



Dr Zena Burgess
Chief Executive Officer
The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
100 Wellington Parade
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Dr Burgess

Re: Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) Stakeholder Consultation paper – General Practice Experience Pathway

The Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) is pleased to have the opportunity to input into this consultation process and would like to thank you for your email dated 22 October 2015 inviting us to participate. We hope the below comments are useful to your consultation.

As you would be aware, AIDA is the nation's professional association for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors and medical students, and advocates for improvements in Indigenous health in Australia. We are working towards improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and reaching parity of Indigenous doctors across the medical profession. We also seek to create a health system that is culturally safe, high quality, reflective of need, and respects and integrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural values.

Given that a significant number of our membership work as or are working towards careers as General Practitioners, AIDA has a particular interest in career pathways that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors achieve their full potential. We note that the Consultation Paper on proposed changes to the General Practice Experience Pathway (the paper) has a strong focus on international medical graduates (IMG), with no mention of other types of graduate cohorts. AIDA is aware that a number of our members have not been able to achieve their RACGP fellowship through the mainstream pathway, and note that they should fulfil eligibility requirements against the pre-requisite list in the paper to access this alternative pathway. Our response to the paper has assumed that eligibility also extends to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical graduates and we would appreciate being informed if this is not the case.

AIDA notes that although the cost of the proposed General Practice Experience pathway is not specified in the paper, the various stages attracting payment or fees may result in an expensive commitment for candidates. Placing the onus on the candidate to cover these various educational requirements may adversely impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical graduates and junior doctors. An undesirable outcome of high fee structures could be that they serve as a disincentive for capable, skilled and enthusiastic candidates opting to engage in this pathway.

The proposed General Practice Experience pathway also specifies that candidates will sit an examination. AIDA would be interested to confirm if this is the Applied Knowledge Test (AKT), Key Feature Problems (KFP) and Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) exams? We note the various difficulties Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors have had with this examination framework previously and

would appreciate further information on this aspect of the proposed changes so that we can make a more fulsome response to this important issue.

With regard to the requirement of each candidate having a Medical Educator review their eligibility prior to sitting the exam, AIDA would be interested in learning more about how this would work in practice. In particular we would be interested to learn how the candidates access the Medical Educator and whether this person would be connected to RACGP or a Registered Training Organisation? AIDA emphasises the importance of having culturally safe, supportive and transparent relationships between trainers, educators and senior medical staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical graduates, trainees and interns.

We are grateful for the opportunity to offer our input into the RACGP consultation on changes to the General Practice Experience Pathway. We would be happy to further engage with you regarding any of the above issues should this be useful. Please direct further queries to Ms Kate Thomann, Chief Executive Officer, AIDA on (02) 6273 5013 or by email at Kate.Thomann@aida.org.au .

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Kali Hayward', written in a cursive style.

Dr Kali Hayward
President AIDA

27 November 2015