

Committee Lists

AMA COUNCIL OF DOCTORS IN TRAINING

During 2014, the AMA Council of Doctors in Training (AMACDT) developed two new position statements, *Regional Training Networks*, which addressed medical workforce maldistribution, and *Entry Requirements for Vocational Training*, which outlined ways to reduce inefficiencies during preparation for training programs.

Under AMACDT's leadership, a Roundtable was convened in June to develop and promote a *Mental Health Action Plan* to address the significant findings of the 2013 *beyondblue* report on the mental health of doctors and medical students.

The launch of the *AMA-MIIAA Clinical Images and the Use of Personal Mobile Devices: A Guide for Doctors and Medical Students* in November was well received by the profession and health services alike. The guide was developed by AMACDT in collaboration with the AMA Council of Salaried Doctors and the Medical Indemnity Insurers Association of Australia.

Other significant challenges during 2014 included reforms to general practice training, university fee deregulation proposals and workforce agency closures. The AMACDT also lobbied Governments and training providers to better plan and act on looming workforce crises, and encouraged the profession to better integrate global health and clinical academia into prevocational and vocational training.

AMACDT has continued to provide junior doctor representatives on more than 30 different committees and working groups that focus on medical education and training. Council members also presented at a number of conferences throughout the year. The AMACDT would like to thank the many Doctors in Training who have contributed to the work of the Council during 2014.

Dr James Churchill
Chair

AMA COUNCIL OF DOCTORS IN TRAINING

Dr James Churchill	Chair – Federal Council
Dr Julian Grabek	Deputy Chair – Victoria
Dr Stephen Parnis	Federal Council (from June)
Dr Melita Cirillo	Western Australia*
Dr John Zorbas	Western Australia*
Dr Chloe Abbott	Australian Capital Territory
Dr Thomas Crowhurst	South Australia
Dr Sally Banfield	Northern Territory*
Dr Pasqualina Coffey	Northern Territory*
Dr Chris Mulligan	New South Wales
Dr Alistair Park	Tasmania
Dr Bavahuna Manoharan	Queensland
Dr Bernadette Wilks	Victoria (until May)
Dr Danika Thiemt	Victoria (from June)
Miss Jessica Dean	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative (until December)

* Co-chairs/alternating members

AMA COUNCIL OF GENERAL PRACTICE

The AMA Council of General Practice (AMACGP) continued to provide policy leadership for the AMA on key general practice and primary health care issues, in 2014.

The AMA campaigned strongly throughout the year, against the Government's proposed model for Medicare co-payments announced in the May Budget.

In December 2014, the Government announced a substantial overhaul of its proposed Medicare co-payment policy, including greater protection for disadvantaged patients. Nonetheless, the package still represented a significant withdrawal of funding for GP services and the AMA led the campaign against the proposed changes.

The AMA successfully lobbied the Department of Health to provide a satisfactory and clearly-worded clarification about the role of practice nurses when undertaking health assessments. The clarification released in August 2014, confirmed the circumstances in which the time taken by practice nurses in assisting in a health assessment is recognised.

The Horvath Review into Medicare Locals accepted many of the AMA's concerns about the operation and function of Medicare Locals and recognised the need for much stronger GP input. The Government subsequently announced that it would replace Medicare Locals with Primary Health Networks, and the AMA continues to campaign for them to be GP-led and focused on effectively supporting general practice.

AMACGP also developed and revised a number of position statements during the year, including: *Private Health Insurance and Primary Care Services; Out of Hours Services – Criteria for Medical Deputising Services; Call Centre Triage and Advice Centres; and Geographic Allocation of Medicare Provider Numbers*. In addition, the AMACGP contributed to a range of AMA submissions.

Other key areas of work for the AMACGP in 2014 included:

- developing a model for integrating pharmacists into general practice;
- GP training and the Government's GP training reforms announced in the May Budget;
- MBS Chronic Disease items and how they could be improved to better support quality care with less red tape;
- exploring potential areas for greater private health insurance involvement in primary care;
- Family Doctor Week 2014, which strongly promoted the central role of GPs in the health system; and
- exploring opportunities for red tape reduction.

Dr Brian Morton AM

Chair

AMA COUNCIL OF GENERAL PRACTICE

Dr Brian Morton AM	Chair – Federal Council
Dr Richard Kidd	Deputy Chair – Federal Council
Dr Stephen Parnis	Federal Council (from June)
Dr Richard Choong	Federal Council
Dr John Gullotta AM	Federal Council
Dr Tony Bartone	Federal Council
Dr Peter Beaumont	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Patricia Montanaro	Federal Council
Dr Bernard Pearn-Rowe	Convenor – Western Australia
Dr Stephen Wilson	Western Australia
Dr Dimitri Andropov	Northern Territory
Dr Shaun Rudd	Federal Council
Dr Kean-Seng Lim	New South Wales
Dr Geoff White OAM	New South Wales (until May)
Dr Robyn Napier	New South Wales (from June)
Dr Annette Newson	South Australia (from June)
Dr Chris Clohesy	South Australia
Dr Cathy Hutton	Victoria
Dr Michael Levick	Victoria
Dr Anne Wilson	Tasmania
Dr Suzanne Davey	Australian Capital Territory
Dr Victor Tan	Doctors in Training Representative (until March)
Dr Sally Banfield	Doctors in Training Representative (from April)
Dr David Rivett OAM	Adviser – Rural Medical Committee
Ms Karen Freilich	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative (from June)
Mr Richard Arnold	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative (until May)

COUNCIL OF SALARIED DOCTORS

The AMA Council of Salaried Doctors (AMACSD) represents salaried doctors working in a variety of settings, particularly the public hospital sector. The AMACSD receives input from State and Territory AMA entities as well as the Australian Salaried Medical Officers Federation (ASMOF) and its branches. The election of the Federal Councillor representing Salaried Doctors was delayed in 2014 to more accurately identify members who were eligible to vote.

During 2014, the proposal to impose individual contracts on Queensland Senior Medical Officers was seen as a significant threat to salaried medical officers' working conditions, with the potential to flow to other jurisdictions. The AMACSD supported the advocacy of the AMA and ASMOF, which led to significant gains above what was initially proposed by the Queensland Government, but the outcome remains problematic.

Linked to this issue was the Queensland Government's general attack on Senior Medical Officers and its review of private practice arrangements. The AMACSD questioned the allegations which came to prominence in two reports prepared by the Queensland Audit Office into private practice arrangements in Queensland public hospitals. An independent review ultimately determined there was no substantive evidence of wrong doing by the doctors concerned.

The AMACSD reviewed AMA's position statements on *Hospitalists* and *Personal Safety and Privacy for Doctors*.

The AMACSD welcomed the work of the AMA to ensure that hospitals had proper local response plans in place related to the Ebola virus outbreak in Western Africa, and that members had access to appropriate personal protective equipment.

Other key issues discussed during the year included Federal Government health and industrial policies, revalidation in medical registration processes, AHPRA's review of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, clinical photography guidelines, doctors' health programs, and a range of industrial issues and negotiations at State, Territory and Commonwealth levels.

Dr Stephen Parnis
Chair (Until May)

Dr Barbara Bauert
Chair (From June until October)

Dr Roderick McRae
Chair (From October)

AMA COUNCIL OF SALARIED DOCTORS

Dr Stephen Parnis	Chair – Federal Council (until May), Federal Council (from June)
Dr Roderick McRae	Victoria (until May), Chair and Federal Council (from October)
Dr James Fergusson	Australian Capital Territory
Dr Sue Ieraci	New South Wales
Dr Barbara Bauert	Northern Territory (Interim Chair and Federal Council from May until October)
Dr John Murray	Queensland
Dr Andrew Russell	South Australia
Dr Tony Ryan	Western Australia
Dr Stuart Day	Tasmania
Dr Tony Sara	Adviser – Australian Salaried Medical Officers Federation
Dr James Churchill	Doctors in Training Representative

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

The Audit and Risk Committee's core objectives are to provide a link between the Board and its external auditors, and to review the integrity of financial information and the effectiveness of the company's internal controls, including the company's internal audit function.

The Audit and Risk Committee was re-shaped during 2014 following the adoption of a revised Constitution and appointment of a smaller governance Board.

The Audit and Risk Committee met twice during 2014, once before and once after the governance changes.

The Committee met on 17 April 2014 under Associate Professor Brian Owler as Chairman and reviewed the 2013 financial reports for the AMA Group of entities, considered the result of the external audit for that year and considered the recommendations made by the auditors on accounting procedures and internal financial reporting processes. The Committee considered and discussed the Risk Register for the company.

The Committee met again on 15 December 2014. Dr Iain Dunlop was elected to the position of Committee Chair for the term of his current position as Director, Australian Medical Association Limited. Mr Ed Killesteyn PSM joined the Committee as an independent member, having been appointed by the Board.

At the meeting the Committee considered the 2014 audit, particularly:

1. the auditor's annual arrangement letter for the 2014 audit;
2. the auditor's Audit Strategy for the year ending 31 December 2014; and
3. proposed fraud risk assessment.

The Committee also considered the Risk Register for the company.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that a risk assurance framework and an internal audit plan for the AMA Group's assets would be developed in 2015.

Associate Professor Brian Owler
Chair (Until May)

Dr Iain Dunlop
Chair (from December)

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

A/Professor Brian Owler	Chair – Federal Council (until May)
Dr Peter Sharley	Federal Council (until May), Board Member (from July)
Professor Markham Khangure	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Beverley Robotham	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Elizabeth Feeney	Federal Council (until May), Board Member (from July)
Dr Iain Dunlop	Federal Council (until May), Chair – Board Member (from July)
Dr Leonie Katekar	Board Member (from July)
Mr Ed Killesteyne	Independent Member (from November)

COMMITTEE FOR HEALTHY AGEING

The Committee for Healthy Ageing (CHA) ceased in May 2014.

Prior to its dissolution, CHA reviewed the *Restraint in the care of older people (2001)* Position Statement focussing on the use of psychoactive medication in aged care facilities. In particular, the Committee felt it was important to clearly distinguish the appropriate clinical use of psychoactive medication from its possible misuse as a restraint.

CHA drafted a new Position Statement on *Palliative approach in residential aged care (2014)*, recognising there was a need to formulate policy around the longer term management and care of people with life limiting illnesses.

An AMA submission developed with assistance from CHA led to an appearance before the Senate Community Affairs Committee inquiry into the *Care and management of younger and older Australians living with dementia and behavioural and psychiatric symptoms of dementia*. The submission highlighted:

- challenges faced by doctors in providing medical care in aged-care facilities;
- that Medicare items do not support prolonged assessments or interaction with family and carers to properly diagnose dementia, or the GP management and coordination of care and services following diagnosis;
- that timely access to services for both patients and carers is frustrated by long delays with ACAT assessments; and
- ACAT teams are not currently consulting with the treating GP.

The President Dr Steve Hambleton, and Dr Richard Kidd, met with Assistant Minister for Social Services Mitch Fifield, to discuss the integral role of medical practitioners in the aged care sector. The discussion covered the need for:

- ongoing access to medical care for residents of residential aged care facilities;
- community aged care services to take account of the medical needs of older Australians; and
- timely access to respite services for carers of older Australians.

In future, aged care policy issues will be handled by the Medical Practice Committee. I will remain the primary contact for aged care, with support from Dr Richard Whiting and Dr Chris Moy.

Dr Richard Kidd

Chair

Medical Practice Committee member and primary contact for aged care issues

COMMITTEE FOR HEALTHY AGEING

Dr Richard Kidd	Chair – Federal Council
Dr Anthony Bartone	Federal Council
Dr Michael Gliksman	Federal Council
A/Professor Jeff Looi	Australian Capital Territory
Dr Richard Whiting	Federal Council
Professor Geoffrey Dobb	Federal Council
Dr Robyn Langham	Federal Council
A/Professor David Mountain	Federal Council

ECONOMICS AND WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

Until May 2014, the Economics and Workforce Committee (EWC) had carriage of AMA policy on the economics of healthcare financing and funding in Australia and the Australian health workforce. This included financing and delivery of health care, ethical practice of medicine and medical practitioners, expansion of roles of non-medical practitioners, safety and quality of clinical services, ehealth and public hospital funding issues.

EWC provided input to policy development including the drafting and revision of position statements on health literacy, entry requirements for vocational training, scope of practice issues, medical fees, end of life and advanced care planning, and geographical provider numbers.

It considered indexation for AMA fees and issues relating to out-of-pocket costs, and highlighted problems with possible mandatory co-payments for GP services. EWC's discussions on medical fees and out-of-pocket costs contributed to the AMA's submission to the Senate committee inquiry on out-of-pocket costs in health care.

EWC also agreed additional matters when the AMA List may not necessarily need to be aligned with the items in the MBS. These include MBS requirements to follow clinical guidelines, to preclude billing of a consultation on the same day, to specify qualifications of the medical practitioner, or to restrict a service according to requirements of Government programs.

EWC maintained its strong interest in, and involvement with issues of public hospital funding and input to the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority (IHPA). This shaped the AMA response to Budget cuts to public hospital funding and the content of the AMA Public Hospital Report Card. The AMA participated in IHPA advisory committees across areas including stakeholder advice, teaching, training and research, funding for small rural hospitals and hospital cost data. EWC provided input for submissions to IHPA on the ABF mental health costing study discussion paper and the Pricing Framework for Australian Public Hospital Services 2015-16.

EWC also provided input to the AMA's position on Medicine Australia's Code of Conduct

Dr Steve Hambleton
Chair

AMA ECONOMICS & WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

Dr Steve Hambleton	Chair – Federal Council
Professor Geoffrey Dobb	Deputy Chair – Federal Council
Dr Anthony Bartone	Federal Council
Dr Richard Choong	Federal Council
Dr James Churchill	Doctors in Training Representative
Dr John Davis	Federal Council
Miss Jessica Dean	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative
Dr Iain Dunlop	Federal Council
Dr Elizabeth Feeney	Federal Council
Dr Michael Gannon	Federal Council
Professor Gary Geelhoed	Federal Council
Dr Brad Horsburgh	Federal Council
Dr Omar Khorshid	Federal Council
Dr Andrew Miller	Federal Council
Dr Patricia Montanaro	Federal Council
Dr Brian Morton	Federal Council
A/Professor David Mountain	Federal Council
Dr Andrew Mulcahy	Federal Council
A/Professor Brian Owler	Federal Council
Dr Stephen Parnis	Federal Council
Dr Gino Pecoraro	Federal Council
Dr Christian Rowan	Federal Council
Dr Beverley Rowbotham	Federal Council
Dr Choong-Siew Yong	Federal Council

ETHICS AND MEDICO-LEGAL COMMITTEE

In 2014, the Ethics and Medico-Legal Committee (EMLC) updated AMA policies on medical records, advertising and public endorsement by doctors, and ethical considerations for doctors responding to disasters in Australia.

A major focus for the EMLC was the review of AMA policy on end of life care and advance care planning. The updated position statement addressed issues including access to end of life care and support services, conscientious objection, medical futility, cultural and religious influences on decision-making, decision-making capacity, artificial nutrition and hydration, carers, workforce and advance care planning.

Continuing its focus on ensuring the Federal AMA has strong, ethical-based corporate policies and guidelines, the EMLC updated position statements on AMA commercial and funding relationships, advertising in Federal AMA publications and through AMA digital and social channels, and AMA endorsement. These policies have been developed to ensure the AMA's commercial and funding activities are consistent with AMA values, aims, objectives and policies, preserve trust in the AMA and wider medical profession, do not undermine the public good and public health policy, and maintain the credibility and effectiveness of the AMA brand.

Australian Medicine ethics columns addressed the doctor's role in disaster response, professional obligations in relation to advertising medical services, honouring past and present colleagues working in areas of conflict, and a doctor's perspective on death, dying and futile care.

Ethics-related submissions were developed on a wide range of topics including safe and high quality end-of-life care in acute hospitals, direct-to-consumer genetic DNA testing, euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Dr Elizabeth Feeney
Chair (until May)

Dr Michael Gannon
Chair (from June)

ETHICS AND MEDICO LEGAL COMMITTEE

Dr Elizabeth Feeney	Chair – Federal Council (until May)
Dr Michael Gannon	Chair – Federal Council (from June)
Dr Stephen Parnis	Federal Council (from June)
Dr Peter Beaumont	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Michael Gliksman	Federal Council (until May)
Professor Stephen Lee	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Helen McArdle	Federal Council
Dr Beverley Rowbothom	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Choong-Siew Yong	Federal Council (until May), New South Wales (from June)
Dr Bernadette Wilks	Doctors in Training Representative
Miss Danielle Pannacio	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative
Professor Paul Komesaroff	Victoria
Dr Roderick McRae	Victoria (until May)
Dr Alexandra Markwell	Queensland
Mr Andrew Took	Observer (from June)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

A revised Constitution was adopted by the Members of the Australian Medical Association at the Annual General Meeting on 23 May 2014. Under the revised Constitution and establishment of the new board structure, the Finance Committee ceased to exist from May 2014, and its functions were taken up by the new Board from that date.

Prior to its dissolution, the role of the Finance Committee was to review and assess financial matters affecting the AMA Group of Entities and to make recommendations to Federal Council on the matters considered by the Committee. It provided a forum for communication between Federal Council and management on financial, membership and commercial arrangements of the Association.

During 2014, the Committee met formally on three occasions. The following activities were undertaken by the Committee during the year:

- detailed monthly review of the financial and cash flow performance of the AMA Group of Entities and membership statistics;
- review and renewal of support for The Australian Medical Students' Association;
- review and assessment of ongoing support for several State and Territory AMAs, including AMA Tasmania and AMA ACT;
- ongoing discussion in relation to industrial relation activities including ASMOF and SASMOA, funding industrial relation activities and implications on membership, including consideration of the outcomes of the conjoint membership arrangements for salaried doctors in Queensland;
- regular review and oversight of the AMA commercial leasing activities and lease book for AMA House and the two units owned in Tourism House;
- review of progress and funding of the refurbishment and infrastructure upgrade within AMA House;
- oversight of the development of the AMA Travel Policy;
- oversight of the development of the AMA Delegation of Authority;
- close monitoring of the financial performance of AMPCo; and
- ongoing discussions in relation to commercial activities.

Dr Elizabeth Feeney

Chair

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Dr Elizabeth Feeney	Chair – Federal Council (until May)
Dr Richard Choong	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Anthony Bartone	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Andrew Miller	Federal Council (until May)
A/Professor Brian Owler	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Peter Sharley	Federal Council (until May)
Professor Geoffrey Dobb	Federal Council (until May) Board Member (from September)
Dr Steve Hambleton	Federal Council (until May) Board Member (from September)
Dr Iain Dunlop	Federal Council (until May) Board Member (from September)

HEALTH FINANCING AND ECONOMICS COMMITTEE

The Health Financing and Economics (HFE) Committee was formed in July 2014 to develop policy on economic and clinical impact of healthcare financing and funding arrangements in Australia.

HFE focuses on broader economic, financing and strategic issues that affect the structure of the health care system, including public hospital funding; private health insurance; the Medicare Benefits Schedule; and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. HFE also considers the economics of private medical practice.

At its meeting in October, HFE examined the Community Pharmacy Agreement and other pharmaceutical issues that interact with, and impact on, medical care jointly with the Medical Practice Committee. This included pharmacy location and ownership rules and the process for listing new medications on the PBS. The Committee confirmed the AMA's decision to support and respect the independence of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee, and to lobby against Government interference in PBAC decisions or delays in the implementation.

HFE also considered the implications of the Federal Government's cuts to public hospital funding and noted the change to Federal funding based on population and consumer price indices. It was decided the AMA Public Hospital Report Card should emphasise issues on health spending sustainability, progress made against emergency department and elective surgery targets, and the likely impacts of the withdrawal of reward funding and the Commonwealth's decision to abandon ABF.

While not perfect, HFE agreed that activity based funding provides a transparent tool to show where health dollars are spent, and can help in improving efficiency, reducing unwarranted variation, informing service agreements, and setting benchmarks for performance and comparisons.

HFE identified the need to address sustainability of health financing and develop AMA policy on measuring health outcomes to inform health policy.

AMA input to the Government's Federalism White Paper process, and private health insurance (PHI) issues impacting on health financing and medical fees, were also considered. In relation to PHI and general practitioner services, HFE considered that specific proposals for PHI funding needed to be developed, with a focus on clinical parameters first and the funding arrangement second.

Associate Professor Brian Owler

Chair

HEALTH FINANCING AND ECONOMICS

A/Professor Brian Owler	Chair – Federal Council
Dr Stephen Parnis	Federal Council
Dr Beverley Rowbotham	Federal Council
Dr Shaun Rudd	Federal Council
A/Professor Robert Parker	Federal Council
Dr Richard Choong	Federal Council
Dr Andrew Miller	Federal Council
A/Professor David Mountain	Federal Council
Dr Brian Morton	Federal Council
Dr Brad Horsburgh	Federal Council
A/Professor Jeff Looi	Federal Council
A/Professor Sue Neuhaus	Federal Council

MEDICAL PRACTICE COMMITTEE

The Medical Practice Committee (MPC) develops AMA policy and strategies on issues that impact on medical practice including: medicines, devices and their regulation, private health insurance, ehealth, pathology and diagnostic imaging, practitioner regulation and non-medical scopes of practice, safety and quality, medical services fees, medical indemnity, and medical care for the elderly and people with disabilities.

The MPC provided critical guidance to the AMA on its response to the ACCC's draft determination on Medicine Australia's new Code of Conduct, which added a condition only allowing relationships with health practitioners who agree to details on certain payments being publicly reported. The AMA's submission supported the ACCC's proposal but sought that the specific condition be deferred for twelve months to allow pharmaceutical companies and health practitioner's time to fully understand and implement the new reporting requirements.

In addition, MPC examined the *AMA Position Statement Informed Financial Consent* and provided advice to guide its revision and updating. Current policy on private health insurance and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme issues was reviewed to ensure it remained current and relevant.

On 13 November, Committee member Dr Chris Moy represented the AMA at the first meeting of the AHPRA Prescribing Working Group established to develop a framework for National Board regulation of non-medical health practitioner prescribing. The AMA is urging National Boards to adopt consistent, transparent and rigorous processes underpinned by high standards of education and training and practice.

Associate Professor Robyn Langham

Chair

AMA MEDICAL PRACTICE COMMITTEE (FROM JULY 2014)

A/Professor Robyn Langham	Chair – Federal Council
Dr Stephen Parnis	Federal Council
Dr Michael Gannon	Federal Council
Dr Julian Grabek	Doctors in Training Representative
A/Professor Tim Greenaway	Federal Council
A/Professor John Gullotta	Federal Council
Professor Mark Khangure	Federal Council
Dr Richard Kidd	Federal Council
Dr Patricia Montanaro	Federal Council
Dr Chris Moy	Federal Council
Dr Gino Pecoraro	Federal Council
Dr Richard Whiting	Federal Council

MEDICAL WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

The AMA Medical Workforce Committee (MWC) was established by Federal Council when it met in August 2014. The Terms of Reference for the MWC are set out below:

1. Develop new, and revise existing policy, and make recommendations to Federal Council on:
 - (a) medical practitioner training and education;
 - (b) medical workforce planning;
 - (c) the corporatisation of medical practice and its implications for the medical workforce; and
 - (d) the recruitment and retention of medical practitioners.
2. Develop and make recommendations to Federal Council on strategies to advocate AMA policies.
3. From its membership, represent the AMA on external committees.

The MWC met in November 2014, and undertook a thorough review of the AMA's existing body of policy and work with respect to medical workforce and training. The Committee identified a number of existing policy areas that required progress and/or updating. These included generalism, the medical training pipeline, medical training in expanded settings, flexibility in medical work and training practices for doctors in training and international medical graduates.

Much of the initial focus of the MWC has been on medical workforce planning, with the work of the National Medical Training Advisory Network (NMTAN), established by the former Health Workforce Australia (HWA), a key focus.

The absorption of HWA into the Department of Health had seen a dramatic slow-down in the work of NMTAN, and the AMA has raised this with both the Department and the Minister for Health. Assurances have been given that the work of NMTAN is a key priority, and that adequate resourcing has been put in place to enable NMTAN to function effectively.

The MWC wrote to the Colleges and NMTAN regarding the potential unemployment and under-employment of new Fellows. Anecdotal evidence in several specialties shows that new Fellows are increasingly facing this problem, and there is an urgent need for further analysis of the situation to inform future workforce planning and career choices.

Dr Stephen Parnis
Chair

MEDICAL WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

Dr Stephen Parnis	Chair – Federal Council
Dr Elizabeth Gallagher	Federal Council
Dr Tony Bartone	Federal Council
Dr Helen McArdle	Federal Council
Dr Brad Horsburgh	Federal Council
Dr James Churchill	Doctors in Training Representative
Mr Kunal Luthra	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative
Dr Omar Khorshid	Federal Council
Dr Saxon Smith	Federal Council
Dr Andrew Mulcahy	Federal Council
Professor Gary Geelhoed	Federal Council

PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHILD AND YOUTH HEALTH COMMITTEE

Until May 2014, the Public Health and Child and Youth Health Committee (PHCYHC) had carriage of policy development and advocacy in a range of topical public health-related areas. The Committee's work incorporated a strong focus on preventing excess alcohol use, obesity and tobacco use.

PHCYHC members developed and revised a number of position statements on women's health, sexual and reproductive health, physical activity and health in the context of education. Committee members also supported the development of a number of AMA submissions on air quality, mental health services, grandparent carers, suicide and self-harm among children, and protections against cyber bullying.

The PHCYHC also advocated for the adoption of front of pack food labelling, and supported the AMA's contribution to the Government's Stakeholder Advisory Group, and the need for ongoing support for the State-based public health services. Committee members also considered issues relating to justice health, impacts of trade agreements on public health, tobacco packaging, children in immigration detention, childhood immunisation, childhood obesity, body image and water fluoridation.

The PHCYHC continued to engage with a number of organisations with mutual interests, including the National Alliance for Action on Alcohol, the Australian Association of Adolescent Health, the Network for Interest Investigation and Research Australia, the Australian Women's Health Alliance and the Climate Change and Health Alliance.

Professor Geoffrey Dobb

Chair

PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHILD AND YOUTH HEALTH COMMITTEE (FROM JULY 2014)

Professor Geoffrey Dobb	Chair – Federal Council
Dr Choong-Siew Yong	Deputy Chair – Federal Council
Professor Gary Geelhoed	Federal Council
Dr Michael Gliksmann	Federal Council
Dr Richard Kidd	Federal Council
Professor Stephen Lee	Federal Council
Dr Helen McArdle	Federal Council
A/Professor David Mountain	Federal Council
Dr Stephen Parnis	Federal Council
Dr Gino Pecoraro	Federal Council
A/Professor Leena Gupta	Adviser – Public Health
Ms Eliza Wziontek	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative (until February)
Mr Kunal Luthra	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative (from March)
Dr Pasqualina Coffey	Doctors in Training Representative

AMA RURAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE

The AMA Rural Medical Committee (AMARMC) meets four times a year. Its role is to identify issues and provide advice on the development of policies and strategies that relate to the workforce needs and delivery of health care in regional, rural, and remote areas of Australia.

The RMC was pleased with two commitments made by the Government in the 2014-15 Federal Budget:

- \$52.5 million for infrastructure grants for regional and rural GP practices, focused on supporting teaching and training;
- additional funding of \$35.4 million made available through the General Practice Rural Incentives Program over two years from 2013-14 to 2014-15.

A key issue for AMARMC during 2014 was the need for the flawed Australian Standard Geographic Classification-Remoteness Areas (ASGC-RA) system to be replaced. The AMA lobbied strenuously for changes to this system.

Our arguments were persuasive, and the Government announced in November that the ASGC-RA would be replaced with the Modified Monash Model. The AMA is a key player in the consultative process now underway to determine the changes that are needed.

During 2014, the AMARMC developed a *Position Statement on the "Easy Entry, Gracious Exit" Model for Provision of Medical Services in Small Rural and Remote Towns*. The Position Statement outlined the key principles that should underline the innovative model to attract and retain medical professionals to rural areas.

Other activities of the Committee in 2014 included:

- continued advocacy for an advanced rural training pathway for GPs;
- ongoing review of the AMA/RDAA Rural Rescue Package;
- collaborating with the AMA Council of Doctors in Training on rural issues, including the need for the establishment of regional training networks;
- representation on the Government's Rural Classification Technical Working Group and the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority's Small Rural Hospitals Working Group;
- preparation of a submission to the Government's development of guidelines for the Rural and Regional Teaching Infrastructure Grants Programme; and
- contribution of a rural perspective to AMA advocacy on issues arising from Federal Government health policy, particularly the 2014-15 Federal Budget and the GP co-payment.

Dr David Rivett AOM

Chair

RURAL MEDICAL COMMITTEE 2014

Dr David Rivett OAM	Chair – New South Wales
Dr Geoff White OAM	New South Wales
Dr Leonie Katekar	Northern Territory
Dr Christian Rowan	Queensland (until May)
Dr Shaun Rudd	Queensland (from June)
Dr Nigel Stewart	South Australia
Dr Gerard McGushin	Tasmania
Dr Joseph Tam	Victoria
Mr Peter Burke	Victoria (until August)
A/Professor Peter Maguire	Western Australia
Dr Sally Banfield	Doctors in Training Representative (until September)
Dr Rachael Purcell	Doctors in Training Representative (from October)
Ms Erin Maylin	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative

TASKFORCE ON INDIGENOUS HEALTH

The Taskforce on Indigenous Health (TIH) underwent some changes in 2014. A new adviser from National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (NACCHO), Mr Matthew Cooke, joined TIH, as well as CEO for the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association, Ms Kate Thomann.

The new Taskforce galvanised support for the Close the Gap Campaign Steering Committee, playing an active role in the development of the Close the Gap Shadow Report 2015.

Under the direction of TIH, the AMA also became a signatory to the Lowitja Institute's Health Coalition Statement in support of constitutional change, highlighting its importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing. The Statement recognises the higher burden of disease and shorter life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and argues that constitutional recognition could provide a strong foundation for working together toward better health and social wellbeing in the hearts, minds and lives of all Australians.

Each year, the Taskforce oversees the awarding of the AMA's Indigenous Peoples' Medical Scholarship to an Aboriginal medical student enrolled at an Australian University. The recipient for the 2014 Scholarship was Wayne Ah-Sam from the University of Newcastle.

Applications for the 2015 Indigenous Peoples' Medical Scholarship opened on 1 November with advertising through a number of Indigenous-specific and mainstream channels.

The AMA was pleased to be able to increase the award to \$10,000 per year of study from a previous \$9,000, thanks to a donation from the Reuben Pelerman Benevolent Foundation, which has provided \$50,000 over five years.

In order to sustain the Scholarship, the AMA will continue to explore new avenues of donation from private sector and philanthropic organisations.

The Taskforce also discussed the need to develop a mentoring arrangement to sustain the studies of Indigenous students who face challenges.

Dr Steve Hambleton
Chair (until May)

Associate Professor Brian Owler
Chair (from November)

AMA TASKFORCE ON INDIGENOUS HEALTH MEMBERS – 2014

Dr Steve Hambleton	Chair – Federal Council (until May)
A/Professor Brian Owler	Chair – Federal Council (from November)
Dr Elizabeth Gallagher	Federal Council (from November)
Dr Richard Kidd	Federal Council (until May)
Dr Robyn Langham	Federal Council
A/Professor Robert Parker	Federal Council
Dr Paul Bauert	Northern Territory
Dr Noel Hayman	Queensland
Professor Ian Ring	Queensland
Dr Lara Wieland	Queensland
Dr David Scrimgeour	South Australia (from November)
Dr Sally Banfield	Doctors in Training Representative (until May)
Dr Robert Marshall	Doctors in Training Representative (from November)
Miss Erin Maylin	Australian Medical Students' Association Representative (from January)
A/Professor Brad Murphy	Adviser – Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
Dr Tammy Kimpton	Adviser – Australian Indigenous Doctors Association
Mr Romlie Mokak	Proxy – Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (until May)
Ms Kate Thomann	Proxy – Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (from November)
Mr Justin Mohamed	Adviser – National Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (until May)
Mr Matthew Cooke	Adviser – National Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (from November)
Ms Lisa Briggs	Adviser – National Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (from November)
Dr Mark Wenitong	Proxy – National Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation

THERAPEUTICS COMMITTEE

Until May 2014, the Therapeutics Committee was responsible for developing AMA policy and strategies on timely access to affordable medicines and therapeutic devices and the safe, efficient and quality use of medicines and therapeutic devices.

The red tape caused by PBS Authority Prescriptions policy continues to concern members. Following a detailed submission by the Committee to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) in 2013, PBAC recommended to the Government that there should be a systematic review of each PBS medicine currently requiring an Authority. The Department of Health subsequently commenced the review in May 2014; the AMA is represented on the review reference group by Dr Andrew Miller and Associate Professor John Gullotta.

The Committee updated the *AMA Medicines Position Statement* to ensure it continued to be relevant in the current medicines policy and regulatory environment.

Therapeutics Committee members represented the AMA on several external committees and meetings. In addition to the representation noted above, Professor Geoffrey Dobb attended the NPS MedicineWise members planning day in March 2014. Associate Professor Robyn Langham continued to represent the AMA on the Medicines Australia's Code of Conduct review panel examining industry payment transparency measures until it completed its work in May 2014. Associate Professor John Gullotta attended a TGA-hosted meeting of stakeholders in June to investigate ways to update medicine product information in a timely way as evidence-based indications evolve.

The Committee provided advice to support lobbying against pharmacists providing immunisation injections without having completed appropriate accredited training.

Professor Geoffrey Dobb

Chair

AMA THERAPEUTICS COMMITTEE (UNTIL JUNE 2014)

Professor Geoffrey Dobb	Chair – Federal Council
Dr John Aloizos	Queensland
Dr Anthony Bartone	Federal Council
Professor Ric Day	New South Wales
A/Professor John Gullotta	Federal Council
A/Professor Robyn Langham	Federal Council





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