



THE AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF DERMATOLOGISTS

10 November 2005

Health Workforce Study
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Dear Sir/Madam

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT ON THE HEALTH WORKFORCE

The Australasian College of Dermatologists would like to make the following comments on the Productivity Commission's draft report.

The College would support changes such as a single registration body throughout Australia and amalgamation of the various Councils, such as AMWAC and AHWOC. Unfortunately, we believe that these changes are not likely to lead to a significantly more productive workforce with regards to the delivery of health care to the Australian community.

It would be interesting to have had some predictions as to how much improvement in productivity will occur and how many more full-time equivalent health workers there will be after these proposed changes. The College would perhaps suggest that it might be more cost-effective to increase the number of training positions for medical specialists, general practitioners, and health care workers.

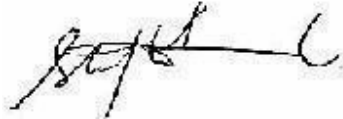
College would also support the report's acceptance of telemedicine and the recognition that there should be Medicare rebates applicable to this type of service. The College would like to offer our services in working with the Commonwealth in developing telemedicine and, in particular, teledermatology.

The College is also concerned with regards to the possible reduction of the quality of services when non-medical healthcare workers take on roles previously undertaken by general practitioners and medical specialists. College also has concerns with regards the use of these non-medical healthcare workers of the supervising doctors' provider number. This may well lead to some difficulty with regulatory issues. College would suggest that these people be provided with their own provider numbers.

College is concerned that the Medicare Plus scheme provides financial incentives only for GPs in rural and regional Australia. College would suggest that this scheme be extended to specialist services.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Shumack', written over a light grey rectangular background.

STEPHEN SHUMACK
Honorary Secretary