



## MEDIA RELEASE

# New training programs in radiology and radiation oncology accredited

14 December 2009

After a comprehensive assessment, the Australian Medical Council (AMC) has accredited new training programs of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR) and its Faculty of Radiation Oncology.

The College provides specialist qualifications in radiology and radiation oncology. Radiologists are medical specialists who are skilled at diagnosis and intervention in disease processes using medical imaging techniques and advanced computers. Radiation Oncologists are medical specialists who use radiation to treat, support and advise patients with cancer, and patients with some other diseases.

To be granted College Fellowship, which leads to independent specialist practice, medical practitioners must successfully complete one of the College's five-year training programs while they work in hospitals, clinics and private practices accredited for training by the College.

Since 2006, the College has been reviewing its training programs, considering changes in the roles of radiologists and radiation oncologists and the teams in which they work, and scientific and technical advances that are changing medical practice. An AMC expert team reviewed the College's plans in June 2009. The team considered comprehensive College documentation, sought submissions from groups affected by the changes, and conducted site visits and meetings in Australia and New Zealand.

The AMC report on the new programs commends the College's approach to specifying the knowledge, skills and competences required for independent specialist practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As well as the requirements to be clinical and technical experts, the new radiology and radiation oncology programs address medical specialists' roles as communicators, multidisciplinary team members, managers, scholars and researchers. Other major changes are being made in how doctors in training are assessed, emphasising assessment early in training, and constructive feedback to improve performance.

The AMC found that doctors in training and their supervisors have welcomed the new radiation oncology program, which was introduced at the beginning of 2009, and the opportunities to contribute to its development.

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The new radiology program will be introduced in 2010. A major change in this program is the College's approach to broadening the clinical experience of radiologists in training. The AMC report indicates that many examinations such as screening mammography, musculoskeletal ultrasound, obstetric and gynaecological imaging, and routine barium diagnostic procedures are no longer performed commonly in public hospitals. It commends the College's actions to expand the range of settings in which doctors may complete their clinical experience.

The Executive Summary of the team's report (available on the AMC website at [www.amc.org.au](http://www.amc.org.au)) identifies and commends the significant strengths of the College's training. It also makes recommendations to improve some of the College's training processes, as well as to monitor the introduction of the new programs, the workload associated with them, and their effect on doctors in training and the health services. At the time of the AMC assessment, the College was still finalising some of its policies and plans, and the AMC report identifies a number of tasks which need attention.

The AMC has asked for detailed annual reports on the implementation of the new radiology and radiation oncology training programs.

The President of the College, Professor Mark Khangure, said that the College welcomed the report and the constructive and collegial approach taken by the review team. "Our accreditation is recognition of the hard work of all involved in the redevelopment of the College's curricula and training programs".

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