

8 December 2023

Ms Janene Hillhouse | Executive Director
Workers' Compensation Regulatory Services
Office of Industrial Relations
1 William Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

Via email to: wcpolicy@oir.qld.gov.au

To the Workers' Compensation Regulatory Services

Re: Proposal for new Specialty Medical Assessment Tribunal (SMAT) for psychiatry

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) Queensland Branch welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the proposal to prescribe a new Specialty Medical Assessment Tribunal (SMAT) for psychiatry.

The Queensland Branch supports that psychiatry should be formally recognised as a specialty for a new eighth SMAT. The assessment of medical matters relevant to psychiatric or psychological injury claims is currently undertaken by the General Medical Assessment Tribunal (GMAT), convening as 'GMAT-Psychiatric'.

The Branch agrees that psychiatry should be recognised in its own right, to recognise the complexity of cases involving psychiatric injury which is often co-morbid with a physical injury and given the recent increase in psychiatric or psychological injury claims referred to the Tribunal.

Psychiatrists are skilled in undertaking a comprehensive psychiatric assessment to arrive at an accurate diagnosis and formulation that considers the interaction between physical and mental illness and the unique needs and attributes of the individual patient. Psychiatrists often work in collaboration with general practitioners and other health professionals to best meet the mental health and emotional needs of patients. Psychiatrists work in partnership with patients and their families and carers and are attuned to the array of social and cultural factors that impact on the individual patient.¹

Psychiatrists have the training and expertise to provide an independent medical review and assessment of injuries for which compensation is payable under Queensland's *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*.

The Branch supports the proposed amendments to prescribe a new SMAT for psychiatry as a standalone speciality, along with the seven others SMATs.

To discuss the contents of this letter please contact me via Ms Nada Martinovic, Policy and Advocacy Advisor, at nada.martinovic@ranzcp.org, or on (07) 3426 2200.

Yours sincerely



Professor Brett Emmerson AM
Chair, RANZCP Queensland Branch Committee

¹ *The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists*, [Position Statement 80: The role of the psychiatrist in Australia and New Zealand](#).