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THE AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL COUNCIL

AND

THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE, THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

UNIVERSITY OF NSW MEDICAL FACULTY GRANTED FULL ACCREDITATION

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) announced today that it had extended the accreditation of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of New South Wales to the maximum period, which is ten years. AMC President, Professor Correy said: "Accreditation by the AMC means that the University's medical graduates will continue to be eligible for registration as medical practitioners in any State or Territory in Australia".

Established in 1985 by the Australian Health Ministers, the AMC is Australia's national accreditation and standards body for undergraduate medical education. "The accreditation process ensures that all medical graduates in Australia meet agreed national standards of training and skills," Professor Correy explained. Assessment for the purposes of accreditation entails interviews with staff and students of the Faculty, detailed appraisal of teaching activities and visits to the associated teaching hospitals.

A four-member review team, headed by Professor Richard Larkins of the University of Melbourne, Chairman of the AMC Accreditation Committee, visited the Faculty from 6 to 8 October 1993. The purpose of the visit was to assess the Faculty's progress in implementing a new six-year curriculum. A 1990 accreditation visit, carried out when the first cohort of students had just commenced the third year of this new course, had identified the need for further development of the later years of the new course, and attention to the clinical experience of students and the facilities for students and staff.

"The review found that the new curriculum offers students a markedly improved clinical and educational experience compared with the previous five-year curriculum," Professor Larkins explained. The review also endorses a number of innovations introduced since the 1990 visit, including the student experience at the South Western Sydney Area Health Service Clinical School (based on Liverpool Hospital), the increased use of peripheral hospitals for teaching, the general practice program, and advances in computer assisted instruction.

A particular feature of the developments at the University of New South Wales has been the successful cooperation between the Medical Faculty and the state health authorities. "The Area Health Services have been very supportive in the provision of teaching and other facilities in their hospital redevelopment programs", Professor Larkins indicated. Notable achievements have been the redevelopments at St George, Liverpool and Prince of Wales Hospitals, the establishment of the Prince of Wales Medical

Research Institute, and the securing of funding for the redevelopment of the Garvan Institute of Medical Research and associated University and hospital research laboratories at St Vincent's Hospital.

The Council commends the enthusiasm and determination of the Faculty and the Area Health Service authorities in addressing its earlier concerns, and sees the excellent cooperation between the two as a model which is ideal for the future development of optimal clinical services and medical education.

In response to the report the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Professor Darty Glover, said the Faculty was extremely pleased that its new curriculum had received such a high commendation from the AMC. "The first graduates from this innovative course will be interns in 1994 and I am confident that the emphasis we place on learning through clinical and community experience will be reflected in their performance."

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