

Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program The MSOAP Update

August 2009

MSOAP Expansion in 2010

The 2009-10 Federal Budget included a \$120.5 million package of measures to improve choice and access to maternity services for pregnant women and new mothers in Australia.

As a result of this package, families will have greater choice in the type of care they wish to receive when having a baby. The package recognises the important role played by qualified midwives in the birthing experience of many Australian women.

Responding to the recently completed national Maternity Services Review, the package has many facets including more services for rural and remote communities, where the state of maternity services is poor, through an expansion of the successful Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program (MSOAP).

The complete media release can be found at [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/budget/publishing.nsf/Content/DC23E42BFF234C7DCA2575B2003B7902/\\$File/hmedia05.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/budget/publishing.nsf/Content/DC23E42BFF234C7DCA2575B2003B7902/$File/hmedia05.pdf).

New service proposals will be canvassed in January 2010 for inclusion in the 2010-2011 MSOAP Annual Plan in midwifery, especially in areas currently under resourced in this specialty.

2009-2010 Plan Approved

The Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) recently sent confirmation of the approval of the 2009-2010 MSOAP Annual Plan.

The 2009-2010 MSOAP Annual Plan provides a broad overview of the agreed strategies and activities that will be undertaken by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) over 2009-2010, in order to work successfully towards achievement of the MSOAP objectives.

The main objectives of MSOAP over 2009-2010 are

1. Increase visiting specialist services in areas of identified need.
2. Support medical specialists to provide outreach medical services in rural areas.
3. Facilitate visiting specialists and local health professional relationships and communications about ongoing patient care.

4. Increase and maintain the skills of regional, rural and remote health professionals in accordance with local need.

These objectives will be achieved by comprehensive planning, implementation, and review cycles. A copy of the 2009-2010 MSOAP Annual Plan is available from the MSOAP Project Officer.

New Services

New specialist service proposals are considered by the MSOAP advisory forum. A new service must meet some basic conditions related to local need, available support, capacity to integrate into existing services and value for money.

The proposal forms and guidelines can be found at http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/service_information/services_files/medcal_specialist_outreach_assistance_program_msoap

The MSOAP team would like to thank Dr Stewart Graham who is commencing rheumatology services in Devonport and Somerset shortly, extending his current clinics offered in King Island and Queenstown.

MSOAP would also like to announce an increase to the number of dermatology clinics offered in Latrobe by Dr Michael Sladden to 18 clinics per year to ease the current waiting lists and improve the level of dermatology care for the residents on the North West coast.

Letter of Offer

MSOAP Tasmania recently sent out a new Letter of Offer for the 2009/10 financial year to all private specialists.

These letters are required to be returned by 31st August 2009 to assist the MSOAP Project team in organising and scheduling clinics.

Contact Us

Further information on MSOAP can be found on the internet <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ruralhealth-services-msoap>.

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