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

Dear Minister Snelling,

RE: REFORM OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

I am writing 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. I recognise the requirement for change to the current Boards and Committees structure in South Australia, however I am concerned about the possibility of the abolition of the South Australian Medical Education and Training Health Advisory Council (the Advisory Council).

The Advisory Council is the intern training accreditation body for South Australia. It was established in 2013 under the South Australian Health Care Act 2008 as an unincorporated council established by, and reporting to, the Minister for Health. The current formation of the Advisory Council follows an independent review in 2011, undertaken to determine opportunities to streamline the former Advisory Council.

The role of the Advisory Council is as an independent body aimed at improving the quality of education, training and welfare for trainee medical officers within South Australia and to make recommendations for the accreditation of trainee medical officer positions in health services to the South Australian Board of the Medical Board of Australia. The Medical Board of Australia has delegated the authority for the accreditation of all intern positions in South Australia to the Advisory Council to undertake.

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is the designated accreditation authority for the medical profession under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. In 2013, the AMC reviewed the Advisory Council and resolved that it be granted accreditation for the maximum possible period of 5 years. The AMC noted the independence of the Advisory Council, as is required to meet the relevant standard, and commended the business stability of the Advisory Council.

In line with AMC requirements, the Advisory Council meets the need for a legally constituted and registered business entity, with governance and management structures giving appropriate priority to the accreditation of intern training programs.

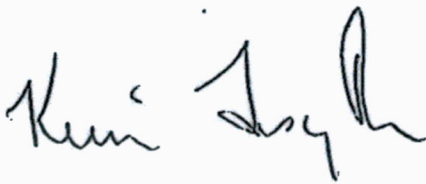
The AMC commended the representation of stakeholders on the Advisory Council. There is minimal cost associated with the operations of the Advisory Council as members are not paid sitting fees and a grant from the Medical Board of Australia subsidises activities directly related to accreditation.

It is important to recognise that if the Advisory Council was to be abolished there would not be an agency in South Australia that is authorised to accredit intern training positions to enable medical students to be registered as medical practitioners. This would put at significant risk the outputs from our medical schools and the ability to staff our health service with junior doctors. There would be a severe impact on hospitals as there will be no intern accreditation body in the state. Even more concerning, it will impact on the education, training and safety of trainee medical officers within the state.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss the functions and requirements of the Advisory Council and I look forward to meeting with you in the near future.

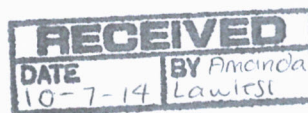
With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Forsyth', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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