rigby, Executive General Manager, Professional Practice
louise.rigby@racp.edu.au.

Yours sincerely



Professor Jennifer Martin

Attachments:

1. RACP feedback on MBA Consultation questions regarding the draft revised Registration standard: specialist registration