

Medical Board of Australia consultation on the funding of external doctors' health programs

Submission received from: **Anonymous**

Question 1: Is there a need for health programs?

Do you see any value in, or need for external health programs for medical students and/or doctors? Please explain your reasoning

I see a definite need for external health programs. In allowing a doctor or medical student to be identified, either by themselves or their colleagues, and referred to an independent body for a proper evaluation and rehabilitation program at the earliest possible moment would be highly advantageous. In pure cost analysis terms, the amount of money spent funding such a service would be far less the financial consequences to the community felt from a practitioner practicing in an unsafe manner or committing self harm. In public health terms, it should be a prime concern for all of the medical community to attempt to ensure all available facilities are in place to prevent harm befalling patients.

Question 2: Preferred model for external health programs

Of the existing models in Australia as described above, is there a model that you would prefer to see adopted nationally? Is there an alternative model that you would like to see adopted nationally?

The Victorian model appears to deliver the most comprehensive service of those outlined and I feel should be the option that is adopted nationally.

Question 3: The role of the Board in funding external health programs

Do you believe that it is the role of the Board to fund external health programs?

Yes

Question 4: Range of services provided by doctors' health programs

What services should be provided by doctors' health programs. In addition to the ones you have selected, what other services (if any) should be provided by doctors' health programs?

Telephone advice available 24/7

Referral to expert practitioners for assessment and management

Programs to enhance the skills of medical practitioners who assess and manage the health of doctors

Case management and monitoring (including workplace monitoring) the progress of those who voluntarily enter into Case Management agreements (or similar) with the service

Follow up of all participants contacting or attending the service

Question 5: Funding

How much of an increase in registration fees is acceptable to you, to fund doctors' health services?

\$25 - \$40

Question 6: Other comments

Do you have any other comments or feedback about external health programs?