

SESSION 4: THE ROLE OF THE MARKET IN THE CLINICAL WORKFORCE

Authors were asked to use the following guidelines in preparing their papers.

All countries share similar goals for their health care system, and yet differ significantly in their reliance upon market forces to plan, organise, and finance their clinical workforce. The differences in the respective roles of the marketplace and the public sector reflect countries' political and economic environments as well as their traditions of social welfare. The number of physicians, income, professional standing, and clinical care are influenced by the extent and type of competitive markets.

In this session, authors will discuss the role of health care markets in the clinical workforce through examining for each country the underlying economic assumptions and political environments. The performance of the differing approaches will be evaluated to understand what works and fails. The authors will consider the impact of these approaches on the major stakeholders of the health care system - patients, payers, and providers.

In considering the above, authors will address five questions for their country:

- 1 What are the nature of the country's health care markets?
- 2 Indicate the different types of purchasers of physician services and the degree to which a competitive market operates at each of these purchasing levels.
- 3 How has the different mix of public/private planning, regulation, and financing affected:
 - the availability of clinicians to patients;
 - the cost of care to the public sector, private payers, and patients;
 - the professional opportunities of providers;
 - the entry of physicians into training programs and then into practice;
 - the specialty mixture; and
 - the geographic distribution of clinicians, particularly physicians.
- 4 In what areas of the health care system have the market and/or public planning fallen short in achieving a desirable clinical workforce?
- 5 How is the country altering its approach as it assesses the successes and failures of past policies?