



Press Release: 4/5/2006

## Sinking deeper into the Abyss!

Health Workforce Queensland has released a report that explores current and future trends in the Australian general practice workforce. Based on an information paper developed for the Australian Rural and Remote Workforce Agencies Group the report draws on data from a variety of sources including; Medicare Australia, Australian Medical Workforce Advisory Committee, ACIL Tasman, Australian General Practice Training, Committee of Deans Australian Medical Schools and Rural Workforce Agencies to provide a concise overview of general practice trends.

Dr Brenton Trezise, Chairperson of Health Workforce Queensland stated “the data indicate that there are significant differences between estimated GP requirements as projected by AMWAC to 2013 and current supply (new GP workforce entrants) and that this discrepancy will not be resolved in the short to medium term”.

Dr Trezise: “Clearly we are sinking deeper into the abyss and much more attention needs to be paid to rural and remote communities as they will bear the burden of the reduced workforce.”

Dr Trezise reported that other evident trends include:

- an ageing and a more feminized workforce with an increasing tendency to work and train part-time.
- a generational shift, where GPs both male and female are electing to reduce hours worked and place lifestyle ahead of work.
- an increased demand for GP services due to an ageing population and the resulting increase in diseases, medical conditions and disabilities associated with age.
- a declining interest in general practice as a speciality and an increase in the number of registrars undertaking training on a part time basis.
- significant discrepancies between AMWAC estimates as to GP requirements and the current capacity of Australian general practice training to supply same.
- rural and remote general practice will remain fragile due to the inability to attract sufficient rural pathway applicants and that a significant proportion of the rural and remote workforce are compelled to work in these areas.
- generational changes in work and lifestyle expectations will lead to a reduction in the number of services provided in rural and remote communities despite some increase in the overall number of providers.
- the substantial increase in medical graduates from 2009-2010 will challenge the capacity of hospitals and training providers to provide adequate support and supervision for interns and trainees.

A copy of the report can be obtained from:

[http://www.healthworkforce.com.au/downloads/publications/1601\\_arrwag\\_hwq\\_gp\\_trends\\_draft%20\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.healthworkforce.com.au/downloads/publications/1601_arrwag_hwq_gp_trends_draft%20_2_.pdf)

Media Contact: Dr Brenton Trezise  
Chairman  
07 47831377

Chris Mitchell  
Chief Executive Officer  
0438821129

Post: GPO Box 2523 Brisbane QLD 4001 | [www.healthworkforce.com.au](http://www.healthworkforce.com.au)  
Email: [admin@healthworkforce.com.au](mailto:admin@healthworkforce.com.au)

ABN: 81065 574 996 | Tel: 07 3105 7800 | Fax: 07 3105 7801

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