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Queensland Health

Prof Michael Pervan
Chief Executive Officer
Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority

Email: submissions.ihpa@ihpa.gov.au

Dear Professor Pervan

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the 'Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA) draft Work Program and Corporate Plan 2023–24' (the Plan).

The Plan has identified activities and initiatives to which IHACPA has previously received feedback via Ministerial correspondence, or through various IHACPA working groups with jurisdictional representatives, and Queensland acknowledges the emphasis within The Plan on the prioritisation of initiatives related to maternity and paediatric care, particularly the eligibility criteria specialised children's hospitals and the funding methodology for unqualified newborns.

In October last year, The Honourable Yvette D'Ath, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, wrote to the Honourable Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, specifically seeking Minister Butler's assurances that the review of funding for 'unqualified neonates' would continue to be prioritised. Minister D'Ath outlined the review would need to consider resourcing for babies now able to receive additional supportive care on postnatal wards, and therefore close to their mother. The current funding practice requires the newborn to be moved to a special care nursery/neonatal intensive care bed for the payment to recognise the additional resources associated with supportive care. The logical argument being that if quality and safe care can be delivered to the baby in the postnatal ward, next to their mother, then the funding model should recognise and reflect this.

Queensland also strongly supports IHACPA's intention to review the criteria for specified intensive care units. Although throughput, the number of ventilated cases and the proportion of invasive ventilation, have historically provided an adequate approach to measure whether an intensive care unit should be recognised as specified, with clinical care improvements and alternatives to invasive ventilation more common practice, the state welcomes IHACPA's intention to explore the alternate criteria options with consideration to remove the reliance on mechanical ventilation hours.

Queensland appreciates mention in The Plan of “the significance and potentially long-lasting changes to models of care and service delivery in Australian public hospitals” brought about by the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). It is important that these changes are adequately accounted for in the national pricing model, without distorting the long-term application of the national pricing model. Queensland has raised this issue with IHACPA on several occasions and acknowledgement of the ongoing impact is appreciated.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the significant role performed by IHACPA and reiterate my department’s continued willingness to work with you to achieve the best possible funding outcomes to ensure Queenslanders continue to receive world class healthcare.

Should you require further information, please contact Ms Liz Lea, Acting Senior Director, Healthcare Purchasing and Funding Branch via email at Liz.Lea@health.qld.gov.au, or telephone 0428 505 376.

Yours sincerely



Melissa Carter
Deputy Director-General
Healthcare Purchasing and System Performance Division
5 / 04 / 2023

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