

AMC reaccredits the medical course at the University of Otago, New Zealand

The medical course offered by the Otago University Faculty of Medicine has been reviewed and reaccredited for a further four years by the Australian Medical Council (AMC), the national standards body for medical education.

The accreditation was given subject to submission to the AMC of annual reports on the continuing development and implementation of specific aspects of course management and content.

In August of this year, a seven-member team of medical education specialists from Australian and New Zealand medical schools spent a week visiting the Faculty of Medicine at its teaching sites in Dunedin, Wellington and Christchurch.

The team met with students, staff, clinicians, general practitioners, hospital managers and representatives of the New Zealand Ministry of Health and the District Health Boards. Following the visit, the University was presented with a detailed report. The report was sent also to the Medical Council of New Zealand, for that body to make its own decision regarding recognition of the medical school and its graduates.

The Dean of the School of Medicine at Otago, Professor John Campbell, said he appreciated the AMC's review of the medical course and support for the direction in which the curriculum has been developing. "The medical school is endeavouring to broaden student clinical experience by increasing early clinical training and increasing clinical attachments in smaller hospitals and rural areas. These developments have been hampered by the very tight financial restrictions under which the Faculty is operating. We understand fully the need for the Medical Councils of New Zealand and Australia to keep the financial situation under annual review as inadequate funding does have the potential to have an adverse effect on the quality of the medical education we can provide. "

The University of Otago is New Zealand's oldest university, founded in 1869, only twenty-two years after organised settlement of Dunedin began. The Faculty of Medicine comprises three Schools of Medicine, situated at Dunedin, Christchurch and Wellington, together with the School of Biomedical Sciences which is also at Dunedin.

The Faculty has established an international reputation as a leading academic medical institution and has recently introduced a number of measures designed to further complement and support its research, and teaching and learning activities. It plays an important role in training doctors to work effectively with Maori communities and patients.

The head of the AMC accreditation team, Professor Lindon Wing, Dean of Medicine at Flinders University, said that 'the team was impressed with the Faculty's talented and committed staff, with a special mention for the community-based preceptors and the excellent clinical resources both in the hospital and community environments. The course clearly continues to produce very competent graduates'.

Further information:

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