



## Communiqué

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### National Specialist IMG Committee Meeting: 11 September 2013

The National Specialist International Medical Graduate (IMG) Committee is established as a Committee of the Medical Board of Australia (the Board). The Committee meets quarterly.

#### Review of the specialist pathway

All international medical graduates (IMGs) who apply for limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice, or limited registration for area of need, must meet the requirements of one of three nationally consistent assessment pathways:

- Competent authority pathway
- Standard pathway
- Specialist pathway.

In their report, *Lost in the Labyrinth*, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing made recommendations about reducing red tape, duplication and administrative hurdles faced by IMGs. The National Registration and Accreditation Scheme has opened up opportunities to streamline and simplify the assessment and registration of IMGs.

The Board, agreed to consult on the Committee's recommendations for proposed changes to streamline the specialist pathway (comparability assessment and area of need assessment).

The Board consulted widely on the proposed changes. The consultation closed on 31 May 2013 and the Board received valuable feedback on these proposals from a wide range of stakeholders. The submissions indicate that there is broad support for changes that streamline processes and reduce duplication, yet still ensure that rigorous assessment processes are maintained.

The Committee noted that the Board is working closely with the Australian Medical Council (AMC), the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the specialist medical colleges to ensure successful implementation of the changes to the specialist pathway. A date for implementation of the changes has not yet been set and will need to be agreed on by the Board, AHPRA, the AMC and the specialist colleges. The Committee will keep stakeholders informed as implementation progresses.

#### Specialist pathway – short term training

Stakeholders had requested clarification on the processes and requirements of the *specialist pathway – short term training* including clarification on the role of the Board and the role of the specialist medical colleges in the assessment of IMGs applying for limited registration postgraduate training or supervised practice under this pathway.

Draft guidelines on this pathway have been developed that aim to clarify the requirements for registration for medical practitioners who are in this pathway. The guidelines also describe the role of the specialist medical colleges in this process, including providing advice to the Board.

The Board on the recommendation of the Committee conducted a preliminary consultation on the draft guidelines on the *specialist pathway – short term training* ahead of a wider public consultation. The submissions received from stakeholders indicate that there is broad support for the content of the

draft guidelines. Based on initial feedback, the Committee considered revised draft guidelines which further clarify the requirements of this pathway.

The Committee noted that the Board also has registration standards for limited registration for medical practitioners and that the Board is also reviewing these standards. When the Board consults on the limited registration standards, it will also conduct further consultation on the revised draft guideline. The guideline and registration standard for limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice are related.

**Dr Joanna Flynn AM**  
**Chair, National Specialist IMG Committee**

18 September 2013