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Medical colleges reform to address accessibility and affordability challenges

21 July 2025 – Australia's specialist medical colleges will speak with one unified voice on healthcare policy under major governance reforms designed to accelerate responses to workforce shortages and access barriers.

The transformation comes at a critical time for Australian healthcare, with the system facing ongoing workforce pressures and access challenges that require coordinated responses across all medical specialities.

"Our previous structure was a historical legacy. We are building a voice for specialist doctors, including GPs, that is responsive, accessible and can respond to challenges in real time," said A/Prof Sanjay Jeganathan, Chair of the Board and President of the Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges. "This unanimous decision shows we are united and ready to help shape urgent healthcare reform with a clear, strong voice."

CPMC CEO Jodie Long said the changes will enable more agile decision-making and clearer communication with government, health departments, and other stakeholders, positioning the peak body as more transparent, responsive, and strategically focussed in its advocacy role.

The changes, approved at a Special General Meeting on 17 July, replaces CPMC's traditional single-council structure with a model featuring a Representative College Council of Presidents and a separate Board of Directors. This moves away from the previous 16-member council that functioned as both representative body and board.

The reforms reflect CPMC's commitment to better listening to members and stakeholders, empowering the organisation to respond quickly to the changing nature of Australia's healthcare system.

Under the new structure, the Representative College Council will ensure all member colleges maintain their voice in organisational direction, whilst the separate Board will provide focussed strategic leadership and enhanced accountability.

The Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC) is the peak body for Australia's specialist medical colleges. <https://cpmc.edu.au/our-governance>

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CPMC Chair

A/Prof Sanjay Jeganathan

Clinical Associate Professor Sanjay Jeganathan is based in Australia. He presently holds the professional positions of Radiologist at Perth Radiological Clinic, and Consultant Radiologist at two other Perth hospitals.

He is also an Adjunct Clinical Associate Professor at Curtin University Medical School.

His qualifications include MBChB, M.MED, FRANZCR as well as post-fellowship training in Breast MRI. Clinical Associate Professor Sanjay Jeganathan has held hospital appointments as a Radiologists in Australia and New Zealand.



CPMC Chair Elect

A/Prof Kerin Fielding

Associate Professor Fielding was the first woman in New South Wales to become an orthopaedic surgeon and is only the third woman to undertake the role of president of RACS.

For nearly 20 years, Associate Professor Fielding has held positions as chair of the Clinical Surgical Training Council at the Health Education and Training Institute of New South Wales.

She has also been involved with the Early Management of Severe Trauma course at RACS for more than two decades, and is a long-time RACS councillor, chairing the Scholarship and Grants committee, the SIMG committee and the professional standards committee.



CPMC Board Director

Prof David Story, FANZCA

Dave Story is Professor and Foundation Chair of Anaesthesia at the University of Melbourne; and Head of the University Department of Critical Care. His main research interest is clinically and cost-effective approaches to reduce perioperative risk, complications, disability, and mortality. He also does translational work in acid-base disorders; environmental impact research and is a consumer investigator in diabetes care.

Dave is a staff anaesthetist at the Austin Hospital where he provides perioperative care for most procedural specialties including liver transplantation. His academic and ANZCA roles include supporting students, trainees, and fellows in pursuing research, education, and leadership.



CPMC Board Director

Professor Jennifer Martin

Professor Martin is a physician and academic healthcare leader with skillsets and experience in complex regulatory and performance environments in both health and education. She leads two independent multidisciplinary high-profile National research programs informing clinical practice and healthcare policy around optimised use of medicines, has 20 years' experience on specialist Government committees guiding Trans-Tasman pharmaceutical policy, was a long-serving member of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) Policy and Advocacy Committee - setting strategy on a number of social policies affecting people's health, until she became a Board Director of the RACP and President-Elect (2022-24).



CPMC Board Director

Dr Helen Parsons

Dr Helen Parsons CSC past President and Fellow of the Royal Australasia College of Medical Administrators (RACMA) .

Helen has worked in rural and urban health service settings in the public sector, Correctional Health Services, Immigration and the Australian Defence Force. She currently works as District Director Medical Services at Nepean Blue Mountains LHD and has responsibilities for medical administration across tertiary, regional and rural hospitals.



CPMC Board Director

Dr Nicole Higgins

Nicole is the past president of RACGP, an organisation which represents 43,000 general practitioners around Australia. Nicole is an innovative, strategic and collaborative leader.

Nicole brings strong governance experience to CPMC through her previous directorships and chairperson roles at a national level. Nicole is a GP and practice owner in regional Queensland. As a medical educator and supervisor, continuity of care, relationships, teaching are values that she holds closely. Nicole is the Convenor of the RACGP Future Leaders Program and chairs the Supervision and Medical Education Committee. She has been recognised by the Australian Institute of Management as a regional entrepreneur. Nicole is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the London School of Economics and Politics.



CPMC Board Director

Dr Rod Martin

Rod has been a Rural Generalist for nearly 20 years. He is the President of ACRRM and he continues to teach medical students, as well as serving as a VMO in Anaesthetics, Obstetrics, and Emergency Medicine, and as a Practice Associate of Health on Rusden. Most recently, he and wife Deborah have co-founded Observa Care, a Remote Patient Monitoring service company focused on addressing rural and remote health needs.

Rod has enjoyed serving on many College committees, has been examined by the College and has been an examiner for over 15 years. He has been on Council as the NSW representative on Council for nearly ten years over the span of five Presidents. He teaches and contributes to many of the courses offered by ACRRM and has been active in building curriculum areas including palliative care and continues to assist the College in developing a new Rural Point of Care Ultrasound course.