



Document No. eA279536
File No. 2009-02436/2

Country Health SA Hospital Inc.
Adelaide Office
Level 12
100 Waymouth Street
Adelaide SA 5000
PO Box 287, Rundle Mall
Adelaide SA 5000
DX 243
Tel 08 8228 6120
Fax 08 8226 7170
ABN 00 167 660 816
www.countryhealthsa.sa.gov.au

Dr Graham Morris
President
Rural Doctors' Association of South Australia Inc.
PO Box 846
CLARE SA 5453

Dear Dr Morris

RE: RURAL GPs REVISED TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT OFFER

Country Health SA (CHSA) appreciates the valuable contribution General Practitioners make to the overall provision of medical care to the South Australian community, and in particular, our rural communities. Our two organisations have for the greater part of 2009 discussed improvements to the terms of engagement for rural GPs, with an emphasis on the clear understanding of the expectations of the respective parties and a level of remuneration that reflects GP availability for emergencies and the provision of inpatient medical services. The process to date has been positive and serves to provide a solid foundation on which our on going relationship and mutual understanding can continue to develop.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Authorisation (A91078), dated 14 May 2008, has enabled a valuable opportunity for our two organisations to negotiate a universal model of engagement in a collective manner on behalf of your members who are rural based GPs.

CHSA maintains its support of rural GPs engaged in the capacity of contractors paid on a *fee-for-service* basis with an on call allowance for the provision of emergency services. Furthermore, CHSA supports the introduction of payments for GPs for time spent undertaking activities required by CHSA but not currently remunerated in any other way.

In relation to the provision of on call services, CHSA recognises:

- the impost that being on call presents to individual GPs, and
- the critical role that GPs have in supporting CHSA meet its service obligations.

In terms of unplanned disruptions brought about by the need to attend to inpatients or emergency presentations in hospital emergency departments, CHSA further recognises:

- potential loss of income from the re-scheduling of appointments to another day and or additional expense in undertaking patient consultations after hours due to business interruptions, and

- travel costs where the distance between the business premises and the hospital is significant.

The following list summarises the key features of our offer for rural based GP contractors, excluding Registrars, which would have an effective date of 1 January 2010:

1. GPs will be engaged through a universal agreement and supporting documentation as developed over the last few months.
2. GPs will participate in on-call arrangements and provide public patient services in a manner to be reflected within the universal agreement and supporting documentation.
3. An overall increase in on-call payments shall apply based on three groups.
 - Group One (assuming full year coverage) \$85,200
 - Group Two (assuming full year coverage) \$95,850
 - Group Three (assuming full year coverage) \$113,600
4. GPs will be paid for time spent when called to the hospital during scheduled consulting times. The applicable rate shall be \$144/hour.
5. GPs will be paid for time spent accompanying patients on inter-hospital transfers. The applicable rate shall be \$144/hour.
6. All GPs will be engaged and paid for their involvement in safety, quality and service planning activities based on 8 one-hour meetings per year for non-procedural GPs and 10 for procedural GPs. The applicable rate shall be \$144/hour.
7. By 30 June 2010, each hospital shall provide GPs with access to a PC whereby they can log on and send and receive emails, and obtain copies of policies, procedures and reference material.
8. During the life of this agreement, the RDASA agrees to negotiate the reform of current on-call rosters, specifically as it relates to after hours rostering arrangements.
9. The attached documents, subject to further negotiation on a small number of outstanding clauses identified separately, will form the entire offer:
 - The Country Health SA Rural General Practitioner Fee for Service Agreement
 - The South Australian Rural Medical Engagement Responsibilities
 - The South Australian Rural Medical Fee Agreement
 - Credentialing & Defining Scope of Clinical Practice for Country Health SA Health Service for Medical and Dental Practitioners, 2009.

Yours sincerely



George Beltchev
Chief Executive Officer

17/12/2009