

General Practice Advisory Council of Tasmania (GPACT)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

as at March 2007

1. BACKGROUND

The General Practice Advisory Council of Tasmania (GPACT) was created in 2000 to provide an opportunity for Commonwealth, State and University senior stakeholders to work with general practice organisations to explore ways to improve health services in Tasmania and to improve relationships between service providers.

GPACT commenced meeting in April 2000.

2. PURPOSE

GPACT acts as the key consultative mechanism between stakeholder groups in general practice, other sectors of *health* service delivery and education and training in Tasmania.¹ Its purpose is to facilitate collaboration to achieve improvements in health services and health outcomes in Tasmania.

Roles and Functions

1. To facilitate consultation and discussion between general practice and other key stakeholder groups concerning the operation of the health services system in Tasmania.
2. To enable member organisations to identify opportunities for improved health services and to refer agreed priority work, preferably through existing partnerships and collaborative mechanisms.
3. To provide a forum for communication between general practitioners and other key stakeholder groups that informs policy development and strategic planning in Tasmanian health services.
4. To facilitate improved relationships between member organisations.
5. To provide a forum for the identification, discussion, debate and exchange of ideas in relation to current and emerging issues affecting the health system in Tasmania.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Members will be the representatives of the following organisations in the listed positions.

¹ The use of the term "health" is taken here to include population and public health, community-based health care, primary care, aged care, acute care, emergency care and the interfaces between these sectors.

Division of General Practice

CEO, General Practice Tasmania
CEO, General Practice Workforce
Chair, General Practice Tasmanian
Chair, General Practice South
Chair, General Practice North
Chair, General Practice North West
Chair, General Practice Workforce

General Practice Tasmania's Chief Executive Office (CEO) and Chair will attend all GPACT meetings throughout the year. The General Practice South Chair and Executive Officer (EO) will represent Divisions at meetings in Hobart and the General Practice North Chair and EO and the General Practice North West Chair and EO will represent Divisions at alternate meetings held in Launceston.

State Department of Health and Human Services

Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services
Deputy Secretary, Acute Health Services
Deputy Secretary, Community Health Services
Director of Public Health
Chief Medical Officer
GP Adviser, Community Health Services

Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing

State Manager, Department of Health and Ageing
Assistant State Manager, Department of Health and Ageing

University of Tasmania

Executive Dean, School of Health Science, University of Tasmania
Professor of Rural Health, University of Tasmania
Professor of General Practice, University of Tasmania

Other General Practice Groups

State President, Rural Doctors Association of Tasmania
Chair, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
Representative, Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine
Representative, Australian Medical Association
Chair, General Practice Training Tasmania

Member Roles and Responsibilities

- The role of members is to contribute to the development of meeting Agendas, participate in discussions at meetings and consult with their constituents prior to meetings for representing these views of constituents appropriately at meetings.

- ❑ Members have responsibility for communicating matters back to their constituency after meetings in a timely manner.
- ❑ Members may make arrangements for proxy representation if they are unable to attend a meeting provided advice to this effect is provided to the Secretariat prior to the meeting.
- ❑ Voting rights are not applicable to GPACT as it is not a decision-making body however the Secretariat must accurately record differences of opinion in the minutes of meetings.

Probity and Conflict of Interest

Members have obligations for declaring any actual or potential conflicts of interest (eg financial, professional etc) either individually or on behalf of the organisations that they represent.

Duration of Membership

Individuals remain members of GPACT for the period that they are incumbent in the listed position.

Remuneration of Members

Members may be paid sitting fees (including travel rates if applicable) as determined by the organisations they represent. The payment of this remuneration is at the discretion of the organisation and remains the responsibility of the organisation at all times.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Group members will be expected to maintain confidentiality and operate in accordance with privacy principles where the group is dealing with sensitive matters. To support a pro-active solutions focus, confidential discussions will be undertaken without fear or favour.

It is the responsibility of both the Chair and the member raising/discussing an issue to identify matters of a confidential nature.

4. GOVERNANCE / REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

Chair

The Chair of the Board of General Practice Tasmania, with support from the Secretariat, is responsible for ensuring that meetings are chaired and operated within agreed business rules. This includes ensuring that agreed actions are summarised and clearly recorded.

The Chair (or their nominee) is also responsible for welcoming new members to the group and for providing adequate induction information (background papers, meeting minutes etc).

Secretariat Function and Responsibilities

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is responsible for providing the secretariat and executive support function for the group.

This includes the distribution of meeting papers, arrangement of meetings and management of relevant records and files for the group.

Meeting Frequency

Meetings are held three times a year (every four months). An annual calendar of meetings will be prepared and circulated by the Secretariat at the last meeting of each calendar year.

Venues

The venue for the meeting is to be rotated between Launceston and Hobart.

5. MEETING BUSINESS RULES

Agendas

The Secretariat will call for Agenda items for meetings at least four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date. All members have equal rights to list items for the Agenda.

Standing Agenda Items are to include:

1. Matters arising from previous meeting
2. Items for discussion
3. Emerging Issues
4. Items for information (including Progress Reports)

Items for Discussion will require informed constituent input, **briefing papers and supporting information must be provided by the organisation listing the item. This information must be supplied at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.**

Emerging Issues provides an opportunity for open discussion of both issues that have occurred since the last meeting and issues of emerging concern to members. While the privacy and confidentiality provisions will apply to all agenda items it is envisaged that this Standing Item will, in particular, require members to observe this principle. Members will be responsible, through the Chair for identifying matters that are of a sensitive nature and for providing guidance to members about the appropriate use of the information emerging from discussion. If possible, these items should be listed on the Agenda in advance. If prior notice is not possible, members should raise these issues at the start of the meeting so that they may be listed for discussion under Agenda Item 3.

Items for Information are those items for which awareness of members is important but about which extended discussion is not considered necessary. Members reserve the right to elevate information items to discussion items at the start of the meeting should there be views or concerns that they wish to raise on behalf of their constituents.

Progress Reports provides the mechanism for GPACT to be briefed about progress with actions against agreed priorities. These Progress Reports are to be included as Items for Information but as such may be elevated to Discussion Items should members wish to raise issues about them.

Agenda papers are to be circulated by the Secretariat at least 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting date.

Minutes

Minutes including agreed actions and meeting outcomes are to be produced by the Secretariat. Confidential items are not, in general to be minuted. Minutes will be documented and circulated to members (and/or other specified stakeholders) within two (2) weeks of the meeting. Draft Minutes are to be endorsed by DHHS and DoHA liaison officers (where appropriate) prior to wider distribution.

Group Review

The Terms of Reference for GPACT are to be reviewed at least biannually. The group will be required to reflect on its achievements on an annual basis that may also result in a revision of the group's role, function and deliverables etc.

Grievance and Dispute Resolution

Grievances or disputes that may arise in relation to the business of the group will be dealt with as follows:

1. GPACT Liaison Officers are to be nominated from each member organisation. The nominated Liaison Officers shall be (unless otherwise specified):
 - The CEO, General Practice Tasmania on behalf of Divisions of General Practice and Other General Practice Groups
 - The Deputy Secretary of Community Health Services on behalf of the State Department of Health and Human Services
 - The State Manager on behalf of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing
 - The Executive Dean, School of Health Sciences on behalf of the University of Tasmania
2. GPACT members are to advise the nominated Liaison Officers of the parties between which there is a potential grievance or dispute, of the nature of this grievance or dispute and provide relevant background information.
3. If possible, grievances or disputes are to be resolved at the level of Liaison Officers. If this is achieved, the nominated Liaison Officer shall provide feedback to represented organisations regarding the terms of this resolution.
4. If it is not possible to resolve the grievance or dispute through the Liaison Officers, discussion will be elevated to Head of Agency level. Upon satisfactory resolution at Head of Agency level, the nominated Liaison Officer shall provide feedback to represented organisations regarding the terms of this resolution.
5. GPACT members recognise that in the spirit of collaboration and in the interests of maintaining continuing good relations between members, all reasonable efforts will be made to resolve disputes.