

REMOTE AREA HEALTH CORPS WORKFORCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

The Australian Government is providing \$99.7 million to expand health services delivery in remote Northern Territory Indigenous communities over two years from July 2008 (the Expanding Health Service Delivery Initiative (the Initiative)). The Initiative aims to deliver long term, sustainable improvements in the NT primary health care system and will assist in closing the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

The roll-out of this Initiative involves the collaboration with Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT) and the Northern Territory Department of Health and Families (NT DHF). It will provide for the delivery of expanded regionally based primary health care services in remote NT Indigenous communities to support more efficient and comprehensive health care.

To assist in the delivery of primary health care services, Aspen Medical has established and is operating the Remote Area Health Corps (RAHC) to supplement the recruitment and retention efforts of Aboriginal Medical Services (AMSs) and NT DHF.

The RAHC must recruit, culturally orientate, supplement the clinical training and deploy health professionals to enable the provision of increased primary health care services to assist in addressing the shortfall in health service delivery in remote NT Indigenous communities and thereby improve health outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee will:

1. Offer advice to the RAHC on enhancing its services to supplement the recruitment efforts of the Aboriginal Medical Services (AMSs) and NT Department of Health & Families (NT DHF).
2. Act as a conduit for peak bodies to channel health professional resources to support the initiative.
3. Provide advocacy for the RAHC within the Health Sector and keep the RAHC management informed of challenges or areas of concern.
4. Advise on possible workforce requirements within the remote communities.
5. Provide guidance and advice on cultural and clinical aspects associated with working in the remote NT.



COMPOSITION of WAC MEMBERS

Chair

Dr Tony K. Austin AM MBBS, MPH, FRACMA, FRACGP, DipAvMed, GAICD

Members: one representative from each of the following organisations:

Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses
 Australian Indigenous Doctors Association
 Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
 Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory
 Council of Remote Area Nurses of Australia
 Australian General Practice Network
 Royal College of Nursing, Australia
 Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
 Services for Australian Rural and Remote Allied Health
 Australian Medical Association
 General Practice Network Northern Territory
 Australian Rural Nurses and Midwives
 Rural Doctors Association of Australia
 Rural Health Workforce Agency
 Committee of Presidents of Medical Colleges – Australia
 Northern Territory Department of Health and Families

Invited Attendees:

Dr David Dumbrell – Department of Health and Ageing

RAHC Attendees:

Angela Cusack – A/g General Manager
 Dr James Ross – Medical Director
 Luke Gosling – NT Regional Manager

WAC MEETING SCHEDULE

Meeting	Day	Date	Comm	Finish	Location
First	Friday	6 February 2009	9.30am	12.00pm	RAHC Office Canberra
Second	Friday	5 June 2009	9.00am	11.30am	Darwin – venue TBA
Third	Friday	9 October 2009	9.30am	12.00pm	RAHC Office Canberra

Meetings for 2010 will be confirmed in late 2009.

