

# ***The Gold Coast Declaration on learning through practice in the health professions***

***A communique from the 2014 conference of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Health Professional Educators (ANZAHPE), 8-10<sup>th</sup> July, 2014, Griffith Health Centre, Gold Coast, Australia.***

## ***Preamble***

We the delegates at the 2014 ANZAHPE conference gathered from across the region at a time of considerable uncertainty in relation to the viability of effective systems to ensure the practical education of health professionals into the future.

Although the extent of concern varies between regions and excellent examples can still be seen in some jurisdictions, we have a general sense that the collaborative relationships between health care and education, on which effective clinical training depends, are being eroded through the increasing emergence of corporatised models and the charging of escalating fees by some health care providers for 'student placement' in some health professions.

As health professional educators, we hold grave concerns for the future health and welfare of our communities unless urgent, concerted and coordinated action is taken to address this issue across all levels, from individual practitioner-educator, to institutions, to state and national governments.

On the basis of our deliberations at the conference we make the following declaration:

## ***Article 1***

The provision of health care services (defined in the broadest sense) and the education of health and social service professionals are inseparable elements of one common enterprise that aims to ensure the highest levels of health and wellbeing for the citizens of both the present and the future.

## ***Article 2***

It is impossible for learners to gain the skills, understandings, perspectives and values they will need to become the competent and effective health and social service practitioners that our communities require without extensive experiential learning through undertaking supervised meaningful work as members of interprofessional teams in service provision settings.

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### ***Article 3***

Health professional students and practitioners-in-training are able and have a responsibility to make a significant contribution to the provision of health and social care, in partnership with senior colleagues and the patients, clients and communities they are seeking to serve. There is evidence that their contribution to clinical and service provision settings enhances the quality of the care that is provided and should be viewed as an asset rather than a burden by service providers.

### ***Article 4***

All health and social service practitioners have a fundamental professional responsibility to contribute significantly to the education and development of health professional students and junior colleagues, as a primary and inalienable component of their work.

### ***Article 5***

All institutional providers of health and social care have a fundamental social responsibility to contribute significantly to the primary and continuing education and development of health professional students and practitioners, as a primary and inalienable component of their mission, in order to ensure that a sufficient continuing supply of competent and effective health care workers is available to our communities into the future.

### ***Article 6***

The social goods of health and education both provide benefits for communities as well as individuals and neither have the characteristics of commodities. For these reasons effective coordination of the common health and education enterprise, which serves both to improve the current health of citizens and to ensure the ongoing availability of high quality health professionals for the future benefit of our communities, cannot be achieved solely through the operation of market forces.

### ***Article 7***

The principles outlined in this declaration place a responsibility on individual practitioner-educators, institutions and the health and education departments of governments at all levels, to collaborate closely to develop systems that serve the common enterprise described in this Declaration efficiently and in a coordinated way, minimising the unnecessary movement of funds, particularly public funds, between entities.

We urge all parties with the ability to effect change to act immediately, collaboratively and effectively to ensure the continued viability of learning through practice in the health professions and the health of our communities into the future.

Drafted by the President and Committee of Management of ANZAHPE in collaboration with delegates and keynote speakers at the ANZAHPE conference, July 2014.