



ANZCA
FPM

Wednesday 9 July 2025

Mr Peter Breadon
Health Program Director, Grattan Institute
E-mail: info@grattan.edu.au and admin@grattan.edu.au

Dear Peter,

Grattan Institute report: *Special treatment: Improving Australians' access to specialist care*

The Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) welcomes the above report and its recommendations, particularly the establishment of a national health workforce planning body, increased specialist training and flexible training model funding, and funding that is more reflective of specialist training workforce needs.

ANZCA is one of the largest medical colleges across Australia and New Zealand responsible for the postgraduate training programs of anaesthetists and specialist pain medicine physicians. The college is responsible for the training, assessment, examination, qualification and continuing professional development of specialist anaesthetists and specialist pain medicine physicians, the standards of anaesthesia and pain medicine in Australia and New Zealand, and specialist international medicine graduate assessment.

The report confirms our view that anaesthesia is one of the specialties that is undersupplied and growing more slowly than average. This has been a consistent message across recent government reviews and is generally accepted in the Australian health community.

The college would like to highlight that the report contains a factual inaccuracy relating to medical colleges limiting entry into training schemes (refer page 3 "*Training places are determined by specialist colleges and the immediate service needs of public hospitals, not the community's healthcare needs.*"). Some colleges do set training places, however ANZCA does not. ANZCA accredits training hospitals which means the number of trainees, and therefore number of new Australian anaesthetists, is controlled by state and territory health departments and their affiliated hospitals.

ANZCA is very keen to expand the anaesthesia workforce, particularly in regional and rural areas. This is something we're continuing to discuss with governments so there is no misinformation on differences in medical college processes and roles of coverage. ANZCA is also working with various states and territories to address anaesthetist workforce gaps and consider sustainable solutions.

We understand the report has been finalised and published however if there is an update to the report we would appreciate the above information being corrected to ensure the integrity of the information and prevent any negative consequences that might arise from misleading information.

Regards,

Nigel Fidgeon
CEO, ANZCA