

Australia's peak health groups call for all children to be released from immigration detention

18 March 2015

Australia's peak health professional bodies have today joined together to call on the Government to immediately release all children and their families from immigration detention in Australia and Nauru.

Our organisations represent a wide range of health professionals who have seen, first-hand, the devastating impact of detention on the health and wellbeing of children and their families.

Many of our organisations provided input into to the Australian Human Rights Commission National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention. The report, *The Forgotten Children*, released a month ago, reflects our ongoing concerns.

We believe there is a moral imperative for the Government to implement the recommendations of the report, in particular:

- remove children and their families from detention centres on and offshore and release them into the Australian community, and
- urgently appoint an independent guardian for unaccompanied children seeking asylum in Australia.

In addition we reiterate the need to appoint an independent panel of health professionals to provide advice and oversight of health and healthcare in detention facilities on and off shore, with agreement for the panel to consult with our organisations.

The Government must show leadership on this important issue and act now to prevent further unnecessary and long-lasting harm to children in their care.

The groups making this call are:

- Royal Australasian College of Physicians
- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
- Australasian College for Emergency Medicine
- Australian Medical Association
- Australian Psychological Society
- Public Health Association of Australia
- Children's Healthcare Australasia
- Australian Association of Social Workers
- Australian Medical Students for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Mental Health
- Australian College of Nursing
- Australian College of Mental Health Nurses
- Australian College of Midwives
- Maternal, Child and Family Health Nurses Australia



The Royal Australasian
College of Physicians



The Royal Australian
College of General
Practitioners



The Royal
Australian &
New Zealand
College of
Psychiatrists



The Royal Australian
and New Zealand
College of Obstetricians
and Gynaecologists



Public Health Association
AUSTRALIA



APS Australian
Psychological
Society



ACN



the Australian College
of Mental Health Nurses Inc.



AMA



AASW



Australian College
of Midwives



Maternal Child and Family
Health Nurses Australia



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