

Change is the only constant

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'Change' is a word we hear a lot these days, especially when it comes to fundamental reforms in the Australian health industry. As this issue goes to print there is much discussion around the national health reform agenda, in particular the recently announced National Health and Hospitals Network. Over the next 12 months the merits and drawbacks of the reforms will be discussed and debated by politicians, health professionals, economists and the general public. No matter your political leaning or understanding of the health system, the proposed changes will, if implemented, represent significant change from the way health is currently delivered, administered and funded. Health professionals need to understand that this reform is but one of an ongoing change cycle that will continue to affect health and other aspects of our society and lives. At this time we also see the establishment of Health Workforce Australia. This national body has been established to 'produce more effective, streamlined and integrated clinical training arrangements'. In time, this body will help drive fundamental clinical training initiatives that feed into health reform more systematically. Finally, the move to national registration and accreditation of ten health professional groups, representing the majority of clinical health professionals, drives change through integration, shared governance principles, ease of worker mobility and providing greater community safeguards. Whereas these three examples represent significant bodies of work in their own right, more importantly they are major pieces of the health reform puzzle that compliment each other. Without any of these projects, health reform in this country would be pedestrian at best.

This issue sees a wide range of papers centred on gaining a better understanding of health data, chronic disease management, the role and functions of different health professional groups, workforce issues, and the development of staff through education and teaching. All of these themes have a relationship to the health reforms that are being considered at present. Looking forward, to be successful, the health workforce needs to embrace change and system evolution. This can only come through being better informed and understanding the key drivers to improving the health and welfare of our society.

After commencing as Editor-In-Chief of the *Australian Health Review* I would like to advise that I will be taking on a new role within the Journal. The reasons for this are two-fold. Firstly, I have accepted a new senior executive role in the South Australian Health Department leading Organisational Development and Learning, and secondly, the AHHA Board sought a full-time Academic 'Head' for the *Australian Health Review*. My new role with the Journal as Senior Associate Editor will allow me to continue to contribute to Australia's premier health systems, policy and management journal, while allowing the Journal to continue with its Academic standing. I am sure under the guidance of the new Editor-in-Chief, Professor Andrew Wilson, ably supported by Dr Simon Barraclough, Dr Deborah Roberts and myself, the Journal will continue to grow, improve and publish the needed changes and improvements to aspects of our health system.

Dr Gary E. Day
Editor-in-Chief