MEDIA RELEASE

AMC Celebrates History on Eve of Reform

24 June 2010

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is today launching a definitive 25-year history, on the eve of national medical regulation and accreditation reform.

Assuring Medical Standards: the Australian Medical Council 1985 – 2010 will be launched in Canberra today by the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, the Hon. Mr Mark Butler MP.

The publication documents the evolution of accreditation and examination standards in medical education in Australia over 25 years. It includes the testing of the AMC examination processes in Australian courts and tribunals; the history of supply and demand in the Australian medical workforce; government and health policy responses to issues in the medical workforce; and the adaptation of AMC processes to respond to changes in the practice of medicine, changes in medical education and changes in community expectations and involvement.

AMC President, Professor Richard Smallwood AO, said there was no more fitting time to recognise the lessons of the past than as Australia implemented the most significant reform of health profession regulation and accreditation in decades.

"July 2010 marks the start of a new chapter for the AMC, as we establish our position in the national regulation and accreditation scheme," Professor Smallwood said.

"We have restructured our organisation in preparation for this, to ensure the AMC can continue to make a substantial contribution to medical education and accreditation in this country," he said.

Professor Smallwood said the AMC would continue to draw on the expertise and experience of those in the medical profession and the community who contribute to the ongoing work of the AMC.

"Through the wisdom and contribution of many people, the AMC will continue to work diligently to ensure that appropriate standards are set in the assessment of international medical graduates and the accreditation of the training programs of Australian and New Zealand medical schools and specialist medical colleges," he said.

Assuring Medical Standards: the Australian Medical Council 1985 – 2010 was edited by Emeritus Professor Laurie Geffen AM.

Snapshot

Over the last 25 years, the AMC has:
- Administered more than 30,000 AMC MCQ Examination sittings
- Assessed about 14,000 candidate sittings of the AMC Clinical Examination
- Completed 97 accreditations of training programs of Australian and New Zealand medical schools
- Completed 28 accreditations of the education, training and professional development programs of Australian and New Zealand specialist medical colleges
- Assessed 12 preliminary applications and completed seven full assessments of applications for recognition of a medical practice as a medical specialty
- Processed 24,000 applications from international medical graduates (IMGs) for primary source verification of medical qualifications
- Established formal links with the United States and Canada to develop highly sophisticated systems for the assessment of IMGs
- Developed and implemented three pathways for the uniform national assessment of IMGs
- Established an international reputation for excellence in accreditation and assessment
- Developed cooperative projects with the World Health Organisation's World Federation for Medical Education and the Peoples Republic of China on the accreditation of medical training.

Background Information

The AMC

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is an independent national standards body for medical education and training. Its purpose is to ensure that standards of education, training and assessment of the medical profession promote and protect the health of the Australian community.

Under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme the AMC has been appointed as the external accreditation authority for medicine.

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