



DOCTORS IN TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE POSITION STATEMENT

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Summary: The Council is of the view that, in most cases, Performance Assessment of doctors in training is not appropriate.

Applies to: Performance Committee

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Relevant legislation: *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW)*

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DOCTORS IN TRAINING AND PERFORMANCE POSITION STATEMENT

PURPOSE

The Medical Council of NSW (the Council) has considered whether it is appropriate to undertake Performance Assessment of doctors in training (those in their first two postgraduate years and those on College training programs).

The Council is aware that doctors in training are subject to formal mechanisms for ongoing supervision and assessment in their workplace and has resolved that, in most cases, Performance Assessment of doctors in training is not appropriate.

BACKGROUND

A Performance Assessment may be held in circumstances in which the Council is satisfied that matters indicate that the professional performance of a practitioner is or may be unsatisfactory. In general, the Assessment is undertaken in the practitioner's workplace and involves an initial interview, observed consultations, review of medical records, review of facilities and a clinical practice interview.

From time to time, Council receives complaints or notifications which raise concerns about the professional performance of doctors in training. Such notifications have primarily involved doctors involved in College training programs but, more recently, notifications regarding the performance of interns or doctors with provisional registration who are undertaking their period of supervised training have been received.

Although the Performance Committee has, on occasions, resolved to conduct a Performance Interview for a doctor in training, the Council has never resolved to conduct a Performance Assessment of such a practitioner.

ISSUES CONSIDERED

Doctors in training, including doctors in their first two postgraduate years (PGY1 and 2) and those on College training programs are practising in circumstances where there is a formal mechanism for ongoing supervision appropriate to their level of experience and for both informal and formal assessment of their performance.

One of the premises of Performance Assessment is that the assessment will be conducted by peers of the subject practitioner. It would be very difficult and possibly inappropriate to recruit appropriate peer assessors for doctors in training. Assessment of such practitioners is more appropriately undertaken by appointed supervisors in an ongoing clinical setting.

Doctors in training are generally employed in relatively short term positions, many with terms of 10 – 12 weeks. Such placements make the scheduling and conduct of a Performance Assessment logistically difficult.

Performance Assessment is resource intensive for Council and the allocation of such resources to doctors in training who are already being supervised and assessed may be considered inappropriate.

COUNCIL POSITION

Having considered these issues, the Council is of the view that, in most cases, Performance Assessment of doctors in training is not appropriate.

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