

Outcome 12

## Health Workforce Capacity

Australians have access to an enhanced health workforce

### OUTCOME SUMMARY – THE YEAR AHEAD

In 2006-07, the Australian Government will pursue the following key workplace objectives:

- sufficient numbers of high quality doctors, nurses and other health workers to meet the health service needs of Australians now and into the future; and
- effective distribution of the workforce to meet the health service needs of those living in remote, rural and outer metropolitan Australia, and for Indigenous Australians.

### Key Strategic Directions for 2006-07

In 2006-07, the Australian Government will continue to collaborate with health professional associations, the tertiary sector, specialist colleges, accrediting bodies, and State and Territory governments to improve the adequacy, quality and distribution of Australia's health workforce.

During 2006-07, the Department will:

- implement key health workforce reforms as part of the Government's contribution to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Health Workforce package announced on 8 April 2006, in response to the Productivity Commission Health Workforce Report;
- provide advice to the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC), on options for the expansion of medical specialist training into a broader range of settings, including the private sector;
- deliver the Government's major health workforce distribution programs, including Rural Clinical Schools, University Departments of Rural Health, and bonded medical school places programs;
- continue work to attract and distribute overseas trained doctors in Australia; and
- continue to improve the health workforce capacity underpinning health services for Indigenous Australians.

### Major Activities

#### Health Workforce

A major focus for the Department will be the development and implementation of the Australian Government's response to the Productivity Commission's Research Report on Australia's Health Workforce. The Department is providing advice to the Department of Education, Science and Training on the distribution of new medicine and nursing places announced by the Prime Minister in April 2006 in response to the Productivity Commission's report, and on health workforce places under its Backing Australia's Future initiative. COAG is expected to consider additional workforce reforms early in 2006-07. Implementation of these reforms will form a central part of the Department's work during the year.

### **Medical Specialist Training**

In 2006-07, the Department will continue to work collaboratively with a range of bodies in meeting the Government's workforce policy objectives. These include committees established under AHMAC, the Australian Health Ministers' Conference, the Committee of Presidents of Medical Colleges, the Committee of the Deans of Australian Medical Schools, the Australian Medical Council, and the Medical Training Review Panel.

A particular focus of the Australian Government has been ensuring that Australia continues to train high quality medical specialists. During 2006-07, the work of the Medical Specialists Training Steering Committee, established by AHMAC, will be finalised. The Committee has been examining ways to ensure that each medical specialist trainee has access to training in settings that will prepare them for their future medical practice. The Department will begin implementation of the recommendations of the Committee, in conjunction with State and Territory governments, the medical colleges, health professionals and the private sector.

### **Health Workforce Distribution**

The Australian Government continues to invest in a broad range of programs to improve the distribution of Australia's health workforce. During 2006-07, the Department will continue the More Doctors for Outer Metropolitan Program, with some modifications, aimed at encouraging a further 265 general practitioners and specialists to practice in outer metro areas over four years. The Department will work with Universities to implement the Australian Government's recent distribution of \$95 million in 2006-07 and 2007-08 for new and expanded Rural Clinical Schools. The range of scholarship initiatives managed by the Department will continue, with more than 2,000 students receiving a scholarship during 2006-07.

### **Overseas Trained Doctors**

The Department will continue to administer a range of initiatives under Strengthening Medicare to attract and distribute overseas trained doctors to Australia. Over 300 additional doctors are expected to be working in areas of workforce shortage as a result of these programs.

### **Outcome 12 Resourcing**

Table 3.1.12 shows how the 2006-07 Budget appropriations translate to total resourcing for Outcome 12, including administered expenses, revenue from government (appropriation), revenue from other sources, and the total price of outputs.

**Table 3.1.12: Total resources for Outcome 12**

	Estimated actual 2005-06 \$'000	Budget estimate 2006-07 \$'000
<b>Administered appropriations</b>		
<b>Program 12.1: Rural Workforce</b>		
Appropriation Bill 1	101,696	103,379
	<b>101,696</b>	<b>103,379</b>
<b>Program 12.2: Workforce</b>		
Appropriation Bill 1	23,332	27,238
	<b>23,332</b>	<b>27,238</b>
<b>Total Administered Appropriations</b>	<b>125,028</b>	<b>130,617</b>
<b>Departmental appropriations</b>		
<b>Health and Ageing</b>		
Output Group 1 - Policy Advice	3,262	3,535
Output Group 2 - Program Management	5,799	6,285
<b>Total price from departmental outputs</b> <i>(Total revenue from government and from other sources)</i>	9,061	9,820
Total revenue from government (appropriations) contributing to price of departmental outputs	9,061	9,820
Total revenue from other sources	-	-
<b>Total price from departmental outputs</b> <i>(Total revenue from government and from other sources)</i>	9,061	9,820
<b>Total Price of Outputs for Outcome 12</b> <i>(Total Revenue from Government and from other sources)</i>	9,061	9,820
<b>Total estimated resourcing for Outcome 12</b> <i>(Total price of outputs and administered appropriations)</i>	<b>134,089</b>	<b>140,437</b>
	2005-06	2006-07
<b>Average staffing level (number)</b>		
Department	76	80

### Measures Affecting Outcome 12

A summary of measures affecting this outcome is provided at Table 2.2, Section 2. Measure descriptions are published in full in Budget Paper No. 2, *Budget Measures 2006-07*, available on the Australian Government website at <<http://www.budget.gov.au>>.

### Contribution of Administered Programs to Outcome 12

#### Program 12.1: Rural Workforce

The rural workforce programs encourage students of health disciplines to consider careers in rural and remote areas and support existing rural health professionals. These initiatives increase health system capacity and quality in rural and remote areas by increasing the number of rural health professionals and ensuring they are well trained to practice in these areas. The success of these programs is measured by the number of students undertaking training in rural areas; the number of new graduates choosing to work in rural and remote areas; and the number of existing rural health professionals provided with assistance to remain in these areas.

**Program 12.2: Workforce**

The workforce programs aim to increase the supply and retention of health professionals and influence their distribution into areas of workforce shortage. These include short term increases through recruitment and retraining programs as well as long term initiatives to improve the education and training of the health workforce to meet future needs. The success of these programs can be measured in the number and distribution of the health workforce.

**Contribution of Departmental Outputs to Outcome 12**

The Department describes its core activities in terms of three output groups: policy advice, program management and agency-specific service delivery. Outcome 12 reports on policy advice and program management. Refer to Section 3.1 for more information on output groups.

**Performance Information for Outcome 12**

Performance information for administered items, individual outputs and output groups relating to Outcome 12 are summarised in Table 3.2.12.

**Table 3.2.12: Key Performance Information for Outcome 12**

**Performance Information for Administered Programs**

Indicator	Measured by	Reference Point or Target
<b>Administered Funding – Workforce</b>		
Finalise the work of the Medical Specialist Training Steering Committee of AHMAC.	Work of the committee completed and report provided to AHMAC.	Report provided to October AHMAC meeting.
Students of rural origin supported to study allied health disciplines.	Scholarships awarded to rural students in allied health disciplines.	65 scholarships awarded in 2006.
Additional Australian medical students undertaking clinical training in rural areas.	New Rural Clinical Schools established.	Three new schools operating by the beginning of the 2007 academic year.
Increased numbers of overseas trained doctors working as a result of the Strengthening Medicare measures.	Number of additional doctors employed through programs initiated as part of the Strengthening Medicare measures.	Over 300 additional doctors working following the introduction of these programs.
<b>Cost: \$130.617m</b>		

**Performance Information for Departmental Outputs**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measured by</b>	<b>Reference Point or Target</b>
<b>Output Group 1 – Policy Advice</b>		
Quality, relevant and timely advice for Australian Government decision-making.	Ministerial satisfaction.	Maintain or increase from previous year.
Relevant and timely evidence-based policy research.	Production of relevant and timely evidence-based policy research.	Relevant evidence-based policy research produced in a timely manner.
<b>Price: \$3.535m</b>		

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measured by</b>	<b>Reference Point or Target</b>
<b>Output Group 2 – Program Management</b>		
Administered budget predictions are met and actual expenses vary less than 0.5% from budgeted expenses.	Percentage that actual expenses vary from budgeted expenses.	0.5% variance from budgeted expenses.
Stakeholders to participate in program development.	Opportunities for stakeholder participation through a range of avenues, such as surveys, conferences and meetings.	Stakeholders participated in program development.
<b>Price: \$6.285m</b>		

**Evaluations**

There are no evaluations planned to be undertaken in 2006-07.

**Major Reviews**

There are no major reviews planned to be undertaken in 2006-07.

**Performance Improvement Initiatives**

There are no performance improvement initiatives planned to be undertaken in 2006-07.

