

August 30, 2019

Adj. Professor Tarun Weeramanthri
Climate Health WA Inquiry
Public and Aboriginal Health Division
PO Box 8172
Perth Business Centre WA 6849

Dear Professor Weeramanthri

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Climate Health WA Inquiry to investigate the implications of climate change, including more frequent and intense weather events, on health.

The Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, which includes the Faculty of Pain Medicine is responsible for the training, examination and specialist accreditation of anaesthetists and specialist pain medicine physicians and for the standards of clinical practice in Australia and New Zealand. The mission of the college is to serve the community by fostering safety and high quality patient care in anaesthesia, perioperative medicine and pain medicine.

The college's professional documents are crucial for promoting the safety and quality of patient care for those undergoing anaesthesia for surgical and other procedures. They provide guidance to the college's trainees and fellows on standards of anaesthetic practice, define the college's policies, and serve other purposes that the college deems appropriate.

In August 2019, the college released a new professional document, *PS64 Statement on Environmental Sustainability in Anaesthesia and Pain Medicine Practice*. The purpose of the statement is to:

- affirm ANZCA's commitment to minimising the health impact of climate change and promoting environmental sustainability.
- serve as a resource for clinicians to promote environmentally sustainable practices in their workplace.
- assist healthcare facilities in embedding sustainable practices in the delivery of safe patient care.

The statement considers five areas to assist clinicians and healthcare facilities in promoting sustainable practices in the provision of safe patient care – infrastructure, equipment and consumables, rational use of diagnostic tests and prescriptions, anaesthetic agents and waste management.

The health of the environment is a public health issue. The Australian Medical Council's Code of Conduct for Doctors states that "good medical practice involves

"To serve the community by fostering safety and high quality patient care in anaesthesia, perioperative medicine and pain medicine."

using your expertise and influence to protect and advance the health and wellbeing of individual patients, communities and populations”.¹

As outlined in the statement, anaesthetists, perioperative and pain medicine physicians are well positioned to encourage system-wide solutions. As problem-solvers and leaders, they may encourage their organisations to make better decisions with respect to the environment, the climate, and public health.

I hope this information is of value as you conduct the Climate Health WA Inquiry. Should you have any questions, please contact the college via email to policy@anzca.edu.au.

Yours sincerely



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Chair WA ANZCA Regional Committee

¹ Australian Medical Council. Good Medical Practice: A Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia. Australian Medical Council; 2009 Jul.