

Media statement

15 September 2015

Medical Board announces next steps on revalidation

The Medical Board of Australia has today published commissioned research on revalidation and announced the next steps it will take.

The Board is considering how best to ensure medical practitioners maintain and enhance their professional skills and knowledge and remain fit to practise medicine.

‘Regulation is about keeping the public safe and managing risk to patients and part of this involves making sure that medical practitioners keep their skills and knowledge up to date,’ said Board Chair, Dr Joanna Flynn AM.

‘The Board is seeking expert advice, as well as feedback from the profession and the community, about the most practical and effective way to do this that is tailored to the Australian healthcare environment,’ Dr Flynn said.

In December 2012, the Board started a conversation about revalidation and has since consulted with the profession and the community and commissioned international research.

Today, the Board published the report it commissioned from the Collaboration for the Advancement of Medical Education Research and Advancement (CAMERA). The report found positive evidence that revalidation is worthwhile in managing risk to patients and recommends three alternative models for the Board to consider.

Rather than adopting a specific model at this time, the Board will progress its consideration of revalidation in Australia by:

- Appointing an expert group to provide technical expert advice on revalidation and how any models recommended by the group can be evaluated for effectiveness, feasibility and acceptability. The expert group will be chaired by Professor Liz Farmer and include members with experience in medical regulation, performance management, assessment of medical practitioners, medical education and safety and quality.
- Appointing a Consultative Committee to provide feedback on issues related to the introduction of revalidation in Australia. The Consultative Committee will be chaired by the Chair of the Medical Board of Australia and include representatives of the Medical Council of New South Wales, the Australian Medical Council, specialist colleges, medical schools, the AMA and consumers.
- Commissioning social research into what the profession and the community expect that medical practitioners should do to demonstrate ongoing competence and fitness to practise.

The terms of reference for the Expert Advisory Group and the Consultative Committee, as well as the CAMERA research, are published on the Board website, under revalidation, under the registration tab.

The Board has set a 12-month timeline for the Expert Advisory Group to recommend one or more models for revalidation in Australia and provide advice on how these can be piloted. Details about models to be considered are included in the terms of reference. The social research will also be conducted over the next 12 months.

The Board will appoint members to both the Expert Advisory Group and the Consultative Committee and both groups will report to the Board.

“Trust and integrity are cornerstones of medical practice. Developing an approach to revalidation that is tailored to the Australian environment will help make sure that the trust and confidence the community has in the medical profession is well founded,” Dr Flynn said.

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