



Review of the role of divisions of general practice *UPDATE* 21 October 2002

The Review of the role of divisions of general practice was announced by the Minister, Senator Kay Patterson, on 8 October. Some more details have been provided by the Chair of the review, Ron Phillips, at a meeting on Thursday 17 October.

Terms of Reference and Members

The terms of reference and details of the members of the review panel are attached.

Process

The members of the Review will meet for the first time on Thursday 24 October when they will decide on their schedule of meetings and the program for the review.

The review Chair, Ron Phillips, will invite all major stakeholder groups to make submissions, and will advertise the call for submissions in the papers. There will be a two-stage process:

- Brief initial submissions to identify issues that should be considered by the review and to request a meeting with the review members.
- Detailed submissions will be received up to 24 December

The Report is to be presented to the Minister by the end of February.

The review members will make visits to all states between approximately mid-November and mid-December and will schedule meetings depending on the issues that arise from the initial submissions. In Victoria these meetings are expected to be with

- Divisions and GPDV
- DHS
- Victorian Health Services and Agencies
- Organisations and individuals who have requested a meeting

As the time available for this national review is very limited GPDV will keep stakeholders informed to ensure that all are able to make submissions and seek meetings with the review panel.

Bill Newton
19 October 2002

REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF DIVISIONS OF GENERAL PRACTICE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Context

Divisions of General Practice (Divisions), first established in the early 1990s, have received Commonwealth funding through the Divisions of General Practice Program (DGPP) since 1992. There are currently 122 Divisions across Australia. The role and activities of Divisions have grown considerably over the past ten years, at the same time as a wide range of broader developments have taken place in Australia's primary care and general health systems.

Divisions form part of a network with the Australian Divisions of General Practice, as the peak body, and a State Based Organisation in each of the States and Territories.

Purpose

The Minister for Health and Ageing has decided a review of the role of Divisions should occur in 2002 to inform the development of new three-year Commonwealth funding agreements with Divisions.

Terms of Reference

The review panel will make recommendations on:

1. The future role of Divisions of General Practice to ensure:
 - Divisions contribute as effectively as possible to the achievement of the best possible health outcomes for Australians; and
 - Divisions are able to assist general practice in responding to current and emerging developments in Australia's primary health system and the role of general practice in that system.
2. The implications of this future role for the organisation and structure of Divisions of General Practice including:
 - the size and number of Divisions, including consideration of boundaries relevant to other health structures and programs;
 - the governance arrangements of Divisions;
 - the roles of the Australian Divisions of General Practice, and the State Based Organisations; and
 - future funding arrangements under the DGPP, including the possible development of national key performance indicators, the balance between national performance indicators for all Divisions and scope for individual Divisions to respond to local needs and issues, and the calculation of funding allocations for individual Divisions.

The review panel will report to the Minister for Health and Ageing by February 2003.

Review Panel Members

Mr Ron Phillips (Chair)

Mr Phillips was the NSW Member of Parliament for Miranda from 1984 to 1999. From 1991 to 1995, Mr Phillips was NSW Minister for Health. From 1995 to 1999, he was Deputy Leader of the Opposition in NSW, Shadow Treasurer, Shadow Minister for Energy and Shadow Minister for the Olympics. Mr Phillips has extensive experience on Parliamentary committees in the areas of health, youth unemployment and small business. Mr Phillips has wide community experience and has been actively involved in local youth and sporting clubs.

Dr Michael (Taffy) Jones

Dr Michael Jones is currently undertaking consultancy work in Australia and overseas. He has been the Director of Medical Services at several hospitals in Victoria and has worked as a general practitioner in private practice. Dr Jones has chaired and served on a number of advisory committees and boards. He is currently Chair of the Board of the Victorian Doctors Health Program. He has been an Associate Fellow of the Australian College of Health Service Executives since 1979 and a Medical Surveyor for the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards since 1983.

Ms Judith Adams

Mrs Judith Adams has had extensive nursing experience in Western Australia and New Zealand. She served as a councillor on the Australian Healthcare Association Council and the National Rural Health Alliance from 1996 to 2001. Mrs Adams has been a member of the Metropolitan Health Service Board, the Princess Margaret and King Edward Hospitals Board in Perth and the Kojonup Hospital Board in rural Western Australia. Mrs Adams has had a long involvement in rural health issues at a policy and community level. She was the Kojonup Citizen of the Year in 1995.

Dr Sharmila Biswas

Dr Sharmila Biswas has worked as a general practitioner in Queensland and the United Kingdom for the last 10 years. She is currently working in private practice in Cairns and as a VMO at the Cairns Base Hospital. Dr Biswas manages the professional development program for the Cairns Division of General Practice. Dr Biswas is also actively involved in Aboriginal health issues and works part-time at an Aboriginal Medical Service. Since 1997, Dr Biswas has served as a mentor to RACGP registrars in Indigenous health and as a mentor to Indigenous adolescents in medicine.

Dr Daryl Pedler

Dr Daryl Pedler has been the Director of Emergency Services and the Deputy Director of Medical Service at South West Healthcare (formerly Warrnambool and District Base Hospital) since 1987. Dr Pedler is currently a member of the Otway Division of General Practice. He has previously worked as a general practitioner in rural SA and as State Director/ Medical Educator for the RACGP Family Medicine Program for South Australia and the Northern Territory. Dr Pedler has a strong interest in medical education and research. In addition to his clinical work in the hospital's emergency department, Dr Pedler is an honorary Fellow in the Clinical School, St Vincent's and Geelong Hospitals (The University of Melbourne) and a (part-time) Senior Lecturer in Rural Health at Monash University.

Dr Bronwyn Veale

Dr Bronwyn Veale is a practicing GP with visiting rights to a number of hospitals in Adelaide. She is currently working as a consultant in general practice and public health and has adjunct status as senior lecturer in the School of Medicine at Flinders University. Dr Veale has a strong background in research and has published extensively on the quality of health care services and the work practices of general practitioners. She has experience working in community controlled Aboriginal health services and is committed to improving the health of indigenous people. Since 1993 Dr Veale has been a member of the Southern Division of General Practice in Adelaide. She has held a number of positions within the RACGP and the Australian Association of Academic General Practitioners.