Submission to the SA Health: August 2013

Statewide Education & Training Services Position Paper

The Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) welcomes the opportunity to review and provide comment on SA Health’s Statewide Education and Training Services position paper.

ACEM is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for the training of emergency physicians, and for the advancement of professional standards in emergency medicine (EM), in Australia and New Zealand. As the peak professional organisation for emergency medicine in Australasia, ACEM has a vital interest in improving the quality of emergency care provided to the community and supports the continued deliver of high quality training and education activities for its members. The EM workforce involves multidisciplinary clinical teams, and the maintenance and advancement of clinicians’ knowledge and skills is essential to the provision of Emergency Department (ED) care.

Following review of the SA Health’s position paper, ACEM provides the following comments:

Academy of Learning and Development and a Statewide Learning & Development Plan
ACEM supports the establishment of the Academy of Learning and Development (ALD, the Academy) to deliver a Statewide Learning and Development Plan (LDP), to articulate SA Health’s training priorities for the coming years. ACEM also agrees that the initial focus of the LDP should be on induction and mandatory requirements for staff. ACEM considers induction particularly important for junior medical staff (postgraduate years one and two) who rotate through EDs regularly and require orientation to the respective health service and hospital environment and workplace culture. Induction to the health system and service is also crucial for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and Overseas Trained Specialists (OTS) and International Medical Graduate, who often require significant support in orienting to the Australian health system, local health service processes, models of care, and medical culture. In recognition of this ACEM is currently developing resources such as “First Shift in ED’, ‘OTS induction package’ and the ‘OTS Return to Work Assessment Toolkit’.

ACEM considers education and training relating to quality standards is essential for the medical workforce, and suggests that mandatory training requirements should be considered in the context of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards introduced by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACSQHS). Under these standards, a priority for ED clinicians is the recognition and management of the deteriorating patient. Resuscitation training in both online learning modalities and face-to-face training using simulation and inter-professional education techniques should therefore be considered as mandatory training for relevant ED staff. ACEM Fellows have reported the need for increased opportunities to participate in simulation based training along with more on-the-job training involving other clinicians. Such modes of training are critical for all health care; however they are particularly important in emergency medicine, a true ‘team-specialty’ where a well-functioning multi-disciplinary team with procedural expertise is essential. ACEM therefore strongly supports opportunities for the proposed Academy to facilitate increased clinical team-based and simulation training for ED staff.

1 Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC) (September 2011), National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, ACSQHC, Sydney.
Emergency departments have significant teaching responsibilities across a variety of professions including junior doctors, specialist trainees, medical students, paramedics and nurses. ACEM considers quality supervision essential in maintaining an engaged and first-rate medical workforce, and suggests that supervision training is also included as a priority in the proposed Statewide Learning and Development Plan (LDP). ACEM itself is engaged in a number of initiatives to improve supervisory practices, through our Quality Mentoring Initiative and Indigenous Health and Cultural Competency Project. We would seek out ways in which we could actively collaborate with ALD to ensure that any new initiatives or directives are:

- Suitable to the unique context of ED
- Are complementary to the resources and approaches adopted by ACEM and
- Provide appropriate recognition of College-based initiatives through standard credit / RPL processes.

Provision of formal bedside teaching is also becoming increasingly important across medical specialties. ACEM is currently undertaking a Curriculum Revision Project, which once implemented will see the introduction of compulsory Workplace Based Assessments (WBAs) into the ACEM training program. A comprehensive schedule of assessor training is presently being implemented. In coming years, WBAs will feature prominently across medical specialist training, with a number of other Australasian medical specialist colleges recently introducing or due to introduce WBAs as part of their training programs. The Australian Medical Council (AMC) is currently piloting the use of WBAs in the supervision of IMGs, and EDs been a key component of delivering these pilots effectively. In light of the recent introduction of time-based targets within the ED, ACEM suggests SA Health consider approaches to facilitate increased bedside teaching activities across the hospital and broader healthcare system.

Leadership and Governance
ACEM supports the development of a framework which provides clear leadership and governance for the coordination and delivery of all education and training within SA Health. ACEM agrees that an expected function of the ALD (or any similarly proposed service) should be to facilitate links with other education and training bodies including universities, medical specialist colleges and accreditation bodies; however clarification is required as to how the ALD will communicate and collaborate with these various organisations. Ensuring appropriate communication pathways will enable appropriate identification of training gaps across the system and avoid duplication. In addition it will ensure SA Health’s activities are aligned with those of the Colleges and other important accreditation bodies.

General
ACEM notes the importance that has been placed on nursing education throughout the paper. While ACEM strongly supports the role of specific education for nurses, it also suggests that the Statewide service promote opportunities for collaborative training activities involving medical, nursing and allied health staff, facilitating inter-professional learning and cooperation amongst staff. This could be achieved by the appointment of both a medical and nursing senior leaders within the ALD governance structure.

As increasingly more educational content is being developed and delivered online, an important area for consideration is how the ALD will interact with and incorporate the various e-learning facilities delivered by medical colleges. There can often be issues with medical staff accessing external online

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medical education resources, with some ACEM members reporting that access to such online resources can often be restricted (or sometimes prohibited) within their workplaces. ACEM is currently undertaking a number of projects which will involve development and delivery of new online medical education content (please refer to Appendix 1). Of note is ACEM’s ‘Best of Web’ resources project, which will provide a robust referral mechanism and collation of relevant educational materials. There is also significant work being done in relation to International Medical Graduate (IMG) online resources. ACEM considers that consideration should be given to the provision of appropriate internet access and firewall exceptions as well as selection of e-learning platforms. This will ensure staff have adequate access to additional bedside teaching opportunities to facilitate essential on-the-floor learning. ACEM would welcome support from SA Health in ensuring access to such online resources is fully available to all ED clinicians practicing in the SA healthcare system.

ACEM acknowledges that there are many stakeholders involved in the coordination of medical education and training activities. As a medical specialist college, ACEM’s key activities include:

- Training and examination of specialist emergency physicians for Australian and New Zealand. This also involves quality assurance activities, such as robust evaluation and monitoring of the program, from both the trainees and trainers’ perspective.
- Coordination of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program for Fellows. This has recently undergone a comprehensive review to ensure it remains contemporary and aligned to regulatory requirements.
- The establishment of a new non-specialist pathway via the Emergency Medicine Certificate and Emergency Medicine Diploma\(^6\) for non-specialists wanting to work in EDs.
- Hospital accreditation activities. These are essential to ensuring the provision of a safe training environment, and ACEM welcomes opportunity to discuss how the coordination of accreditation activities can be practically achieved across organisations. To date, ACEM has had some exploratory discussions with jurisdictional representatives regarding this matter.

The College therefore welcomes further consultation and collaboration with SA Health regarding medical education and training, and how ACEM will interact with future activities of the proposed ALD. This will ensure alignment across our organisations, and avoid duplication of activities and/or requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide SA Health with feedback regarding the position paper on Statewide Education & Training Services. If you require any clarification or further information, please do not hesitate to contact the ACEM Director of Education, Mary Lawson (03) 9320 0444 or mary.lawson@acem.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

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Appendix 1

Summary of ACEM National Program projects