

Procedure for developing model standards

for specialist medical college accreditation of training settings

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to guide the Australian Medical Council (AMC) and specialist medical colleges in the development of model accreditation standards for specialist medical college accreditation of training settings.¹

2. Definitions

Accredited organisation means the legal entity or entities responsible for a training site, post, network or program that has been accredited by a college (including a public or private health organisation, general practice or community-based service).

Australian jurisdictional health department means an Australian state or territory government department or ministry reporting to a minister for health and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care.

College means any of the sixteen specialist medical colleges accredited by the AMC.

Model standards means the standards that are to be developed in accordance with the Health Workforce Taskforce draft implementation plan for the recommendations in the NHPO report.

NHPO report means the 2023 report of the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman titled *Processes for progress, Part One: A roadmap for greater transparency and accountability in specialist medical training site accreditation*.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 In developing the model standards, the following documentation and background information will be considered:
- (a) the objectives and principles of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law;
 - (b) other relevant legislation;
 - (c) the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) *Procedures for the development of accreditation standards, 2023*;
 - (d) any guidance published by Ahpra's Accreditation Committee on outcome-based accreditation standards;
 - (e) *Procedures for the assessment and accreditation of specialist medical programs by the Australian Medical Council 2023*;

¹ See section 7 for endorsement and application of the model standards by colleges.

- (f) relevant recommendations made in the NHPO report;
- (g) current college accreditation standards (including any in development); and
- (h) available evidence on best practice, and relevant standards from other health regulators, both nationally and internationally, including the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards.

3.2 The model standards will be high-level to:

- (a) be capable of implementation across the various entities that colleges accredit, including sites, posts, practices and networks (which are composed of multiple settings);
- (b) be relevant to all settings, including hospital and non-hospital settings; public, private and non-governmental organisational settings; and rural, regional and remote settings; and
- (c) enable contextualisation to the training requirements of each college's specialty and subspecialty training programs.

4. Content

4.1 The model standards will be based on best practice and developed to be:

- (a) **outcomes focused** to allow for changes in practice and provide flexibility in how accredited organisations can demonstrate that their sites, posts, networks or programs meet the standards;
- (b) **aligned to training outcomes and support high quality training**, by focussing on matters relevant to trainee learning objectives and outcomes;
- (c) **supportive of trainee safety** to enable trainees' learning and professional development;
- (d) **supportive of patient safety**, by taking account of how the requirements of the standards may affect the ability to provide safe patient care;
- (e) **transparent**, in respect of what each standard is measuring; and
- (f) **contextual, timely and responsive**, to take into account relevant issues that are impacting on training and service provision.

5. Impact assessment

5.1 In developing the model standards, the following impacts will be considered:

- (a) how the standards contribute to **positive training outcomes for trainees**;
- (b) how the standards contribute to **positive outcomes for patients and consumers**;

- (c) how the standards affect the role of **supervisors and supervisor obligations**;
- (d) how the standards affect the **service delivery obligations** of accredited organisations;
- (e) how the standards support training opportunities for **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander trainees and Māori trainees and promote cultural safety** for those trainees;
- (f) how the standards support **trainees from diverse backgrounds**;
- (g) how the standards enable training opportunities in diverse settings, including **regional, rural and remote settings** and **public, private and community settings (including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community health settings)**; and
- (h) whether the standards represent the **best regulatory option**, in that regulatory burdens are outweighed by relevant benefits.

5.2 An impact assessment of the draft model standards will be undertaken which addresses the above issues. The impact assessment will be made available as part of the consultation process.

6. Development and consultation

- 6.1 The model standards will be developed through a collaborative process involving a working group with representatives of the AMC, the Medical Council New Zealand, all specialist medical colleges and input from the Health Workforce Taskforce.
- 6.2 A consultation draft of the model standards, together with the impact assessment, will be made publicly available for consultation. Comment will specifically be sought from the following stakeholders.
 - (a) all colleges (working group members from colleges do not represent their colleges in a decision-making capacity. Wider consultation with colleges will allow for input from within college structures);
 - (b) Australian jurisdictional health departments;
 - (c) Ahpra and the Medical Board of Australia;
 - (d) Manatū Hauora | Ministry of Health New Zealand;
 - (e) Te Whatu Ora | Health New Zealand
 - (f) Te Kaunihera Rata O Aotearoa | Medical Council of New Zealand;
 - (g) National Health Practitioner Ombudsman;
 - (h) accredited organisations (in respect of their sites, posts, networks and programs);
 - (i) medical education and training peak bodies and networks;
 - (j) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and Māori peak bodies and organisations;
 - (k) patient and health consumer groups;

- (l) bodies and networks representing trainees and supervisors (Australian Medical Association; Australian Salaried Medical Officers Federation and their various trainee committees; Association of Salaried Medical Specialists I Toi mata Hauora; Doctors Union, Specialty Trainees of New Zealand; New Zealand Resident Doctors' Association);
 - (m) Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and Te Tāhū Hauora I Health Quality & Safety Commission.
- 6.3 The consultation process will allow sufficient time for stakeholders to consider the draft model standards and formulate a response.
- 6.4 Comments provided through consultation will be considered in the finalisation of the model standards. A general summary of feedback provided through consultation and a response to that feedback will be published as soon as practicable after finalisation of the model standards.
- 6.5 Guidance on how future review of the model standards will take place and in what timeframes, will be developed once the model standards are finalised.

7. Endorsement and application of the model standards

- 7.1 It is anticipated that the model standards will be endorsed by individual colleges through their own governance processes and by the Australian Health Ministers Meeting, subject to further direction from Health Ministers or the Health Chief Executives Forum.
- 7.2 Endorsement of the model standards by colleges will not represent their immediate adoption. Further work and a separate, targeted consultation will be undertaken on an implementation plan for application of the model standards to each college's specialty training accreditation processes, subject to any accreditation requirements of the AMC.

8. Publication

- 8.1 Finalised endorsed model standards will be made publicly available on the AMC website.

