



**Queensland  
Government**  
Queensland Health

# MEMORANDUM

*memo to chief executive  
re: recent discussion re Gerry*

**To:** Steve Buckland  
General Manager, Health Services

**Copies to:**

**From:** Dr Gerry FitzGerald  
Chief Health Officer

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**Subject:**

**File Ref:**

Steve

I noticed that at the recent meeting you had with the AMAQ the issue of overseas-trained doctors was raised and you agreed to form a joint working party to consider this matter.

There are a number of related matters regarding overseas-trained doctors that would benefit from a comprehensive review.

- The registration processes for overseas-trained doctors and in particular temporary conditional registration.
- The education program currently run by UQ for OTDs undertaking the AMC examination.
- The PGMEF accredits training programs for PGY1&2 and encourages on-going education for all doctors. Many of these posts are filled by OTDs.
- The Department has ongoing concerns with its medical workforce planning and filling of doctor's positions.
- The professional organisations are involved in accrediting training positions and in providing an alternate pathway through College Fellowship for OTDs.
- The graduates from Medical Schools will increase significantly in January 2005 resulting in an extra 40-50 graduates requiring intern positions. This is likely to require considerable restructuring of PGY1, 2 and 3 positions with an impact on the Area of Need certification and thus on positions available for OTDs within the QH system.

The issues of most concern include the following:

- *Competency standards*

Currently there is little evidence of the competency of OTD who may be authorised under Area of Need certification to practice, often in an unsupervised environment. That competency should include competency in English.

- *The pathways to general registration.*

There are a number of OTDs who continue in Area of Need positions without any attempt to progress with the AMC examinations or alternate process. Although the current pathways are clear, there are some doctors choosing not to progress through any of the pathways.

- *Workforce*

The current OTDs are a significant part of the service delivery framework of Queensland Health. The impact of additional graduates in particular will have an impact on the available positions.

- *Training*

The current educational OTD programs include preparation for the AMC examinations are funded by QH. Should this continue?

Are the College programs the appropriate way forward?

- *Finance*

Who pays for courses and for ongoing education?

I am aware that there have been some efforts at the national level to address some of these issues but it would appear beneficial to take a collaborative approach to consideration of these issues and hopefully a strategic approach to their resolution.

Would you consider broadening the committee between QH and the AMA into a more broadly based committee including all the key stakeholders with the aim of considering and identifying all the issues currently affecting OTDs as well as Qld Graduates with the aim of developing a strategic medical workforce plan.

This group could include representatives of

- *Working Party on Medical Workforce*

Queensland Health  
The Medical Board  
The University medical schools UQ, JCU and Bond  
PGMEF  
Representative of OTDs  
AMA  
Joint Colleges

*Centre for OTDs*

The Working Party should be represented at relatively senior level from within QH. Perhaps a senior medical administrator (Waters, Ashby) as well as key Central office personnel.

I would appreciate your views. Perhaps we could discuss this at ODG.

  
Dr Gerry FitzGerald  
Chief Health Officer  
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