



05 July 2023

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Via email: community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

RE: Health Insurance Amendment (Professional Services Review Scheme) Bill 2023

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission in response to the Health Insurance Amendment (Professional Services Review Scheme) Bill 2023 (the Bill).

The RACGP is Australia's largest professional general practice organisation, representing over 47,000 members working in or toward a career in general practice.

The RACGP [welcomed](#) the recommendations from the Review of Medicare Integrity and Compliance, which was undertaken by Dr Pradeep Philip. We support efforts to strengthen the fairness and transparency of the Professional Services Review (PSR) process, which can cause a great deal of stress and anxiety for practitioners under review. Many general practitioners (GPs) are not familiar with the end-to-end PSR process, however the RACGP acknowledges recent steps to address this including the publication of an updated comprehensive [guide](#) for those referred to the PSR.

The RACGP has no objections to the Bill, provided these legislative changes do not have any impact on the PSR's level of engagement with peak bodies including the RACGP. Our representatives meet regularly with the PSR, and we welcome the PSR's commitment to educating our members on the process, for example by attending conferences and events to answer questions from GPs. We look forward to continuing this productive and collaborative relationship with the PSR.

We do not believe removing the requirement for the Australian Medical Association (AMA) to agree to the appointment of the Director of the PSR will have an adverse effect. The RACGP's primary focus is on ensuring an equivalent level of consultation occurs if the Bill is passed and the AMA's involvement in PSR operations is minimised. The RACGP must continue to be consulted on proposed appointments to the PSR Panel, to ensure the Panel consists of GPs with appropriate skills and expertise.

The RACGP welcomes the establishment of the new statutory office of Associate Director of the PSR. An Associate Director will be permitted to exercise the same powers as the Director for cases as necessary, and it is hoped this will expedite the PSR process for practitioners involved.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this submission, please contact Ms Samantha Smorgon, National Manager – Funding and Health System Reform, on (03) 8699 0566 or via samantha.smorgon@racgp.org.au.

Yours sincerely

Dr Nicole Higgins
President