



COMMUNIQUE

27 September 2023

Professor Cheryl Jones appointed as AMC Assessment Committee Chair

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Cheryl Jones as incoming Chair of the AMC's Assessment Committee and, ex-officio, a Director of the AMC.

Professor Jones will take up the four-year appointment at the conclusion of the AMC's AGM on 24 November 2023, at which time Emeritus Professor David Prideaux retires after eight years as Chair of the Committee.

Professor Jones is Dean and Head of Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney, as well as Senior Staff Specialist, Infectious Diseases, Sydney Children's Hospital Network (The Children's at Westmead). She also serves as a Director for the Ramsay Health Research Foundation.

"The strength we see Professor Jones' bringing to the role lies in her commitment to public good underpinned by a strong community focus," said AMC President, Professor Geoff McColl.

"Her appreciation that our regulatory and accreditation systems need to meet several challenges including balancing a high level of integrity and being evidence based, with being responsive and timely, and overall being culturally safe and compassionate, will provide clear direction for the Committee and the AMC in the post-COVID era of meeting workforce demand."

Professor Jones graduated from the University of Tasmania with First Class Honours in medicine and surgery and completed a PhD at Harvard Medical School (conferred by USYD) on Herpesvirus immunopathogenesis/ vaccine development. She is a fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (Paediatrics).

"I'm excited to be involved in the work of the Assessment Committee and particularly to see the direction the Assessment Futures Working Group recommends across our MCQ and clinical examinations as well as for workplace-based assessment.

"The more immediate challenge is ensuring that the AMC meets and exceeds the expectation of the Kruk review in ensuring we have timely, effective and innovative systems for international medical graduates seeking to practise in Australia and that we are not losing potential doctors due to red tape," Professor Jones said.

"The AMC's recent decision to continue to provide face-to-face clinical examinations in Melbourne through establishing a new AMC Test Centre was an important one to ensure that the numbers of candidates who are able to take the examination meet current demands.

“In addition, improving pathways to fast-track candidates who meet required criteria must be a priority. And for the majority of other international medical graduates, improving efficiencies, particularly reducing duplication, costs and shortening timeframes of the current end-to-end program is critical,” she said.

“While there is an urgent need to meet workforce shortages and increasing pressure from governments in this regard, it is imperative that the AMC continues to ensure that we have robust systems that are measuring the same attributes that we require of our domestically trained graduates. We are increasingly better at understanding the outcomes and attributes we need from our workforce.

“I am pleased to work with the AMC in ensuring cultural safety is embedded across all our assessment pathways in a way that meets the expectations of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and Māori people. This means implementing standards and processes that are developed by and with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and Māori people. The Kruk review has shown that our assessment systems are a window to the world on how culture is valued in Australia. How we deal with international medical graduates, with community, with practitioners and with all stakeholders, should exemplify cultural safety and competence,” Professor Jones said.

“On behalf of the AMC, I would like to thank Professor Prideaux for his leadership in ensuring the quality and recognition of the AMC’s examinations and workplace based assessment programs over the past eight years, not least through three extremely challenging years as a result of COVID disruptions,” Professor McColl concluded.

Professor Jones is an internationally regarded clinician with almost 30 years clinical experience, unrestricted Ahpra registration in NSW in general paediatrics and infectious diseases (since 1994), an awarded and highly experienced medical educator, a senior executive of medical faculties (Head of School and Dean of Sydney Medical School since 2019), a leader in infectious diseases research and practice (Lancet Infect Dis 2013; 13: 743) and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Health & Medical Sciences.

The AMC is responsible for the assessment of international medical graduates seeking medical registration to practise in Australia. The AMC Assessment Committee monitors the operation of the AMC examinations, including primary source verification, and reviews the performance of the Multiple-Choice Questionnaire (MCQ) examination, and the clinical examination and workplace-based assessment results. Several panels and sub-groups report to the Committee, with a focus on the generation of examination questions and scenarios, approving results and ongoing development of the examinations and assessment processes. The assessment processes at the AMC are undergoing a significant process of change as the AMC responds to current government and health workforce initiatives, including the Kruk review. The Committee reports to the AMC Directors.

For further information contact:

Professor Geoff McColl
President, AMC
president@amc.org.au
Phone 02 6270 9783