

Review Implementation Committee
Divisions of General Practice: Future Directions

COMMUNIQUÉ FOURTEEN – MEETING OF 1 DECEMBER 2006

The Review Implementation Committee (RIC), established to provide advice to the Australian Government on implementing the Government response to the 2003 *Review of the Role of Divisions of General Practice*, held its fourteenth meeting on 1 December 2006. The Committee discussed the following:

Information management

Through AGPN and the SBOs, the Department has funded a team of Regional Health Information Management Officers (RHIMOs). One of the important tasks for RHIMOs in the short term is liaising with all Divisions, as part of a national approach, to identify their needs and provide support to enable Divisions to better manage their information.

Quality standards and accreditation

As of 1 November 2006, 35 Divisions have achieved accreditation. While the Department will continue to monitor the progress of Divisions in achieving accreditation, it is the responsibility of the Divisions network including AGPN and SBOs to support Divisions to achieve accreditation.

Boundary alignment

Most Divisions have now agreed to their boundaries aligned to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Collection Districts as a basis for better population information. The RIC noted that Divisions with outstanding issues will be encouraged to continue to engage and negotiate with neighbouring Divisions to finalise boundary alignment by February 2007.

The Department will provide Divisions with PDF maps showing their agreed boundaries once boundaries have been finalised.

Structural efficiency

The Department is currently exploring options to support structural efficiency and/or amalgamation and is encouraging Divisions to continue to investigate options for improving structural efficiency.

Lapsing program evaluation

Outcomes of the Lapsing Program Review will inform the future management of the DGPP.

Multi Program Agreement (MPA)

The Department will make arrangements for discussions with the Divisions network in 2007 regarding the review of the MPA in consultation with the AGPN.

Future of RIC

The Committee agreed that it had essentially achieved what it was tasked to do within its Terms of Reference, and as such, the Committee supported the finalisation of the RIC.

A post-RIC consultative group will be established to facilitate engagement with the Divisions network as well as broader stakeholder interests such as consumers and state and territory representatives.

Recognising and improving performance

An analysis and review of all Divisions network financial and contractual reporting requirements will be undertaken by the Department in early 2007, to ensure a minimum standard of outcomes reporting while reducing repetition and minimising unnecessary burden.

The Department is also undertaking an analysis of whether the NQPS activities are adequately achieving the intended purpose of identifying the performance and achievements of Divisions.

The Department will continue to work with the Divisions network to seek their views regarding the NQPS and reporting requirements.

Future of Performance and Development Funding Pool (PDFP)

The Performance and Development Funding Pool was established to build the capacity of the Divisions network, to promote activities that were already working well, and assist lower capacity Divisions to improve performance. The RIC, on feedback from the network, agreed that the PDFP would not continue.

The Department will now engage the AGPN/SBO Coalition to explore more effective alternatives for encouraging high performance and supporting Divisions to raise their performance standard.

Core funding allocation model

The RIC reviewed the proposed implications of the Flexible Weighted Population Model (FWPM) developed by the Funding Formula Working Group as a theoretical model.

Other business

This will be the final meeting of the RIC in anticipation of the establishment of the consultative group. Ms Jennie Roe, Assistant Secretary, GP Divisions and Information Branch, was the Chair for this meeting and thanked all RIC members for their valuable contributions on issues relating to the Government's Response to the *Report of the Review of the Role of Divisions of General Practice*.

Further Information and Providing Feedback

Information is available on the department's website at:
www.health.gov.au/pcd/programs/divisions/ricinfo.htm.