



Final Draft of Doctors' Code Released For Comment

Media Statement

16 April 2009

The final draft of a code of conduct defining clear, nationally consistent standards of medical practice has been released for comment today.

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is developing the code – *Good Medical Practice* – on behalf of all state and territory medical registration boards.

The final draft reflects feedback from an extensive, national consultation process with the medical profession and the community conducted during 2008 and supported financially by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

“As a result of the consultation process, we are confident the code defines the standards of practice that doctors and the community generally agree are reasonable for doctors to uphold,” said Dr Joanna Flynn, the Chair of the AMC’s expert working party responsible for the development of the code.

She said the consultation process was extremely valuable and made it very clear what was good and what needed changing from the previous draft, Dr Flynn said.

A detailed report of the consultation process and feedback provided is published at www.goodmedicalpractice.org.au.

Key features of the final draft include:

- A change in the tone of the document to ensure the code better supports doctors’ professional standards
- Defining good medical practice rather than listing what doctors should or must do
- Clarification of the purpose and use of the code
- Guidance in relation to conscientious objection
- A new section on third party examinations and medico-legal assessments
- Clearer statements about conflicts of interest.

Dr Flynn said most doctors were familiar with the complex ethical, clinical and medico-legal responsibilities of registered medical practitioners.

“This code brings these responsibilities together in a clear framework that aims to guide the profession and help protect the public,” Dr Flynn said.

Copies of the final draft code can be accessed at www.goodmedicalpractice.org.au. It is open for comment until 15 May 2009. The AMC Working Group will then consider feedback and develop

a final draft to be presented to medical boards and the AMC for signoff, ahead of recommendation to the national medical board, when it is established.

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