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### Peak pain bodies call for tougher controls for procedures

Australia's peak pain sector bodies representing specialist pain medicine physicians, multidisciplinary pain clinicians, and consumers, are calling for tougher controls to restrict who can perform pain implant device procedures following a recent media report.

The Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM) of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, the Australian Pain Society and Chronic Pain Australia say Monday night's ABC *Four Corners* program highlighted the need for a national pain device implant registry and a national model of implanted pain treatment care to protect patients.

Such a model of care would dictate who would be allowed to provide this service as well as the type of patients who would receive them, and the system of care that would be needed to support the treatment.

FPM is the only organisation in Australia that provides systematic, supervised training in the use of pain device implants which should be used sparingly and only as part of a multidisciplinary team approach treating patients in pain.

FPM Vice-Dean Dr Dilip Kapur says there is no standardised training for pain implant procedures in Australia. Restrictions are needed over who can perform these to foster safety and high-quality patient care in pain medicine.

"The effective management of chronic pain requires the skills of more than one health discipline and is greatly improved when doctors, nurses and allied health professionals work together to provide care for these patients.

"It is also frustrating to note that Australia's private health insurers do not fund multi-disciplinary pain programs for members who wish to avoid the surgical route for treatment. This is despite the fact that such treatment pathways have been supported by a robust body of evidence for decades.

"For several years FPM has been calling for the implementation of a national pain device implant registry to protect patient safety and monitor and record patient outcomes in the interests of supporting evidence-based practice."

Dr Kapur says Medicare reform is urgently needed to support the provision of multidisciplinary care outside of hospitals and ration procedures so that the value to the community and the taxpayer is maximised.

The Faculty of Pain Medicine is the specialty body that sets standards in pain medicine in Australia and is responsible for education and training of specialist pain medicine physicians.

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