



**Comments on the Study into Standard Setting and Laboratory Accreditation
Productivity Commission Draft Research Report
from The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS)**

August 2006

Standard Setting

The ACHS supports the best practice governance and processes for standard setting enunciated in the Report on pages 63 and 64. They will be used in the imminent evaluation of the recent four yearly review of ACHS standards. Their applicability and usefulness will be able to be tested during this process.

The ACHS also agrees that “duplication of effort and overlapping or inconsistent standards must be avoided” not only in activities that involve Standards Australia but in all standards setting within an industry.

Participation in international standardisation activities is essential. The ACHS supports continued funding provided participation is relevant and demonstrated to be effective.

Laboratory accreditation

While there is validity in the notion that competition in laboratory accreditation may not lower prices because of economies of scale, it appears that little consideration has been given to the burden on health services that are required to participate in multiple accreditation programs.

The concept of collaboration between accreditation agencies to minimise duplication of resources for participating in programs where there is overlap of standards and requirements needs to be actively pursued to improve the cost benefit of accreditation programs. The ACHS is already working with other accreditation agencies like the Post Graduate Medical Council to explore where efficiencies may be gained for health services by minimising duplication.