

PROCESS FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS



Scope

To outline the process for responding to a concern raised about the education and training of trainee medical officers (TMOs) in South Australia outside of the scheduled accreditation process.

The South Australian Medical Education and Training (SA MET) Health Advisory Council (the Advisory Council) may request documentation from a local health network (LHN), or undertake a specific site visit, to investigate concerns that have been raised regarding the quality and safety of TMO education and training.

Definition

Concerns can manifest in a number of different guises. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- > Issues relating to the education and training provided to TMOs.
- > Issues relating to patient or TMO safety, through supervision or other means.
- > Issues relating to the management of the education and training program at a site.

Concerns can be reported through a number of different sources, including: TMOs or their advocates, other healthcare staff at a LHN and through LHN management.

Concerns reported to SA MET Unit must be made by an identified individual. This individual's identity will be kept confidential by SA MET Unit. Issues reported anonymously to SA MET Unit may be noted and reviewed in future visits, but will not be actioned directly. This is to reduce the likelihood of unsubstantiated claims resulting in investigation.

SA MET Response

SA MET Unit will attempt to gain as much information as possible from the individual(s) raising the concern before taking action. This information may be gained through email exchanges, including documentation requests, telephone conversations and face-to-face meetings.

Once it has gathered information, SA MET Unit (on behalf of the Advisory Council) will contact the Director of Medical Services (DMS), the Director of Clinical Training (DCT) and Medical Education Officer (MEO) of the LHN in which the concern has been raised to discuss the issue. The DMS, DCT and MEO may be able to resolve the concerns at this point.

The source of the initial concern will be advised that the DMS, DCT and MEO will be notified that a concern has been reported to SA MET Unit but that their identity will remain confidential.

Following the discussion with LHN staff, SA MET Unit will provide its findings to the Chair of the Advisory Council for a decision about whether to proceed with an investigation, keep the information for future accreditation visits, or discard the information if it is determined unusable or unrelated to accreditation.

Information kept for future accreditation visits will be filed by SA MET Unit and given to the accreditation team for the relevant unit and/or facility.

Investigating a Concern

If the Chair of the Advisory Council decides the concern requires investigation, they can take the following courses of action:

- > Request documentation from a facility regarding the concern.
- > Undertake a tele or videoconference with the facility.
- > Undertake a site visit to a unit or facility.

A team will be formed to undertake the investigation on behalf of the Advisory Council. This team will consist of trained accreditation team members. The specific composition of the team will be determined by the nature of the concern and agreed by Accreditation Committee.

Documentation Request

The team investigating the concern can request documentation from a unit or facility, through the DCT and MEO. This documentation may be sufficient to close a concern, or it may provide further information to the investigation ahead of a tele/videoconference or visit.

Tele/Videoconference

A tele/videoconference will be arranged when it is deemed necessary to speak with individuals at a site, but not necessary to visit the site in person. The team investigating the concern will determine who it needs to speak with. This will depend on the concern.

Site Visit

A site visit will be undertaken when a tele/videoconference is deemed insufficient or inappropriate to gather the evidence required to investigate the concern. The team investigating the concern will determine who it needs to meet. This will depend on the concern.

Follow Up

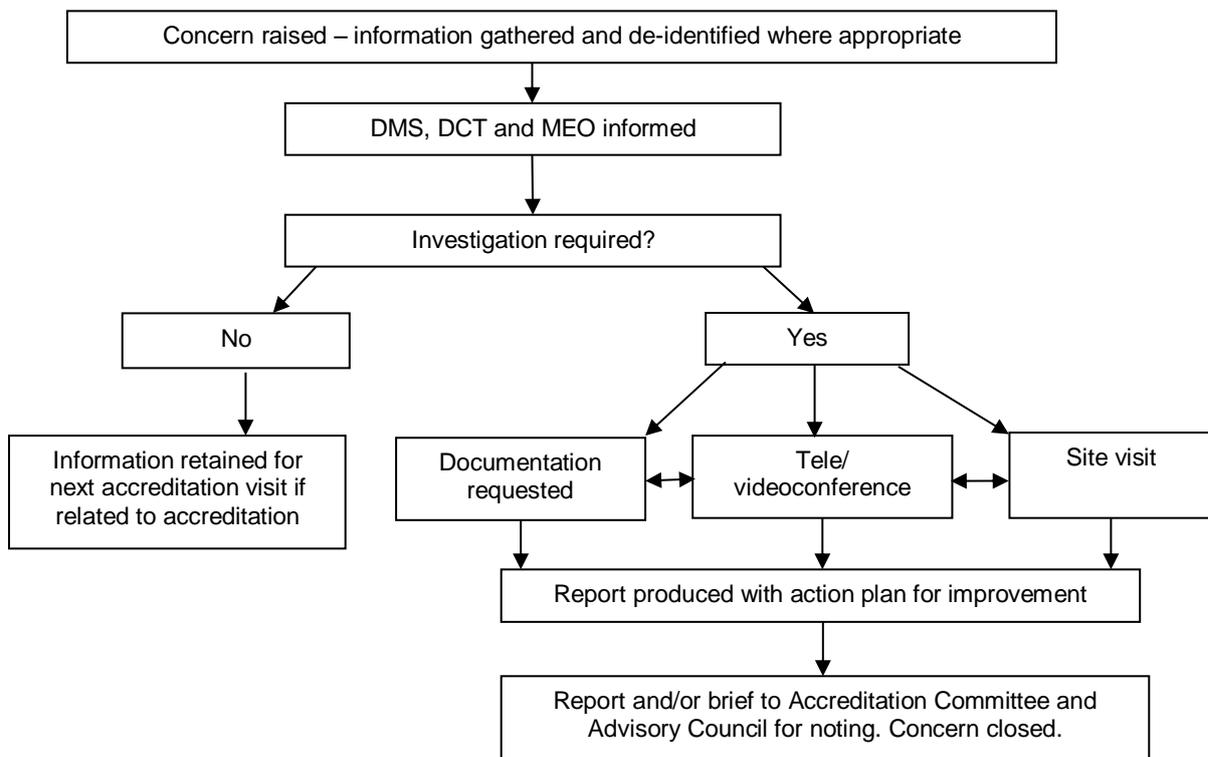
Following its investigation, the team investigating the concern will produce a report, which will be brought to the SA MET Accreditation Committee and the Advisory Council. This report will contain detail regarding the concern and investigation, with specific outcomes relating to the concern. If the concern has not been resolved, the report will detail provisos for action by the unit or facility to action within specific timescales.

The potential outcomes of the report for a unit or facility are as follows:

- > Continued accreditation
- > Conditional accreditation with provisos
- > Rescinded accreditation

As with other accreditation reports, a unit or facility have the opportunity to appeal in line with SA MET's Internal Review Policy.

Response to Concerns Flowchart



Related Documents

- > Accreditation Policy
- > Guide to Accreditation

Definitions

Accreditation – a quality assurance process that establishes and monitors the education and training provided for TMOs within facilities to ensure high standards of clinical training for TMOs. Accreditation may be granted to a facility or a new unit for 6 months, 12 months or three years.

Accreditation Standards – all accreditation activities are assessed against published accreditation standards. These standards have been developed through an extensive consultation process with stakeholders, and endorsed by the South Australian Minister for Health and the Australian Medical Council in 2014.

Local Health Network – There are five LHNs in South Australia that manage the delivery of public health services and other community based health services. The LHNs may comprise a single hospital or a group of public hospitals with a geographic or functional connection.

South Australian Medical Education and Training (SA MET) Accreditation Committee – a Committee of SA MET Health Advisory Council that is responsible for an efficient and effective accreditation process taking into account jurisdictional requirements, national program developments, and the needs of TMOs.

South Australian Medical Education and Training (SA MET) Unit: Supports the functions of the SA MET Health Advisory Council and various committees and subcommittees providing advice to the Health Advisory Council. The unit is committed to supporting the education and training of trainee medical officers in South Australia and supports the Health Advisory Council in ensuring an open and transparent accreditation system.

For more information:

SA MET

Level 6, Citi Centre Building

11 Hindmarsh Square

Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: 8226 67231

SAMETAccreditation@health.sa.gov.au.

Document History:

Date effective	Author/Editor	Approved by	Version	Change Reference
4 April 2012	Senior Project Officer, Accreditation	SA MET Health Advisory Council Accreditation Subcommittee	1.0	Original Document
19 June 2013	Project Officer, Accreditation	Senior Project Officer, Accreditation	1.1	Update process
6 August 2014	Project Officer, Accreditation	Senior Project Officer, Accreditation	1.2	Minor updates
4 February 2015	Project Officer, Accreditation	Senior Project Officer, Accreditation	1.3	Minor update