

COMMUNIQUÉ – INTERN APPOINTMENT EXPERT GROUP

Background

With significant changes taking place in healthcare delivery in South Australia (SA), the Chief Medical Officer, formed the Intern Appointments Expert Group to review SA Health's policy for appointing applicants to intern positions. The group consisted of representatives from Local Health Networks, South Australian Universities including Deans of Medicine and a student, a junior doctor and a SA Health Workforce member.

Work Group Members:

Mr Adrian Anthony (Chair), SA MET Health Advisory Council,
Dr Sharon Morton, Director of Medical Services, SALHN
Dr Jayanthi Jayakaran, Director of Medical Services, Country Health
Dr Linda MacPherson, Medical Advisor, Workforce Planning and Development, NSW Health
Gill Norrington, Acting Executive Director People and Culture
Professor Ian Symonds, Dean of Medicine, The University of Adelaide
Professor Lucie Walters, Rural Clinical School representative
Professor Paul Worley, Dean of Medicine, Flinders University
Dr Heng Chong, Junior Doctor (via teleconference)
Samantha Iannella, Medical Student
Associate Professor Alison Jones, Manager, SA MET Unit
Carmen Crawford, Senior Project Officer, SA MET Unit

The Intern Appointments Expert Group had many robust discussions about the process for selecting and appointing suitable applicants to intern positions and this resulted in some recommendations to be implemented in the new year and others requiring further exploration. Discussions focused on: intern recruitment policies in other jurisdictions, intern application pathways, intern priority category groups, merit selection, work readiness of medical graduates and roles and responsibilities of an intern. Consensus was reached on some but not all discussion elements.

The working group provided recommendations to the Chief Medical Officer.

Recommendations

The following summarises the recommendations of the Intern Appointments Expert Group.

Supported:

- **Rural intern pathway:** Implement an intern application pathway that supports placement of applicants into rural intern positions.
- **Enterprise Patient Administration System eligibility criteria:** Introduce an eligibility criterion (minimum training in EPAS) for all applicants. This recommendation was implemented for applicants applying for internship in 2017.
- **Australian and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) medical graduates:** Include category groups for ATSI candidates – for both local and interstate ATSI applicants.
- **Generic intern job description** – Implement the proposed generic job description.

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Requires further work and exploration:

- **Category groups - limited registration:** The Medical Board of Australia has recently released new standards for limited registration for internationally trained medical graduates (effective 1 July 2016). Intern category groups require review as a consequence of that registration change.
- **Merit Selection:** Merit selection for internship requires further investigation. Further input from junior doctors is required.
- **Allocation of applicants to positions:** The outcomes of the previous points may impact the allocation of applicants to positions.

Next Step:

The work of the Intern Appointment Expert Group is complete. The Medical Officer Appointments Working Group, which oversees the process for intern appointments with the support of the SA MET Unit, will take leadership in implementing the Intern Appointment Expert Group's recommendations.

To provide feedback about the implementation - email healthsamet@sa.gov.au.



PROFESSOR PADDY PHILLIPS
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER & CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER,
System Performance & Service Delivery
SA Health

For more information

SA Medical Education and Training Unit
Level 5 – Citi Centre Building
Telephone: 8226 7231

www.samet.org.au

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