Individual Submission to the Independent Review of Accreditation Systems within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for health professions

From: Consumer

Thank you for providing the opportunity to submit personal comments and suggestions following attendance at the Health Consumers Forum Workshop March 17 2017.

The issues I would like to reiterate, arising from this workshop and other experiences include:

- Community Representatives being selected from both specific lobby/consumer groups and from those who can contribute a broad, more general community perspective gleaned from a background in health and/or community service industries.
- A retirement age for health professionals ... a contentious issue! Alternatively, a system of accrediting older age health professionals, especially medical practitioners such as surgeons, to assess current skills and techniques.
- Direct supervision and monitoring of “new” graduate allied health professionals, especially in the private hospital sector.
- The effectiveness of short-term courses which enable employment of non-health professionals in Aged Care services and increased risk for vulnerable patient groups.
- On-line/distance education nursing courses which do not equip persons, especially those from a NESB, to communicate with vulnerable hospital patients, or to understand the patient’s socio-cultural health milieu.
- Medicare rebated Team Care arrangements which do not ensure that a patient is receiving team care. Medicare funded allied health care should not have a pre-requisite of “team care” if the patient would benefit from only one allied health service.
- Casualisation of the nursing and allied health, health-sector work-force. There is an absence of accountability, credentialing, lack of skills and monitoring of agency staff, especially in the private sector posing both a risk to patients and increased fear and anxiety.
- Misuse of Patient Confidentiality and the consequent break-down of establishing essential communication and understanding between patients and their families and/or carers.

Comment and query

Evidence of increasing interference and punitive actions as a result of current government policies, e.g. “Border & Protection and Detention Policies” towards medical and nursing (and other) staff who refuse to contravene their Hippocratic Oath and medical and nursing ethics.

What is AHPRA doing, or will do, to support health professionals who work in areas where they are at risk of Government repudiation of their required professional standards and ethics?