

Consultation paper: AMC revisions to national standards for intern programs and domains for assessing intern accreditation authorities

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is consulting on proposed minor revision to the *Intern training – Domains for assessing accreditation authorities*, *Intern training – National standards for programs* and the *Guide to intern training in Australia*.

This consultation document outlines the changes proposed to the standards, provides background information on the standards and the scope of the review, outlines the review process and opportunities for stakeholder feedback and provides a timeline for implementation.

There are four attachments: Attachment 1: A summary of the revisions made to the documents, Attachment 2: Draft revisions to *Intern training – Domains for assessing accreditation authorities*, Attachment 3: Draft revisions to *Intern training – National standards for programs* and Attachment 4: Draft revisions to *Guide to intern training in Australia*.

Background information on the standards and the scope of the review

From 2014, a new registration standard on granting general registration to Australian and New Zealand medical graduates on completion of internship took effect (www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx). The AMC developed national standards and guidelines to support the implementation of the registration standard and to provide a national framework for intern training accreditation.

The AMC reviews the bodies that accredit intern training programs on behalf of the Medical Board of Australia. The AMC has been conducting these accreditation reviews from 2013, with a pilot of the process prior to the commencement of the national framework for medical internship in 2014.

The aim of the AMC accreditation process is to recognise intern training programs that promote and protect the quality and safety of patient care, and meet the needs of the interns and the health service as a whole. This is achieved through setting standards for intern training programs, *Intern training - National standards for programs*, and recognising intern training accreditation authorities that assess programs against these standards, *Intern training - Domains for assessing accreditation authorities*.

Full reviews of the national standards for programs and domains for assessing accreditation authorities are scheduled for 2016 and 2018, respectively. However, a number of developments have prompted earlier review by the AMC, summarised below:

Junior doctor wellbeing

In 2015, the AMC completed a review of the *Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Specialist Medical Programs and Professional Development Programs* and implemented new standards from 1 January 2016. Consistent with developments nationally in medical education, the revised standards have an increased focus on trainee wellbeing, and supportive learning environments. The AMC is proposing changes to the national standards

for intern programs to bring them into line with changes to the accreditation standards for specialist medical programs.

Patient safety

The revised *Standards for Assessment and Accreditation of Specialist Medical Programs and Professional Development Programs* also have an increased focus on patient safety. Consistent with this change, the AMC is proposing the obligation of intern training programs and intern training accreditation authorities to have mechanisms to address issues of patient safety that arise from the assessment of an intern’s performance, or in the accreditation of an intern training program, should be made clear.

Scope of the review

The AMC regards this as a minor review of some of the documents that make up the intern training framework. The review is designed to make expectations in the national standards and domains about junior doctor wellbeing and processes for responding to known patient safety issues more clear.

The documents relevant to this review are summarised below:

Framework document	Summary
Intern training – Domains for assessing accreditation authorities 2015	Outlines the criteria the AMC uses to assess intern accreditation authorities.
Intern training – National standards for programs	Outlines requirements for processes, systems and resources that contribute to good quality intern training. Intern accreditation authorities’ standards should map to these minimum requirements.
Guide to intern training in Australia	Contains information about intern training, including the program structure, supervision, assessment, completion, and how junior doctors can get involved in their training.

The AMC acknowledges that, the report of the National Review of Medical Internship (2015) may lead to additional changes to the internship and the national framework documents for internship. It believes the minor changes proposed are not inconsistent with the recommendations of the National Review of Medical Internship.

Review process and opportunities for stakeholder input

The AMC wrote to the intern training accreditation authorities in November 2015 to notify them of this minor review of the standards and domains.

The AMC has established a working group to conduct this initial work on the standards and domains with membership as follows:

- Professor Brendan Crotty (Chair), Executive Dean, Faculty of Health, Deakin University and Chair of the Postgraduate Medical Council of Victoria’s Board;
- Dr Claire Blizard, Director of Medical Services, Sydney Local Health District and Chair of the NSW Health Education and Training Institute’s Accreditation Committee;
- Dr Susan O’Dwyer, Executive Director Medical Services, Metro South Hospital and Health Service; and
- Emeritus Professor David Prideaux, Professor of Medical Education, School of Medicine, Flinders University.

The working group has agreed to a number of minor revisions to the documents. The AMC is now inviting comments on the draft proposals for change. A summary of the revisions made to the documents is at **ATTACHMENT 1**.

The draft revised documents are provided at Intern training – Domains for assessing accreditation authorities **ATTACHMENT 2**, Intern training – National standards for programs **ATTACHMENT 3** and Guide to intern training in Australia **ATTACHMENT 4**.

The AMC considers the proposed revisions to be relatively minor and as such is proposing a four week consultation process in which feedback will be sought from key stakeholders and the revised documents placed on the AMC website. If the AMC receives substantial feedback indicating the changes require more consideration, a second consultation process will be conducted as required.

The AMC is inviting feedback on the following questions in relation to the revisions around patient safety and junior doctor wellbeing made to the framework documents:

1. Is the content and structure of the revised documents helpful, clear and relevant?
2. Are any of the new or revised national standards not achievable by intern training providers?
3. Are any of the revised domains for assessing accreditation authorities not achievable by intern training accreditation authorities?
4. Do any of the revisions need to be changed or deleted?
5. Is there anything that is missing in the revisions, or anything that should be added?
6. Do you have any other comments on the draft revisions to the national standards, domains for assessing accreditation authorities or the guide for internship?

Timeline and implementation of the changes

The stakeholder consultation process will be conducted in May 2016. The working group will review the feedback, consult further as necessary, and revise the documents. The documents will then be subject to approval through AMC committee processes and the Medical Board of Australia. The AMC expects the finalised documents to be available by October 2016 for implementation in 2017.

More Information

More information on the framework for medical internship can be found on the AMC website. The AMC will provide updates on the review process on the website <http://www.amc.org.au/index.php/ar/psa>.

The AMC asks for feedback on the revisions by email to prevac@amc.org.au by **27 May 2016**.

Please provide your feedback in an accessible PDF or Word format.