

## REHABILITATION MEDICINE SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

### POSITION STATEMENT:

The Role of the Rehabilitation Physician in the provision of Rehabilitation Medicine Services

September 2017

RMSANZ is dedicated by its constitutional objects to advance and promote the specialty and professional identity of Rehabilitation Medicine.

We are committed to advocate on behalf of the professionals and recipients of disability services for improvements in quality and the maintenance of optimal delivery of rehabilitation services in Australia and New Zealand.

The Society does this by collaborating with the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP), its Australasian Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine (AFRM) and relevant agencies.

RMSANZ is a Specialty Society comprised of Rehabilitation Physicians who are Fellows of the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

Rehabilitation Physicians are engaged in both public and private sector practice, striving, with teams of Allied Health Practitioners, to optimise the functional recovery of persons who have become disabled as a result of catastrophic illness or injuries.

This includes a specific and credentialed skill base to provide optimal management of areas including: stroke, spinal cord injury, brain injury, multi trauma, cerebral palsy and the like. In our individual practice we advocate for and provide rehabilitation services to individual patients.

Our mandate is to discuss and collaborate with Health authorities in areas of policy innovation where these will assist disabled persons to maximise rehabilitation outcomes.

We are aware of budgetary constraints under which health systems operate and are often in a unique position at the grass roots to see where system changes may improve efficiency and effectiveness of service provision.

### Definitions

**Rehabilitation Medicine** means that part of the science of medicine involved with the prevention and reduction of function loss, activity limitation and participation restriction arising from impairments; the management of disability in physical, psychosocial and vocational dimensions; and the improvement of lost function.

A **Rehabilitation Physician** is a registered medical practitioner and Fellow of the AFRM whose practice is by referral and who, by training and experience in Rehabilitation Medicine is able to conduct expert evaluation and management of patients with impairments and disabilities.

A **Rehabilitation Medicine Service** is an identified unit of patient care providing comprehensive rehabilitation services for inpatients and non-inpatients as well as in the community, with each patient's clinical management being under the supervision of a Rehabilitation Physician.

The **Objects of the RMSANZ** are the following:

- a) to advance the practice of Rehabilitation Medicine;
- b) to promote and advance the study of Rehabilitation Medicine;
- c) to foster the highest standards of training, practice, teaching and research in the field of Rehabilitation Medicine;
- d) to promote, improve, encourage and provide education or training in Rehabilitation Medicine by instituting and conducting courses of study for the benefit of those desiring to increase and improve their knowledge of Rehabilitation Medicine and related disciplines to the highest possible level;
- e) to provide a forum for medical practitioners engaged in the practice of Rehabilitation Medicine and any of its special interests and related disciplines for the furtherance of standards of medical care and rehabilitation;
- f) to liaise with the AFRM and the RACP and other relevant bodies regarding training, certification and recertification programs, and to advance the purpose of any concluded agreement or understanding, whether binding or non-binding, with the RACP or the AFRM (or any successor body) as varied from time to time;
- g) from time to time, to liaise with and advise the AFRM (or any successor body) and the RACP and any of its boards and committees on matters concerning Rehabilitation Medicine;
- h) to nominate from time to time representatives, selected by the Directors, to the AFRM and RACP and any other relevant bodies for membership of the STCs or any other committees of those bodies as deemed appropriate by the Directors;
- i) to represent the views of Rehabilitation Physicians to other relevant bodies;
- j) to maintain ongoing liaison with Federal and State Governments of Australia, the New Zealand Government and other relevant bodies to promote the development of healthcare and disability programs for people with disability;

- k) to hold meetings for the discussion of clinical, academic, administrative, industrial and political subjects relating to Rehabilitation Medicine and related disciplines;
- l) to establish Branches and regional committees, including but not restricted to State and New Zealand Branches and Special Interest Groups of the RMSANZ for the benefit of its Members and the furtherance of its objects;
- m) to provide educational activities for its Members and for trainees in Rehabilitation Medicine of the AFRM and RACP and hold regular scientific meetings for its Members;
- n) to promote research into the field of Rehabilitation Medicine and disability and related areas;
- o) to provide encouragement and support to Advanced Trainees during and after their period of training in Rehabilitation Medicine;
- p) to endeavour to work together and in alliance with RACP and where practicable to create links with RACP to assist RACP in relation to matters of mutual interest to RACP and the RMSANZ; and
- q) to do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects.