



02 APR 2008

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

FROM THE PRESIDENT

31 March 2008

Dr Nicola Dunbar
Policy Team Manager
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
GPO Box 5480
Sydney 2001 NSW

Dear Dr Dunbar,

Re: National Patient Charter of Rights

I am writing in response to the National Patient Charter of Rights consultation.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (the College) has sought member feedback regarding the draft Charter.

The College supports engaging patients in their own health care and building the capacity of patients to make informed decisions. While the Charter has a strong focus on patient rights and entitlements, there is insufficient emphasis on patient responsibilities. A shared understanding between the doctor and patient, regarding both entitlements and responsibilities, needs to be developed before patients can become willing partners in their own health care.

Ultimately both patients and doctors are human and err on occasion. It is the position of the College that a shared responsibility between doctors and patients is necessary to achieve desirable health outcomes.

The College supports a Charter that recognises the careful balance between both patient entitlements and patient responsibilities. Overall the Charter supports comparable standards to that of the College.

The College appreciates the opportunity to comment. Please contact Bronwyn Morris-Donovan on (03) 8699 0498 or via email on bronwyn.morris-donovan@racgp.org.au should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Vasantha Preetham
President