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Medical leaders want one body to set education standards for Doctors

Australia's major biennial conference of medical training and accreditation bodies, MedEd 2007, has called unanimously for one authority to set standards for the training of Australia's medical workforce. Currently there is a gap in accreditation for the years following graduation from medical schools.

Attendees representing all major medical training bodies at the medical education conference say the Australian Medical Council is the right body to oversee training and its reach should be extended to cover the "missing link" years, the postgraduate period before specialist training starts.

A recommendation will go to the Australian Health and Medical Council for the changes to be implemented within 12 months.

"If quality is to be maintained in an era where training doctors is more complicated and demanding than ever, oversight of training and accreditation must be seamless," President of Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand Professor Allan Carmichael said.

"We believe the Australian Medical Council should accredit the postgraduate training years just as they accredit the undergraduate and specialist stages.

"There is now unanimous agreement among the key training bodies for this, and we will be asking the government to implement this seamless system without delay."

The leaders agreed they wanted articulation across the continuum to be transparent and built on cooperation and partnership. There should also be accurate mapping of entry level competencies for the transitions between the different phases of training, for example the transition from undergraduate to internship.

They recommended a working party representing key stakeholders such as students, graduates, Medical Deans, the College of Presidents of Medical Colleges and the Confederation of Postgraduate Medical Education Councils be established to define the competencies required at the beginning of the intern year as its first task.