

3 August 2018

Dr Joanna Flynn AM
Chair
Medical Board of Australia
GPO Box 9958
Melbourne VIC 3001

By email to: medboardconsultation@ahpra.gov.au

Dear Dr Flynn

Re: Public consultation on *Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia*

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) is a membership organisation that prepares doctors to be medical specialists in the field of psychiatry, supports and enhances clinical practice, advocates for people affected by mental illness and advises government on mental health care. The RANZCP has more than 6000 members including over 4000 fully qualified psychiatrists and around 1500 members who are training to qualify as psychiatrists.

The RANZCP is pleased to provide input to the Medical Board of Australia consultation on the revised draft *Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia* (the code). In order to ensure that our input reflects the views of our members, this letter draws on consultation with several of our expert committees, including the Committee for Professional Practice, the Membership Conduct Committee and Branch committees representing all of the Australian states and territories.

The RANZCP supports the principles of good medical practice outlined in the code, and considers the code to be a comprehensive and valuable document for doctors in Australia. The code accurately reflects the nature of the patient-doctor relationship, and the emphasis on culturally safe and respectful practice is most welcome.

With regard to the proposed changes to the code, the RANZCP is pleased to support all recommended changes, and commends the Medical Board of Australia on their commitment to ensuring good regulatory practice. In particular, we feel the strengthening of the code in relation to bullying and harassment is a positive step that promotes a safe professional environment for all doctors in Australia.

The RANZCP notes the addition of 'psychotropic medication', with which psychiatrists have substantial knowledge and expertise, to Section 4.15 on Personal Relationships. The broad content of this section aligns well with the RANZCP [Code of Ethics](#), which was revised this year and notes that 'psychiatrists shall, wherever possible, avoid treating anyone with whom they have a personal relationship, including friends, colleagues and family members. If it is unavoidable, they shall appreciate the need for careful attention to potential adverse consequences and conflicts'.

The RANZCP strongly upholds the principles held in the *Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia* and would expect all of its Fellows, Associates and Affiliates to adhere to them consistently in addition to the RANZCP [Code of Ethics](#).

If you would like to discuss any of the points raised in this letter, please contact [REDACTED], Practice, Policy and Partnerships via [REDACTED] or by phone on [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Dr Kym Jenkins
President

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