

QUARTERLY MEETING WITH COMMONWEALTH
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND AGEING, STATE OFFICE

COMMUNIQUÉ

Attended by:

Ms Jan Turbill, State Manager, DoHA
Ms Fran Lovell, Assistant State Manager, DoHA
Ms Robyn Fanning, Assistant Director Primary Health Care and Workforce, DoHA
Ms Gretchen Scinta, Chief Executive Officer, GPSA
Mr. Brenton Chappell, Senior Manager Network Services, GPSA
Ms Kelly Ryan, Contracts Manager, GPSA

- There was significant discussion about the **health reforms** at this meeting, which included the following:
 - DoHA gave an overview of the transition activities underway at state level in relation to the health reforms. They have been given assigned the task of conducting state level planning with state health to identify boundaries for Local Hospital Networks and Medicare locals. The STO is keen to hear from Divisions about their perspectives on PHCOs, and would be prepared to promote the Divisions' position at state level forums.
 - DoHA indicated that the Commonwealth recognises that the model for establishing LHNs and PHCOs is likely to differ from state to state. It was noted that there is currently a window of opportunity for Divisions to put forward potential models, as the Commonwealth has not made determinations about final configurations.
 - DoHA indicated that PHCOs are not likely to be member based organisations, as this would be at odds with the certain requirements around financial accountability and contracting with multiple types of primary health care providers.
 - GPSA discussed some of the work that AGPN is doing, including the Cranny report on boundaries. DoHA indicated that they had heard of Riverland being with the SA PHCO configuration and possibly Broken Hill coming over within current SA boundaries.
- DoHA related recent communications from Canberra to the STOs requesting that each State Branch deal directly with SBOs, rather than AGPN in relation to contractual matters. This followed a recent written request from GPSA to DoHA Canberra for clarification about appropriate contacts for contract negotiations where DoHA has the head contract with the SBO.
- GPSA discussed ongoing issues with timing of contract payments, delayed payments and the financial risk that the SBO undertakes to ensure that contracts can continue to operate, particularly where payments to Divisions have to be covered by GPSA in the absence of payments from DoHA to GPSA. DoHA continues to acknowledge this problem and indicated that the Department is currently undergoing significant review of its own internal processes.

Gretchen Scinta
Chief Executive Officer

20 May 2010