



MEDIA RELEASE
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Exciting Workforce Planning Development: Medical Schools Outcomes Database to realise its potential through data linkage

Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand (Medical Deans) today announced the signing of a new two year funding agreement with the Commonwealth Department of Health to take the Medical Schools Outcomes Database (MSOD) to its next stage as a significant workforce planning tool.

The President of Medical Deans, Professor Peter Smith congratulated the Australian Government and Minister Ley for the ongoing investment in this essential data set and the exciting new data linkage initiative.

The MSOD is an annual national data collection recruiting over 90% of medical students during their medical studies. MSOD was established in 2004 by Medical Deans as a pilot and followed by a full annual collection involving all Australian medical schools from 2005.

The national dataset has over 30,000 participants and this funding will now allow these medical students and junior doctors to be tracked along their medical career. This will be done by linking data collected in medical school (MSOD) to their time as an intern and then further into their vocational training. This is possible through cross agency collaborations with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Agency and the Commonwealth Department of Health.

The funding will also allow for new medical students in their final or penultimate year of medical studies to be recruited to the dataset each year.

'Without the amazing support from our medical students we don't have a dataset; we don't have a way of demonstrating the essential determinants of where, what and how tomorrow's doctors will work', Professor Alison Jones, Chair of the project Steering Committee said.

'This data linkage development will be the envy of many countries who, like Australia, attempt to plan their future health and medical workforce to meet tomorrow's health care needs. We will be in a position to answer questions about what best predicts why doctors choose a career as a general practitioner or why some doctors want to go bush.'

'Funding will also enable the development of a new medical workforce survey for junior doctors undertaking their intern year, a critical point in career decision making for doctors', said Professor Jones.

Medical Deans is the peak professional body representing entry-level medical education, training and research and is made up of the Deans of Australia's 18 university medical schools and the two New Zealand schools.

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