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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to provide feedback with regards to the public consultation on international criminal history checking proposed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, Option 5: External provider conducts international criminal history checks. It would balance reduced delay in new registration and renewal of registration, and risks to public safety.

New health practitioner registrants would normally require a character assessment, including domestic and international criminal history checks as part of a formal application for an appropriate visa required by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. It ensures internationally qualified health practitioners who register in Australia are sufficiently checked for the protection of the public.

Any international criminal history checks post-registration should only be recommended where registrants declare a change in their criminal history outside Australia, or if registrants have been charged outside Australia with an offence as required under National Law.

We recommend the minimum spent time period overseas should be six months for an international criminal history check. It would be expected that any prosecution for an offence within a three month stay would require the registrant to stay longer than six months. The costs and burden on health practitioners to comply and cover these additional expenses is unjustifiable for any international stay less than six months.

It is essential and necessary to retain the standard that new registrants must have a domestic criminal history check. We are assured that Option 5 is the best option compared to the other four options presented in the previous consultation in 2012.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Tan Nguyen
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