



Dr Rob Walters – Profile

Rob is the ADGP Board member representing urban Tasmania. Originally from Grafton in NSW, Rob moved to Tasmania as a young child and spent his school years in Hobart. Rob was called up to do National Service after finishing school and then spent some time working and travelling in the UK and Europe before returning to study medicine at the University of Tasmania.

After finishing his degree Rob returned to the UK to gain some further experience for a couple of years and then returned to Tasmania to set up a GP. He opened his practice in Sandy Bay, Hobart in 1983 and has worked there ever since. As well as his private practice, Rob holds the rank of Colonel in the Australian Army and is Consultant to the Surgeon General in General Practice for the army, navy and air force. His military work has taken him all around the world including to Berlin, to Hong Kong - where he worked with Guerkas – and, more recently, to Dili in East Timor where he spent six weeks working in the United Nations hospital.

Rob is the Medical Director on the Tasmanian Work Cover Board where he is required to represent medical practitioners in matters to do with workers compensation. He is also secretary of the Medical Protection Society of Tasmania – a job which he says has become much busier in recent months! In addition to these roles, he is also Chair of the Cancer Council of Tasmania.

Rob became interested in Divisions at their inception as he saw them as a structure within which GPs could work together for the good of the profession. He worked in the Southern Tasmanian Division with the current Minister for Education and Training, Dr Brendan Nelson, when Divisions were first established. When Dr Nelson left the Division, he convinced Rob to stand for Chair. Whilst serving as Chair of Southern Tasmanian Division, Rob also became Deputy Chair of the Tasmanian SBO and this year was elected to the ADGP Board.

Rob feels that in the current unsettled world of general practice, Divisions provide a unifying and stabilising force. By their nature, Divisions are the most representative of the GP groups and Rob sees the Divisions Network as the best hope for presenting a united front for general practice. He maintains that when GPs actually get together and discuss issues of concern that consensus is possible, but feels that this will not happen if GPs remain isolated in their surgeries. Therefore, Rob sees a key role for Divisions in bringing GPs together to fight for a better deal for general practice and consumers. Rob feels strongly that the Divisions Network can't ignore the politics of medicine and so the Network needs people who are able to engage at a political level but who are also prepared to listen to grassroots rather than run their own agendas. One of the key strengths of the Divisions Network he believes is that its structure enables grassroots GPs to directly influence the decisions made at a national level.

Rob is keen to encourage more GPs to become involved with Divisions and urges interested GPs to give Divisions a go by considering standing for positions on the Boards of Divisions and on Division committees and taskforces. He is keen to see a wider involvement of GPs in Divisions, rather than just the same old faces! Rob is happy to talk to GPs about how they can get more involved with Divisions and to take forward any issues Tasmanian GPs would like raised with the ADGP Board at a national level.

Rob can be contacted on 03 6225 3858 or 0418 127 123