



Position and Consensus Statements – Member Policy

1. PURPOSE OF POLICY

This policy aims to establish an overarching and consistent approach for College in the development and promotion of College position and consensus statements.

2. POLICY SCOPE & PRINCIPLES

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and to College Officers involved in the development and promotion of College position and consensus statements, in line with the definition provided in this policy.

This policy is not applicable to media releases or other marketing-related outputs; government submissions; consumer resources or evidence based clinical guidelines; or College endorsed position statements created by external bodies.

Principles

This policy is based on the principle that any position or consensus statement released by College is a reflection of and adheres to the principles outlined in the College's Strategic Plan, Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy and ACD's Strategic Engagement Framework.

3. DEFINITIONS / KEY WORDS / ABBREVIATIONS

Position statement: an assertion of an official position held by College developed for the intention of public release, for which supporting evidence is robust and is representative of the views of its Fellows.

A position statement may refer, but is not restricted to, topics of dermatological interest and relevance. Clinical, scientific, political, behavioural or cultural issues may be addressed where it is deemed strategically appropriate for College to assert a public position or where it is viewed as a responsibility of College to members and the community.

Consensus statement: an assertion of an official position held by College and Fellows developed for the intention of public release, for which supporting evidence may be lacking or of insufficient quality to establish evidence-based statements. Recommendations or views put forward have considered the strength of available evidence and an appropriate methodology (e.g., 3-step modified Delphi approach) adopted to reach consensus with an expert group (e.g. Taskforce). The range of issues outlined in the definition of position statements can be applied.

Taskforce: a representative group of College Fellows, experts in the relevant field or consumers who have been involved in the development and approval of consensus statements.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

- a) ACD will demonstrate, through the implementation of this policy, a commitment to represent the views and opinions of its members in College position and consensus statements, with authenticity, integrity and transparency.
- b) Position and consensus statements will be developed with the intention of promoting and reflecting the views of College for the purposes of advocacy, education and communication, and promoting clinical best practice to support optimal outcomes in skin health across the community.
- c) Clinical position and consensus statements will be supported by the most up-to-date and highest quality clinical and scientific evidence where available, and will set standards or recommendations in clinical practice where these may be otherwise lacking to assist health professionals in clinical decision making.
- d) The Expert Advisory Committee will have oversight of the conceptualisation, development, review and approval of College position and consensus statements and will be supported by the Policy Manager.
- e) For existing content, such as consensus statement published in the Australasian Journal of Dermatology or other outputs developed by College Fellows, all authors will be provided with the position or consensus statement for approval and permission will be sought prior to publication with full acknowledgements.
- f) Proposed topics for new position or consensus statements will be drawn from emerging issues including but not limited to: dermatology; medicine, science and research; health services and models of care; policy and legislation; and other topical political or cultural issues of interest.
- g) Proposed topics will be identified through methods such as systematic environmental scanning of relevant databases, media monitoring and stakeholder engagement including the College membership. Topics will be considered and prioritised by the Expert Advisory Committee, informed by a summary of the supporting evidence base and an assessment of evidence quality, developed by the Policy Manager.
- h) Resource requirements or constraints will be considered in the selection of priority topics, such as engagement of an external contractor if lengthy evidence reviews are required. Projected budgets and expenditure will require formal approval from the Chief Executive Officer.
- i) Position and consensus statements will be developed by a panel of Fellows with relevant expertise nominated by the Expert Advisory Committee and supported by the Policy Manager. If required, additional insight or expertise may be sought by external health professionals or consumers, such as members of the Community Engagement Advisory Committee.
- j) Where insufficient evidence is available to support the development of a position statement, a taskforce will be established by the Expert Advisory Committee. An agreed methodology for reaching consensus will be documented prior to development of the statement and will be included in the final publication.
- k) All position and consensus statements will include the following within its structure: a purpose statement; audience; references; author or committee/ group

acknowledgements and permissions; endorsement; disclaimer; date of approval and next review; and key messages and recommendations.

- l) A promotion and dissemination strategy will be developed prior to public release to identify relevant target audiences and strategic mechanisms for promotion, with reference to the ACD Risk Management Policy.
- m) For topics which are deemed potentially sensitive, contentious or divisive with respect to public opinion or amongst health professionals, a risk analysis and mitigation strategy will be developed to inform the decision of the Expert Advisory Committee to proceed with development or release.
- n) While position and consensus statements are developed with full consideration of the latest evidence, these documents will be viewed as fluid and subject to amendment or revision to reflect changes in the clinical, policy or media landscape.

5. APPROVAL AUTHORITIES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The following authorities are delegated under this policy:

Policy	Approve new policy and major amendment		Approve minor amendments	
	Authority	Reporting Requirements	Authority	Reporting Requirements
Member policy	Expert Advisory Committee	Board for noting	Policy Manager	Chair, Expert Advisory Committee

CONTROL REQUIREMENTS

Policy Number :	MEN#001
Approval Authority:	Expert Advisory Committee
Responsible Officer:	Director Policy, Advocacy and Engagement
Designated Officer:	Policy Manager
First approved:	23 December 2016
Last amended:	2 November 2023
Effective Start date:	2 November 2023
Review date:	2 November 2025
Revision frequency:	Every 2 years

HISTORY

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	23 November 2016	NA
2.0	31 July 2019	Authorisation of policy changes to reflect College governance changes
3.0	2 November 2023	Minor changes to reflect updated processes

RELATED DOCUMENTS

ACD College Strategic Plan

[ACD Code of Ethics](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

ACD Strategic Engagement Framework

[Consumer and Community Engagement Policy](#)

Planned Approach to Policy and Advocacy (internal document)

Expert Advisory Committee Charter

[Risk Management Policy](#)

Endorsement Policy (in development)