FOLLOW UP OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL'S PERFORMANCE AUDITS OCTOBER 2011 - MARCH 2012

Organisation: NSW Ministry of Health

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Performance audit: Visiting Medical Officers and Staff Specialists

PERFORMANCE AUDIT – Visiting Medical Officers and Staff Specialists

IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

	RECOMMENDATION	ACCEPTED OR REJECTED	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	DUE DATE	STATUS (completed, on track, delayed) and COMMENT	RESPONSIBILITY (Section of agency responsible for implementation)
1	NSW Health expedites current improvements in VMoney and related systems to: • eliminate manual data entry • improve access by hospital staff to VMO payment management reports	Accepted	The development of the VMoney web application.	June 2013 Commenced April 2013	**Status: On Track and Ongoing** The VMoney Web application was successfully piloted during November-December 2012 in Western NSW LHD and Western Sydney LHD. Planning for a progressive state-wide rollout is being developed in conjunction with the Ministry and Local Health Districts, with the view to commence the statewide rollout from 1 July 2013	HealthShare NSW
2	NSW Health: develops consistent guidelines and procedures for verifying VMO claims for payment ensures that there is more effective scrutiny of VMO payments to ensure that they are being made in accordance with NSW Health Policy Directives	Accepted	One of the benefits of the VMoney improvement should be an enhanced capability to monitor VMO payments and identify the prevalence of non-standard arrangements	June 2013	**Status: On Track and Ongoing** This recommendation is being implemented through the VMO Claims Management Optimisation Project. A state-wide Steering Committee including representation from Metropolitan, regional and rural Director of Medical Services and Auditors is in the process of finalising system-wide guidelines for verifying VMO claims in compliance with NSW Health Policy Directives.	HealthShare NSW and Workplace Relations, MoH
3	NSW Health develops the use of benchmarking studies and analysis to assist local health districts to detect inconsistent VMO claims for payment or anomalies in clinical priorities	Accepted	There is scope to review VMO payments data to identify broad trends in their service delivery. In the longer term, the increase in the numbers of medical administrators, recommended in this Report, will assist in implementing this	June 2013	**Status: On Track and Ongoing** The scope to review VMO payments data to identify broad trends in their service delivery will be implemented through clinical audits as part of the	HealthShare NSW and Workplace Relations, MoH

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	allocated to patients		recommendation.		VMO Claims Management Optimisation Project The consolidation of the disparate instances of VMoney into a single state-build has been completed and can now be used facilitate this exercise.	
4	NSW Health assign unique identifiers to VMOs to ensure that there are no overpayments for duplicated services	Accepted	The VMoney web application will incorporate an Australian Health Professional Registration Agency (AHPRA) medical registration number for each VMO. This number will be the unique identifier for each VMO thereby reducing the risk of overpayments for duplicated services.	June 2013	*Status: Completed* This recommendation is a feature already developed as part of the VMoney web application. The VMoney Web application alongside the StaffLink Identity Management system can facilitate the unique VMO Identifiers.	HealthShare NSW and Workplace Relations, MoH
5	NSW Health seeks improvements to reduce administration costs of staff specialists' training, education and study leave	Accepted	Staff specialists' training, education and study leave (TESL) entitlements are set out in an industrial determination so cannot be varied without agreement of the Australian Salaried Medical Officers Federation (NSW) ('ASMOF'). The Ministry of Health proposes to discuss with ASMOF issuing agreed guidelines to support a consistent approach to the interpretation of TESL arrangements across NSW Health), which would address one of the matters raised in the Report. In terms of monitoring leave entitlements, *StaffLink*, the new Human Resources Information System which is being progressively deployed across NSW Health, has been configured to keep a record of TESL leave entitlement balances.	June 2013	*Status: On Track and Ongoing* The Ministry is entering into the final stage of discussions with ASMOF about issuing jointly agreed guidelines in order to have a more consistent approach to the interpretation of TESL arrangements across NSW Health. Awaiting response from ASMOF on the final draft sent on 26 March 2013. HealthShare NSW advised StaffLink has been deployed to the following Health Agencies: • Mid North Coast LHD • Northern NSW LHD • Hunter New England LHD • Central Coast LHD • Northern Sydney LHD	HealthShare NSW and Workplace Relations, MoH

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					• South Eastern Sydney LHD • Pathology North • Western NSW LHD • Far West LHD HealthShare NSW advised that StaffLink will be deployed to the remaining LHDs in July 2013. Health Agencies are responsible for providing TESL balances when they transition to StaffLink. Where balances have been provided StaffLink is configured to keep a record of TESL leave entitlement balances.	
6	NSW Health provides a more explicit basis for VMO entitlements to treat private patients in public hospitals	Accepted	The Ministry will raise this recommendation with the organisations which represent VMOs, the Australian Medical Association NSW Ltd and the NSW Rural Doctors Association.	June 2013	**Status: On Track and Ongoing** Discussions are taking place with the Australian Medical Association about amendments to VMO model contracts to provide a more explicit basis for VMO private patient arrangements.	Workplace Relations MoH
7	NSW Health uses the provisions of the Staff Specialist award to develop performance agreements for each Staff Specialist to describe their activities in detail.	Accepted	The Staff Specialists (State) Award makes provision at clause 12 for a written annual performance agreement, and attaches the standard format to be used as an annexure to the Award. The Ministry will emphasise to public health organisations the need to specify the work expectations and requirements which apply to staff specialists consistent with the provisions of the Award.	June 2013	**Status: Ongoing** The Ministry is surveying LHDs to promote compliance with this Award requirement.	Workplace Relations MoH

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8	NSW Health builds director of medical services capacity by encouraging doctors to choose medical administration as a career path, such as by training through the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators.	Accepted	The Health Education Training Institute (HETI) has been funded to establish a Clinical Chair in Medical Administration to assist in the coordination and delivery of the training of medical administrators in NSW Health facilities, working in close association with the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators. In addition, under the Health Professionals Workforce Plan Specialist Training Program, Western Sydney LHD has been funded for $100k per annum for 5 years for a medical administrator trainee.	June 2013	*Status : On Track and Ongoing* A HETI report 'Developing Specialist Medical Managers in NSW' has been prepared which sets out a blueprint for implementing this recommendation, by way of a structured three year rotational training program which would meet the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators fellowship requirements.	Health Education Training Institute (HETI), Workforce Development, MoH
9	NSW Health after appropriate consultation with the Australian Medical Association amend the model VMO contracts to impose stricter controls over the submission of VMO claims	Accepted	The Ministry will raise this recommendation with the organisations which represents VMOs, the Australian Medical Association NSW Ltd and the NSW Rural Doctors Association	Not applicable	*Status : ongoing* Discussions are taking place with the Australian Medical Association about amendments to the VMO model contracts to implement this recommendation.	Workplace Relations MoH