

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 17 June 2024 12:27 PM
To: Specialist IMG Pathways Review
Subject: Public consultation on the revised Registration standard: specialist registration'

Dear APHRA,

I am a SIMGE in psychiatry working in Australia for the past 4 years. I think its excellent that the Australian government is prioritising reforms for SIMG to ease workforce shortages.

There are many SIMGE'S like myself who come with many years of clinical experience from our home countries and are currently working here in Australia. There already is a workforce that is ready to serve the Australian people present in Australia. However, the RANZCP has put up many barriers for SIMGE's wanting to work here and this is very demotivating and demoralising for experienced psychiatrists. SIMGE's are subject to inconsistent assessment processes by the CSIMGE (committee for specialist international medical graduates), high stakes examinations and are expected to work in Australia without any support from employers or the college. This is a very unrealistic expectation. Due to these challenges faced by the SIMGE'S many struggle to complete the requirements set by the college and the time on the pathway gets extended and some even are asked to return to their home country as they have been unable to pass these high stakes examinations.

High stake examinations are now considered to be old school and many developed countries like Denmark, Switzerland and Finland have done away with this. It is understandable that the college needs to ensure that the psychiatrists serving the nation are competent and safe but there other ways to assess SIMGE like work place assessments instead of single high stake examinations. The assessment style needs to change and SIMGE's also need to be provided with support. At the moment SIMGE are expected to work full time in rural/ regional areas with limited access to personal and developmental leave. We also struggle to get study leave prior to examinations. Realistically, how is Australia looking to get for SIMGE psychiatrists without giving SIMGE 's adequate support so that we can pass these examinations. Most SIMGE'S come from countries where academics are prioritised and there is no need to subject SIMGE'S again to high stake examinations.

Instead, all SIMGE'S including those on the partial comparability pathway should be allowed work place assessment instead which is more realistic and would quickly ease the current workforce shortage. APHRA should reassess all those on the partial comparability pathway to see who could be given specialist registration instead of continuing with these ridiculous essay like examinations in the modern age of ChatGPT.

As I said, there is already a psychiatric workforce present in Australia that just needs to be tapped by APHRA and provided with proper recognition and support. Currently there is significant burnout amongst psychiatrists due to the high workload. SIMGE workforce that is already experienced in Australian Culture and ethical requirements due to the experience working here for the last few years can be utilised to ease the workforce shortage. Alternatives to pending assessments can be determined by APHRA as the key priority is to ease the workforce shortage as mental health patients are being impacted by the unrealistic and silly college barriers.

Hope this can be considered for the revised registration standard- specialist registration.

Thank you.

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