



MEDIA RELEASE

AMC Directors Endorse Code of Conduct

10 August 2009

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) Directors have endorsed a code of conduct that defines clear, nationally consistent standards of medical practice.

The AMC developed the Code – *Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia* – on behalf of all state and territory medical registration boards.

The Code has been recommended to individual state and territory medical boards, ahead of the introduction of national medical registration in mid-2010. Subject to the constraints of their existing legislation, state and territory boards can choose to endorse the Code in principle or adopt it to replace their existing codes. The AMC has also recommended the Code to the Agency Management Committee of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS), pending the establishment of the Medical Board of Australia.

AMC President, Professor Richard Smallwood AO, said the AMC Directors unanimously supported the Code in its final form. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing contributed to funding the comprehensive, national consultation process that supported the development of the Code.

Dr Joanna Flynn, who chaired the expert working group that developed the Code, said the final version represented a fair consideration of all feedback provided throughout the consultation process.

“The final Code is much stronger and more robust as a result of the constructive feedback and energetic engagement of a wide range of stakeholders”, Dr Flynn said.

“The Code sets out the principles that characterise good medical practice and makes explicit the standards of ethical and professional conduct expected of doctors by their professional peers and the community”, Dr Flynn said.

“That was the goal the AMC and state and territory medical boards set us and I am pleased that this is what we were able to achieve”, she said.

Dr Flynn said the Medical Board of Australia when it is established may choose to review the Code in the light of the national legislation to ensure that there is no inconsistency between the code and the legislation. Steps will also need to be taken to ensure the effective communication of the Code to the profession and the community.

The AMC has recommended that the Code will benefit from a regular, three to five year review cycle, to ensure its ongoing relevance and currency.

The Code is published at www.goodmedicalpractice.org.au.

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