



The Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand

## Paediatric Cardiology - Standards of Practice Position Statement

Paediatric Cardiology involves the management of the fetus, neonates, infants, children and young adolescents with heart disease. Cardiac lesions and their implications differ considerably from those that are seen in adult cardiology. In the last decade the strategies and techniques for evaluation and care have expanded significantly. Practitioners who do not have specific training/expertise in this area and for whom the management of congenital heart disease is not their core work, would find it very difficult to maintain adequate skills to reliably assess and advise regarding the significance/management of heart problems in infancy and childhood.

Therefore it is recommended that:

- \* Where a cardiology opinion is requested, for infants and children in whom there is a strong suspicion of congenital or acquired heart disease, this should be provided by a paediatric cardiologist, in order to ensure that appropriate advice is provided to the patient's family and management is optimised.
- \* In regions where no Paediatric Cardiologist is available for consultation, or in emergency situations, an Adult Cardiologist or Paediatrician may review the patient. He/she should make a preliminary assessment and, if heart disease is not ruled out, the patient should be referred to a Paediatric Cardiologist in an appropriate time frame.
- \* Specialist investigations in paediatric cardiology including cardiac catheterisation and echocardiography require specialised training and ongoing experience. An appropriately trained Paediatric Cardiologist should ideally carry out these specialist investigations. In the case of paediatric and fetal echocardiography, practitioners who have not had such training and / or do not have regular contact with a Paediatric Cardiology referral centre should exercise caution in performing or reporting such studies. Where heart disease is suspected clinically or in situations where the echocardiogram may be abnormal a Paediatric Cardiology consultation must be organised. See published recommendations (Standards of Practice in Paediatric Echocardiography).

Reviewed: 2015

By: Paediatric and Congenital Council

Endorsed by the Quality Steering Committee and ratified at the CSANZ Board meeting held on Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016.