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GENERAL PRACTICE PROFESSION OPPOSES TAX ON LEARNING

Australia's general practice leaders have unanimously called on Government to reverse plans to cap self-education related tax deductions at \$2000 per year, describing the 'tax on learning' as an ill-considered decision that will damage Australia's doctors' and medical trainees' skill sets.

The tax on learning is a contradiction, whereby the government seeks to have a well-trained medical workforce, but at the same time discourages medical practitioners from enhancing and maintaining their skills to provide high quality patient services.

Australian GPs are highly skilled and committed to high quality medical care. Australian general practice leads the world in delivering great health outcomes for our patients and training, education and ongoing CPD are fundamental to this.

United General Practice Australia's (UGPA) members also highlighted the heavy licensing and registration requirements placed on general practitioners in order to practice on a yearly basis. GPs have provided [real life](#) examples of how the cap will impact on their ability to meet their education and learning requirements.

A recent [survey](#) conducted by the Australian Medical Association, a UGPA member organisation, also showed that 79% of the nearly 600 doctors surveyed, paid over \$5,000 in self education expenses each year.

UGPA reiterated the capped funding would not only affect training and CPD activity costs, but the ability to attend conferences to learn about the latest developments in patient care, examination expenses and medical College memberships.

If GPs are unable to attend these CPD activities, many may forgo important skills that would potentially limit the range of services that they are able to provide to the community.

Particularly affected will be doctors in training, many of whom are women working in part time roles. Similarly there are disproportionate impacts upon rural and remote GPs, whose expenses in terms of travel and accommodation are significantly higher to attend QI&CPD eligible conferences and events.

[Formal submissions](#) from peak medical organisations are currently being drafted outlining key considerations the Government must not ignore if it does not wish patient care to be compromised.

In a world of rapidly changing and highly sophisticated medicine, UGPA calls on Government to utilise the current legislation and mechanisms in place to ensure our tax system supports rather than penalizes essential self education for GP's. It is only through continuous learning that we can ensure Australians will receive the highest quality care where patient safety is not compromised.

To enable the Australian medical profession to continue to be one of the most highly regarded in the world, UGPA demands Government re-evaluate its decision to place a tax on learning.

ENDS

UGPA comprises the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), the Australian Medical Association (AMA), the Australian Medicare Local Alliance (AMLA), the Australian General Practice Network (AGPN), General Practice Registrars Australia (GPRA), the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), and the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA).

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