

OUTCOMES OF HEALTH MINISTERS' 18 APRIL 2008 MEETING REGARDING SAFETY AND QUALITY ACCREDITATION REFORMS

Health Ministers at their meeting of 18 April 2008 have:

1. Noted the Commission consulted widely with key stakeholders on the development of a proposed national approach to accreditation in the Australian health care system.
2. Noted, that as a result of this consultation, the Commission has developed an *Alternative Model for Safety and Quality Accreditation* (Accreditation Model).
3. Endorsed in-principle the Commission's Alternative Model and noted that the Commission will undertake the first phase of implementation which will involve:
 - 3.1. developing a preliminary set of Australian Health Standards (AHS); and
 - 3.2. determining processes and costs, including exploring funding options, to implement the Accreditation Model.
4. Forwarded to the COAG Working Group on Health and Ageing copies of the proposed national approach to accreditation, as set out in the Accreditation Model.
5. Endorsed the Commission undertaking:
 - 5.1. a detailed review and analysis of the State and Territory private health facility licensing in consultation with all jurisdictions; and
 - 5.2. a review of overlaps and potential linkages between accreditation and the contractual obligations between the State and Territory health services and health insurance funds (including what opportunities exist to streamline safety and quality performance reporting in this area).
6. Endorsed the public release of the two reports: *Final Report on the Review of National Safety and Quality Accreditation Standards March 2008*; and the *Proposals on an Alternative Model for Safety and Quality Accreditation and Matters Relating to Costs and Duplication of Accreditation Processes, March 2008*.
7. Noted that the *Accreditation Model*, will have the following key elements:
 - 7.1. *Australian Health Standards* for priority safety and quality areas.
 - 7.2. A *Quality Improvement Framework* established to address the key corporate, risk and governance areas that support quality processes and systems improvement.
 - 7.3. *Expanded scope for accreditation* to health services not currently accredited through staged implementation, starting with services at high risk of patient harm.
 - 7.4. *National data collection and reporting* to measure performance outcomes and improvements in priority safety and quality areas, allow credible service comparison and facilitate tracking of the effectiveness of the AHS.
 - 7.5. *Mutual recognition of accreditation processes and outcomes* to reduce duplication, minimise the burden of accreditation for health services and promote continuity of care.
 - 7.6. *National coordination* to coordinate reform of the safety and quality accreditation system, using a model of collaborative governance that gives a clear role for consumers, clinicians, service providers and other stakeholders.
 - 7.7. *Formal obligations to comply with accreditation requirements and consequences for non-compliance* by Health Services through the use of regulatory mechanisms and clearly articulated sanctions and penalties for non-compliance.
8. Agreed that the Commission will provide regular reports on progress to Health Ministers.