

22 June 2018

Executive Officer
Medical
AHPRA
GPO Box 9958
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

To the Medical Board of Australia

Public consultation on *Good medical practice*

Thank you for providing the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) the opportunity to provide comment on the *Good medical practice: A code of conduct for doctors in Australia*.

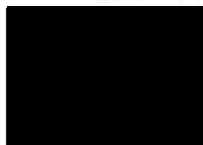
The Rural Doctors Association of Australia is the national peak professional body representing the interests of all rural medical practitioners and the communities where they live and work. Our vision for rural and remote communities is accessible, high quality health services provided by a medical workforce that is numerically adequate, located within the community it serves, and comprises doctors and other health professionals who have the necessary training and skills to meet the needs of those communities.

The RDAA suggests that consideration is given to the following:

- In either Section 5 or Section 12 of the document there is acknowledgement of the power imbalance between a supervisor, registrar, junior doctor and medical student as the document has done in relation to the doctor/patient scenario in Section 4.
- In relation to item 7.2.2 "Upholding the patient's right to gain access to the necessary level of healthcare and, whenever possible, helping them to do so," and item 10.2.3 "Avoiding expressing your personal beliefs to your patients that exploit their vulnerabilities or are likely to cause them distress," RDAA believes there should be reference to the rural and remote context. For locations where there is one or two doctors in town, and in many locations the doctor is from a different cultural or religious background, and this influences their medical practice, access to specific services can be compromised. Anecdotal reports through our members indicate this is particularly challenging in areas of women's health in some locations.
- Under Section 10.5 regarding medical records, with consideration to the patient's electronic health record (My Health Record), should there be some reference for the medical practitioners to support the patient's request to maintain this?
- Under item 9.2.4 it references a 'range of activities' to support continued professional development, should this also reference a range of delivery methods?

If you have any further questions in relation to this matter, or wish to arrange a meeting, please do not hesitate to contact our Chief Executive Officer Ms Peta Rutherford on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Dr Adam Coltzau
President
Rural Doctors Association of Australia