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Cc: s22 ; s47F ; s22
Subject: RAB Handover - Chris Jeacle to Louise Clarke [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Wednesday, 23 December 2020 4:08:20 PM
Attachments: s22

[Bonded Medical Program Reforms - Issue brief.docx](#)
[Bonded Programs - BMP and MRBS Scheme Data - October 2020.DOCX](#)
[Bonded Programs BMP MRBS Reforms - Budget Estimates - October 2020.docx](#)
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[Rural Access Branch Handover - Louise Clarke 23 December 2020.docx](#)

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**BUDGET ESTIMATES
OCTOBER 2020
ISSUE BRIEF**

Bonded Medical Program Reforms

CONTENTIOUS ISSUES

- The reformed statutory Bonded Medical Program (the Program) commenced on 1 January 2020. The Program is established under Part VD of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* (the Act).
- There have been delays in delivery of the Program due to:
 - unforeseen issues with aspects of the legislation, particularly program completion timeframes; ^{s22}
- The Department has temporarily paused ‘opt ins’ to the Program while options to address the completion timeframes issue are developed ^{s22}
- **Completion timeframes:** The legislation states participants must complete RoSO within 18 years after the day on which they complete their medical course.
 - Initial communication materials for the Program incorrectly advised that students and doctors under the previous schemes (Bonded Medical Places (BMP) Scheme and the Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship Scheme (MRBS) Scheme) had 18 years from completing medical studies and/or date of opt in to the Program.
 - Based on the legislation, a small number of former participants of the BMP and MRBS Schemes who have opted into the Program and are now approaching their 18 year threshold will not have sufficient time to complete their RoSO.

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Last reviewed: 28 September 2020

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12) Reform

The Bonded Programs are being reformed as part of the \$550 million *Stronger Rural Health Strategy* announced in the 2018-19 Budget. The aim of reforms is to provide greater flexibility and more support for bonded doctors and to better target return of service to regional, rural and remote areas. Reforms aim to standardise (where possible) the length of return of service obligation across the Bonded Programs.

The statutory Bonded Medical Program (the Program) commenced on 1 January 2020. The Program is established under Part VD of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* (the Act).

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In the 2015 Budget, the BMP Scheme's RoSO was reduced from the length of the medical degree (4-6 years) to 12 months as part of broader Health Workforce Scholarship reforms. Participants who joined the BMP Scheme from 2016 to 2019 will retain the 12 month RoSO under the reforms introduced for the *Stronger Rural Health Strategy* in the 2018-19 Budget.

13) Related programs/activities

The Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship (MRBS) Scheme (now closed to new entrants) offered a medical place at university and a scholarship in exchange for a rural return of service obligation of up to six (6) years. The 100 places from the MRBS Scheme were added to the BMP Scheme quota.

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Bonded Programs – Factsheet Budget Estimates (October 2020)

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Reformed Bonded Programs	Existing MRBS and BMP participants will have the opportunity to opt in to the new Program from 1 January 2020: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 year RoSO completed within 18 years of finishing the medical course;• Eligible locations include MM 2-7, DPA for General Practitioners, Outer Metropolitan DWS for all other specialities;• 18 months RoSO can be worked pre-fellowship and 18 months post-fellowship;• If fellowship is not attained within 12 years of completion of the medical course, all RoSO must be completed within the next and final 6 years of the required 18 year timeframe;• Opt in is voluntary and open ended. Participants who choose not to opt in will keep their existing contract or deed of agreement;• s22
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*The above figures include some of the participants that have opted in to the enhanced Bonded Programs.

Rural Access Branch Handover

Included in pack:

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- Bonded Medical Program Reforms – Issue Brief
- Bonded Medical Places (BMP) Scheme – Additional Estimates
- Bonded Programs – Factsheet budget Estimates (October 2020)
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Rural Support –s22

Bonded Medical Places program

- Superseded Bonded Medical Places program and the Medical Rural Bonded Scholarships Scheme
- Opt in process for transition of current bonded participants to new reformed program
- Finalisation of the Bonded Return of Service System (BROSS) development

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