

NOTE: Would you please run a Melbourne dateline on this story as the Prime Minister is in Melbourne. It is not being released anywhere else.

P.M.No. 51/1959

COSTS OF TEACHING HOSPITALS

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies

The Prime Minister announced today that he had appointed a committee to inquire into the costs incurred by teaching hospitals which are directly attributable to the instruction of medical students, and to submit for the consideration of the Australian Universities Commission recommendations on the magnitude and urgency of Commonwealth assistance for these hospitals which would be appropriate to those special costs.

Sir Leslie Martin Chairman of the Australian Universities Commission will be Chairman of this Committee. Its other members will be:-

Dr. V.L. Collins, Medical Director, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, and Professor-elect of Child Health, University of Melbourne;

Professor D.P. Derham, M.B.E., Professor of Jurisprudence, University of Melbourne, member of the Board of Management, Royal Melbourne Hospital, and member, Faculty of Medicine, University of Melbourne;

Mr J. Griffith, O.B.E., Administrator, Royal Perth Hospital;

Mr. L.B. Hamilton, First Assistant Secretary, Social Services' Division of the Commonwealth Treasury;

Professor J. Hayden, C.B.E., Professor of Medicine, University of Melbourne, and President of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians;

Mr. P. Kenny, Honorary Surgeon, St. Vincent's Hospital, Sydney, and Councillor, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons;

Mr. A.H. Lendon, Honorary Surgeon, Royal Adelaide Hospital, and Councillor, Royal Australasian Council of Surgeons;

Dr. J. Lindell, Chairman, Hospitals and Charities Commission of Victoria, and previously Medical Superintendent of the Royal Melbourne Hospital;

Dr. G.A. Penington, Dean of the Royal Melbourne Hospital Clinical School;

Sir Herbert Schlink, Chairman of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, and President of the Australian Hospitals' Association;

Professor S. Sunderland, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Melbourne; and

Professor N.G. Sutton, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Queensland.

It will be seen that this membership is drawn from all States with teaching hospitals, and includes men experienced in hospital administration, others who have a close acquaintance with the inter-relation between universities and hospitals in the field of clinical teaching, and others with particular knowledge of the legal and financial implications of the subject of the inquiry.

The Prime Minister said that earlier in the year he had been asked by the Health Ministers of the States to set up such a committee, and that he had agreed to do so but had delayed taking action until the Australian Universities Commission was established and its views known. Indeed, the Committee has been established in accordance with the terms of the Australian Universities Commission Act, which provides for the appointment of Committees to advise the Commission on specific problems. At present, Mr. Menzies commented, the Commonwealth does not contribute to the costs incurred by the teaching hospitals as a direct result of the training given in them to medical students, although, through the Australian Universities Commission, it does assist the States to meet the cost of other aspects of medical teaching.

The Prime Minister stated that he appreciated that this matter is one of some urgency. Nevertheless, because the Commission is at present fully occupied in assessing the needs of Australian universities in the period 1961-63, it will not be practicable for the committee on the teaching hospitals to begin its investigations until the early months of next year.

MELBOURNE,
18th December, 1959.