

A Sense of Care

Memorandum of Understanding

Friday, 12 December 2003

**General Practice Divisions – Victoria Ltd
&
The Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital**



Eye & Ear Hospital
caring in every sense

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Memorandum of Understanding
General Practice Divisions – Victoria & The Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital

Collaborating Organisations

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by General Practice Divisions - Victoria and The Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital.

The Eye & Ear Hospital is a state-wide teaching, training and research hospital specialising in eye and ear, nose and throat (ENT) medicine. One of Victoria's largest hospitals (in terms of patient appointments), it performs half of the State's public general eye surgery, up to 90% of special eye surgery, and almost all of Victoria's public cochlear implant surgery. The Hospital is associated with the University of Melbourne Departments of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology, which are both based in the Hospital. These relationships ensure the Hospital is able to remain at the forefront of teaching and research in these specialty areas. In addition, the Eye & Ear Hospital is associated with the Centre for Eye Research Australia, the Bionic Ear Institute and the Human Communication Research Centre.

General Practice Divisions – Victoria (GPDV) is the state-based organisation of general divisions in Victoria, established under the Commonwealth Government's Divisions of General Practice Program, which aims to improve health outcomes for patients by encouraging GPs to work together and link with other health services and health professionals to upgrade the quality of health services delivery at the local level. GPDV's members are the 30 divisions of general practice in Victoria.

GPDV works to:

- Improve the integration of general practice with the primary and acute care sectors;
- Enhance the quality of practice; and
- Increase the capacity of divisions to support GPs.

GPDV does this by:

- Working with its member divisions, supporting them in their work at the local level, through the provision of information, advice, education and resources; and by

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- Advocating on behalf of divisions with other state peak bodies and with government, to ensure that state-wide issues relevant to divisions of general practice are addressed, to help create a better integrated health system.

One of GPDV's goals is to facilitate collaboration between divisions and other health service agencies, such as the Eye & Ear Hospital.

Principles

GPDV recognises the Eye & Ear Hospital as the leader in vision and ENT health provision in the state of Victoria. The Hospital recognises GPDV as the organisation representing divisions of general practice in Victoria.

Both organisations recognise that the quality and provision of eye and ENT care to the Victorian community will be enhanced if they work together to achieve the aim and objectives of this MOU.

Aim of MOU

This MOU commits GPDV and the Eye & Ear Hospital to act together and cooperatively, for an initial period of five years, with the common purpose of improving the eye and ENT health and health care of the Victorian population.

Objectives

Both parties will work together to achieve this aim by developing and implementing strategies and initiatives to:

- Enhance care standards and practices to the benefit of consumers;
- Increase service provision efficiencies by improving and streamlining administrative and communication processes between the Eye & Ear Hospital and GPs;
- Increase appropriate referrals to the Hospital and GP management of non-acute ENT or vision related conditions;

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- Provide health care professionals with increased practice skills and knowledge through education and training; and
- Enhance the quality and continuum of care for consumers by better utilising community support services.

Terms of Agreement

This MOU commences on the date of endorsement by the respective parties and remains in force for five years thereafter or until amended or replaced.

Structure and Processes of MOU

Title

Projects and initiatives implemented under this MOU will be referred to by the title *A Sense of Care*.

Representatives

Both organisations will appoint appropriate individual/s to coordinate *A Sense of Care* initiatives. These individuals will be an initial contact point and will coordinate relevant initiatives within their organisation.

It will be their responsibility to monitor, respond and report against the initiatives under the agreement. This includes identifying and addressing appropriate opportunities for, and impediments to, collaboration.

Implementation Plans

An implementation plan for each 12-month period will be developed by the appointed representatives to actively implement the MOU and identify and plan *A Sense of Care* initiatives.

Review of this Agreement

Each organisation agrees that it will keep the operation of this MOU and its initiatives under continuous review and will consult each other with a view to improving operations and resolving any matter that may arise.

On, or shortly after the first anniversary of the date of this MOU, appointed representatives will review and consider whether amendment of this MOU is appropriate. This process will be repeated every 12 months thereafter for the life of the MOU.

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Expected outcomes will be listed in the *Sense of Care* Implementation Plans and will be utilised to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the MOU.

Meetings

Respective coordinators will meet on a quarterly basis to discuss and plan *A Sense of Care* activities. In addition to these meetings, either party can initiate additional meetings for extraordinary purposes.

Working Groups

Joint working groups comprising relevant members of each organisation shall be established as required to implement *A Sense of Care* and undertake relevant consultation under this Memorandum.

Implementation

The above meetings and working groups will provide a mechanism to plan, implement and monitor the following MOU related activities:

1. Inform the other party of relevant issues and opportunities that may promote or impede the aims of the agreement;
2. Identify opportunities for collaborative health promotion opportunities;
3. Improve administrative practices such as referral processes and relevant resources;
4. Identify and, where appropriate, involve additional stakeholders, including divisions of general practice, who may benefit under initiatives of the agreement;
5. Arrange and implement relevant GP and Hospital staff training;
6. Identify and address practices that currently impede communication and effective service delivery;
7. Raise the profile and understanding of GP practice within the Hospital;

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8. Develop, where appropriate, standard screening tools/ minimum interventions by GPs in regard to eye & ENT health;
9. Increase GP understanding regarding the specialties practiced and services offered by the Hospital with a view to increasing appropriate referrals and GP management of non-acute ENT and vision conditions;
10. Implement information technology solutions that enhance efficiencies and communication between the organizations, including electronic referral systems;
11. Improve GPs' capacity to identify and where appropriate treat eye and ENT injuries and conditions; and
12. Identify appropriate opportunities to jointly advocate on issues effecting the provision of eye and ENT care.

Resources and Facilities

Each organisation agrees to commit the resources, as required, to implement initiatives under this MOU. In circumstances where either organisation is unable to commit the necessary resources a review of the initiative and timetable will be undertaken to ensure implementation at a mutually convenient time.

Sharing of Information

Each organisation will provide the other with opportunities to disseminate information to their relevant stakeholders regarding MOU initiatives and relevant issues.

The knowledge and initiatives developed under this MOU are to be documented as they arise. This documentation is to be utilised as a knowledge sharing exercise to be made available to other relevant/interested groups.

Confidentiality

Information provided in accordance with this MOU will only be used or disclosed for the purpose for which it was requested. Utilising this information for additional purposes will require authorisation from the information provider.

Dispute Resolution

The parties agree that they will promptly resolve any dispute by informal conciliation without resort to legal action of any kind.

Both parties are committed to making every effort to resolve any dispute within 28 days. Initiatives under this agreement are to continue during a dispute unless either party believes it will compromise the integrity of the MOU or the organisation itself.

If a dispute remains unresolved following informal conciliation the matter is then to be referred to The Primary Care & Population Health Advisory Committee (an advisory committee to the Hospital's Board of Directors on which both parties are represented).

Either party may wish to seek further representation at such a forum. If either party feels that conciliation in this manner will be biased an independent conciliator will be appointed (to the satisfaction of both parties).

If the parties are still unable to reach a resolution the dispute is to be referred to formal mediation. An independent mediator registered with the Victorian Law Institute and approved by both parties will be appointed. Both parties will attend and cooperate fully during the dispute resolution procedure.

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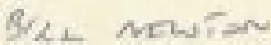
Confirmation

This Memorandum of Understanding is made between General Practice Divisions – Victoria and The Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital on Friday, 12 December 2003.

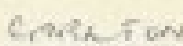
SIGNED for and on behalf of
General Practice Divisions - Victoria


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Dr Nola Maxfield
Chairperson


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Witness


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Print name


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Print address



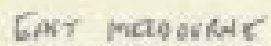
SIGNED for and on behalf of
The Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital


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Professor Graeme B Ryan, AC
Chairperson


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Witness


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Print name


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Print address



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