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Medical Deans Change Name and Launch Resources Campaign

The former Committee of Deans of Australian Medical Schools is changing its name to Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand – and has flagged that it will aggressively pursue funding and infrastructure issues in Australia in election year 2007.

The organisation, which represents Deans of Medicine in universities with medical schools in Australia and New Zealand, will also have a new chairperson from February, Professor Allan Carmichael, Dean of Medicine at the University of Tasmania.

The role of chair has been filled since January 2005 by Professor Lindon Wing, Dean of Medicine of Flinders University in South Australia.

Professor Wing said today the new name coincided with the incorporation of the organisation and a renewed determination to seek greater resourcing of medical training in Australia.

“This is a federal election year and Medical Deans will be calling on all politicians to take stock of the facts about the training of our doctors – that while we produce some of the best medical graduates in the world, we do not have the resources and infrastructure for the sort of expansion of student numbers and medical schools governments are keen on,” Professor Wing said.

“The issues of cluster funding, pipeline funding and the medical student loading are very important to us. They impact significantly on our ability to respond to an expansion of the future medical workforce.”

The organization this week wrote to the Minister for Education, Science and Training the Hon Julie Bishop MP, asking her to take into account increasing demands on medical training as she reforms funding for universities and considers a new research quality framework.

“We have done well to date with declining resources,” Professor Wing said.

“Innovative and responsive curricula, dedicated students and the support of our public hospitals and other key partners have continued to ensure high quality outcomes. But it can’t continue. We need infrastructure and funding if standards are to be maintained and improved.”

Professor Allan Carmichael said he was pleased to be taking up the role of chair and would pursue the resourcing issues with vigour in the coming year.

The new Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand website is available at www.medicaldeans.org.au

Note: The new name may be shortened in general use to Medical Deans.

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