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22 September, 2014



SOUTH AUSTRALIAN
MEDICAL EDUCATION & TRAINING
HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

Jack Snelling M.P.
Minister for Health
GPO Box 2555
ADELAIDE S.A. 5000

Dear Minister Snelling,

RE: REFORM OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

I write further to my previous correspondence on 28 July, 2014 in reference to the letter I received from Premier Jay Weatherill on the 8 July, 2014 regarding the reform of the South Australian Boards and Committees. Whilst I recognise the requirement to streamline governance structures in South Australia, I would like to reiterate the risk of the proposal to abolish the South Australian Medical Education and Training Health Advisory Council (the Advisory Council).

I am attempting to organise a meeting to discuss this matter with you in more detail, as we will need to set in place controls for the risk as soon as possible. The Advisory Council is the intern training accreditation body for South Australia and is given this role by the Medical Board of Australia. We will need to inform the Medical Board of Australia soon if the Advisory Council is going to be abolished, as they will have to delegate the authority for intern accreditation to another entity. This could take time, particularly given that the Australian Medical Council will have to accredit that entity.

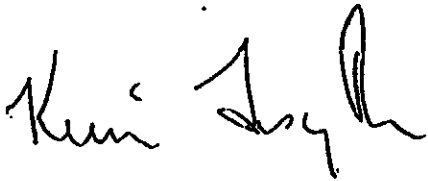
If there is any delay between the abolition of the current Advisory Council and appointment and accreditation of a new entity, there could be significant risk for intern training in South Australia and potential adverse publicity. Medical graduates need to be in accredited intern settings, being the only pathway to general registration to practise in Australia. Under a Council of Australian Governments' agreement, South Australia is required to offer all local medical graduates an intern position. This agreement cannot be met if there is no authority to accredit intern positions.

In addition to the 2013 review, streamlining of the Advisory Council and the Australian Medical Council recently granting 5 years accreditation to the Advisory Council, we have conducted a survey of our members and deputies. This survey explored perceptions of the role of the Advisory Council and the effectiveness in performing its functions. It gave valuable information on the importance placed on the accreditation work of the Advisory Council and also the need to ensure that there is sufficient time to work on broader strategic issues around junior doctor training. The results demonstrated perceptions that the role of the Chair is effective and that meeting agendas are effectively addressing local and national issues. The information from this survey will help us build capacity for members to be more effective in their contributions, for example by providing further upskilling on the role of other

relevant councils and committees at a statewide and national level. It was noted how confusing and contested the space is around junior doctor training, thus demonstrating the need for a single decision making body in South Australia to have oversight of junior doctor education and training.

Please advise if you would like to meet with me to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Forsyth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Kevin Forsyth
Presiding Member
SA MET Health Advisory Council

Encl: Letter dated 08 July, 2014 from the Premier Jay Weatherill RE reform of S.A. Boards and Committees



Hon Jay Weatherill MP
Premier of South Australia

PREM14D03458

Mr Kevin Forsyth
Presiding Member, South Australian Medical Education and Training Health Advisory
Council
c/o Ms Amanda Lawless, EA/Coordinator, SA Medical Education and Training
Level 6 Citi Centre, 11 Hindmarsh Square
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Mr Forsyth

I am writing to provide you with more information about my recent decision to reform South Australian government boards and committees.

Since becoming Premier, I have sought to improve the way Government engages with community, business and citizens in making public policy. The past decade has seen profound technological and social change. Community expectations today favour a direct say, transparency, immediacy and greater use of technology to enable collaboration in public policy development. The boards and committee model, which has served the state well in the past, needs reform to give way to more contemporary approaches that meet these expectations.

Our *Building a Stronger South Australia: A Modern Public Service* policy outlines a number of ways in which we are seeking to reform the way Government engages, including through more citizens juries, country cabinet, an upgraded YourSAy website and a new GovChat service. My vision is to give a broader range of organisations and individuals more direct access to government advisory and decision-making processes.

As part of the recently announced reforms, every government board and committee will be abolished, unless it can be demonstrated it has an essential purpose that cannot be met through other means. This reform will apply to all kinds of boards and committees, including statutory, advisory, commercial, regulatory and decision-making boards and committees.

For statutory boards, I intend to take a bill to parliament to remove from legislation the requirement for boards and committees that are no longer considered necessary.

Ministers will be responsible for recommending which boards and committees should be exempt from being abolished. A range of factors will inform decision making around exemptions, such as:

- efficiency: is it considered more cost effective to undertake functions in another way, or
- independence: do the functions require a level of separation from government to ensure objectivity.

Chairs and members of boards and committees have provided a dedicated and important service to the state over many years. In light of your expertise, I welcome your input, and that of your board or committee, into the approach being taken, as well as your ideas about how government can ensure it continues to receive high quality advice in new and innovative ways.

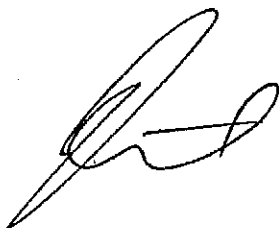
I invite you to consider if the functions of your board or committee require a separate board, could be merged with another or if its functions could be carried out in an alternative way. I encourage you to liaise with your ministerial or departmental contact officer about these matters and to provide any information that you feel will assist in their decision-making.

I expect this work to be completed by October this year. I also intend to make changes to the appointment and reporting procedures for boards and committees to Cabinet to reduce the administrative burden and speed up the process.

This is a significant reform that will see real change in the way government conducts business. While it will result in a reduction in the number of government boards and committees, new and innovative engagement strategies will be introduced in their place. This is intended to enable a more robust, meaningful and diverse engagement with the community, business and citizens in order to keep building South Australia.

Further information on these changes can be accessed via the yourSAy website at <http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/>.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jay Weatherill', written in a cursive style.

Jay Weatherill
PREMIER

08/07/2014