

10 May 2023

## Training is the missing piece of the budget's primary care reforms

Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand (Medical Deans) welcomes the Australian Government's announcements on reforming and strengthening Australia's primary care system – it is the necessary foundation for any effective, patient-focused and sustainable health system. We also strongly support the Budget's focus on multidisciplinary health teams and enabling the adoption of new models of care. These changes are much needed.

However, we are disappointed that nowhere was there mention of the training of our future doctors.

"Support for the teaching and training of our future doctors in primary care was the missing piece of this year's Budget. This is essential to strengthening Medicare" said Professor Richard Murray, Medical Deans' President.

"Funding reforms need to embed the teaching and training of students and early career doctors into the clinical and business models of primary care – developing our future GPs cannot be an afterthought".

"The Health Minister has rightly stated that encouraging our graduates to pursue a career in general practice is a national priority, but that means they need to be able to learn in and for general practice" explained Professor Murray.

Our approach to medical training continues to be hospital-dominated. Currently, the support for GPs to teach medical students is minimal and inflexible. It is limited to sessional payments that were last increased in 2015.

The payments are also based on the premise that training can only be provided "by a GP" – disregarding the valuable learning from practice nurses and allied health professionals, undermining the multidisciplinary practice that students are learning during their studies, and reinforcing unhelpful professional silos.

"A stronger Medicare can only be delivered by a strong health workforce, and training our health students is paramount. Without our future doctors, we have no health system" said Professor Murray.

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*Medical Deans is the peak body representing the 24 medical schools across the two countries, whose focus is on planning for, developing and supporting the medical graduates our communities need.*

*Our member support and advocacy focus on matters to advance health and medical education, including social accountability and inclusion, student health, Indigenous health and the LIME Network, graduate competencies, and the Medical Schools Outcomes Database (MSOD).*