

Media statement

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Board and AMC launch new intern framework

The Medical Board of Australia and the Australian Medical Council have finalised a national framework for medical internship, being implemented this year.

The new framework marks a major step towards national consistency in intern training and was made possible by the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

The internship is the first year after graduation from medical school. Doctors work in accredited posts in health services while they complete a 12-month period of provisional registration as a medical practitioner.

The internship allows medical graduates to consolidate and apply clinical knowledge and skills while taking increasing responsibility for providing safe, high quality patient care.

The number of medical interns in Australia has more than doubled in the last seven years. A record 3,901 intern positions were available in Australia for the 2013 clinical year. This represents an increase of 1,314 positions since 2007. The increase in intern numbers, and changes in where health care services are provided, have required changes in the standards and requirements for internship.

Medical Board of Australia Chair, Dr Joanna Flynn AM, said the new framework balanced national consistency in intern training with local innovation and flexibility.

“Medical education is a continuum and there are significant benefits in having accreditation standards and procedures aligned across the phases of medical education,” Dr Flynn said.

“Continuing to improve and support medical education leads over time to better doctors and is a cornerstone of the Board’s job in keeping the public safe,” she said.

AMC President, Professor Robin Mortimer AO, said the new national framework reflected changes to medical practice.

“The training framework makes sure that doctors’ experience in their first year of practice prepares them well for contemporary medical practice, including through the structure and location of their intern training,” Professor Mortimer said.

“The national standards and guidelines support flexibility and innovation in how health services provide the required experience, and how the quality of that experience is monitored and assessed,” he said.

The AMC consulted widely during the development of the new intern framework and the Board and the AMC thank all those who have contributed to its development and implementation.

Health jurisdictions, intern training accreditation authorities, junior doctors, clinicians and health facilities all contributed to make sure the new framework is practical, flexible and robust and will help make sure Australian-trained doctors are as good as they can be.

Background information

Until the implementation of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for registered health professions, there was some state-to-state variation in the registration of medical practitioners and intern requirements. State based postgraduate medical councils set the standards and accredited the intern posts. The requirements for general registration were determined by each State and Territory Medical Board. In July 2010 the Medical Board of Australia became responsible for granting general registration.

From 2014, the Medical Board of Australia will implement the new registration standard on granting general registration to Australian and New Zealand medical graduates on completion of internship (www.medicalboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx).

The national framework supports this standard and sets national standards and requirements appropriate for the national scheme. It builds on the previous state based standards.

Implementation status

Implementation has started with a 2013 pilot reviewing the intern training accreditation authorities for South Australia and Tasmania. This led to the AMC granting five years' accreditation (to December 2018) to both bodies: the South Australian Medical Education and Training Health Advisory Council and the Postgraduate Medical Education Council of Tasmania. The reports on these assessments are available on the [AMC website](#).

The remaining intern accreditation authorities were requested to provide initial reports to the AMC for the purposes of granting transitional accreditation until they undergo a full AMC accreditation assessment. The following authorities are currently accredited by the AMC through the transition to the new standards:

- Northern Territory Postgraduate Medical Council
- NSW Health Education and Training Institute
- Postgraduate Medical Council of Victoria
- Canberra Region Prevocational Management Committee

The Postgraduate Medical Education Council of Queensland and the Postgraduate Medical Council of Western Australia will participate in the new accreditation framework in 2014.

For more information

- Visit www.medicalboard.gov.au and www.amc.org.au
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- Visit www.ahpra.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form