

29 January 2013

The Secretary
Legal and Social Issues Committee
Legislative Council Parliament House
Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3002

Email: lsic@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Madam / Sir

RE: Inquiry into the Performance of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Thank you for asking The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia to comment on the above.

The new arrangements in general are an improvement overall, despite the cost increase compared to single jurisdictions. The College considers there are a number of very good outcomes that have occurred since the introduction of AHPRA.

The first point is the standardisation of criteria for registration and records of credentials across State boundaries. There were significant discrepancies between jurisdictions in the documentation required for registration, especially in making the distinction between specialists and consultants.

The second is the ability of the general public to review registration details of individual doctors.

The third is in the response to complaints. Again a coordinated national approach seems essential in this era of mobility and highly publicised cases of misconduct, some of which were due to the failure to review credentials or previous complaints in other jurisdictions at the most basic level.

The fourth is that issues of Cross Border Registration and the need to be registered in multiple states have been resolved.

Lastly, more stringent attention to communication skills appears to me to have a positive rather than a negative impact on patient safety.

On a negative note, in its early days the AHPRA bureaucracy demonstrated very significant problems.

Further, from a workforce assessment point of view, AHPRA's database has a lot of discrepancies in regards to the area of Specialization.

There is also a concern regarding CPD Registration Standard. The current Registration Renewal form asks whether the doctor fulfils the Board's requirements for CPD but does not ask for any evidence. Medical Practitioners should make a specific declaration about which CPD scheme they participate in and provide documentary evidence.

Yours sincerely



Dr Debra Graves
Chief Executive Officer