

# The College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand supports global collaboration and respect

Rob Bevan, Charlie Corke, Raymond Raper, Mary Pinder, Ross Freebairn, Bala Venkatesh, Dianne Stephens, Gavin Joynt, Peter Morley, Rinaldo Bellomo, Sarah Yong, Stephen Jacobe, Felicity Hawker, Michael Ashbolt, Stephen Lam and Benoj Varghese

The College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand (the College) is the organisation responsible for the training of intensive care medicine (ICM) specialists in Australia and New Zealand. In its strategic plan, the College is committed to achieving the best health outcomes for critically ill patients through training high-quality specialists, increasing specialty knowledge and improving standards of care.<sup>1</sup> The College identifies five core values, represented by the acronym I-CARE (Box 1).

In line with the position statement made by the Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society (ANZICS),<sup>2</sup> the College believes that to achieve the best outcomes for critically ill patients, international collaboration, in the form of freedom of speech, the celebration of difference, and respect for those of all genders, faiths, ethnicities and places of birth, is essential.

The United States has long been regarded as a major contributor to the practice and knowledge of ICM. In 2017, several presidential executive orders have been signed, one of which (13769, "Protecting the nation from foreign terrorist entry"<sup>3</sup>) specifically restricts travel to the US for individuals (termed "aliens") based on their country of birth. At the time of writing, the latest iteration of the order had relaxed the ban on dual nationals travelling on passports from certain countries. There remains the onus

on individuals to convince the border protection officer that "entry would not pose a threat to national security and would be in the national interest" in order to obtain a waiver.<sup>4</sup>

There are Fellows of the College who originate from countries identified in the order as high risk, and no justification has been given about why they would pose a terrorist threat if they travel to the US. Because of concerns about the implications these restrictions could place on scientific collaboration, the College successfully petitioned the Australian Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC) to issue a statement on this issue (Box 2).<sup>5</sup>

Freedom of travel and freedom of speech have enabled ICM specialists from our region to participate in global collaboration, which is essential to spur innovation and further the interests of patients around the world. The College believes that any law which is inherently discriminatory or suppresses a free exchange of ideas is contrary to our values.

There are justifiable arguments that governments are unlikely to acknowledge the views of the College, ANZICS or the CPMC, but we recognise the historical consequences of not speaking out about discrimination. On behalf of the College of Intensive Care Medicine Fellows and in the interests of our core values, the board of the College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand is speaking out.

## Box 1. College of Intensive Care Medicine core values

**Integrity:** Adhering to moral and ethical principles and practice

**Collaboration, leadership and teamwork:** Working together to achieve the best outcome

**Accountability and responsibility:** To our patients and their families; to our communities and our colleagues

**Respect and compassion:** Being sympathetic and empathetic

**Excellence:** In all aspects of intensive care practice

## Box 2. Australian Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC) statement on freedom of engagement of medical professionals

The CPMC supports the freedom of engagement of medical professionals to improve and advance medical practice across the world. Equitable access for medical delegates from across the world to countries that host international medical congresses and meetings is important to support this goal.

## Competing interests

None declared.

## Author details

Rob Bevan	Dianne Stephens	Felicity Hawker
Charlie Corke	Gavin Joynt	Michael Ashbolt
Raymond Raper	Peter Morley	Stephen Lam
Mary Pinder	Rinaldo Bellomo	Benoj Varghese
Ross Freebairn	Sarah Yong	
Bala Venkatesh	Stephen Jacobe	

The College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand, Melbourne, VIC, Australia.

*Correspondence:* drrsbevan@gmail.com

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- 2 Australian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society. Non-discrimination position statement. Melbourne: ANZICS, 2017. <http://www.anzics.com.au/Downloads/Forms/AllItems.aspx> (accessed Mar 2017).
- 3 United States Department of State. Executive order on visas. Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2017. <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/news/important-announcement.html> (accessed Mar 2017).
- 4 Office of the Press Secretary, the White House. Executive order protecting the nation from foreign terrorist entry into the United States [press release]. Washington, DC: White House, Mar 2017. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/03/06/executive-order-protecting-nation-foreign-terrorist-entry-united-states> (accessed May 2017).
- 5 Australian Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges. Statement on freedom of engagement of medical professionals. Canberra: CPMC, 2017. <http://cpmc.edu.au/about-us/policy-statements> (accessed Mar 2017). □

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