



Communiqué

Eighth meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia 26 May 2010

The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*. At its eighth meeting, held in Melbourne, the Board made decisions about a range of matters that will support the smooth transition to the national registration and accreditation scheme. This Communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the decisions of the Board.

Local Board member participation

The Board had previously reported its decision not to have State and Territory Boards under the national scheme. To retain the skills and experience of State and Territory Board members in the national scheme, the Board has invited the Chairs and members of existing Boards to express interest in participating on panels and working groups that the National Board may establish under the National Law. While the Board has received several expressions of interest, it hopes that more existing members will continue their valuable contribution to the profession in this way.

Mailout to registered podiatrists

The Podiatry Board of Australia has written to every registered podiatrist since late April, to support the transition of all registrants into the national scheme. The letter explains each practitioner's registration type from 1 July 2010 and explains what podiatrists have to do to ensure a safe transition to the national scheme. The letter details the information that will appear on the online national Register of Podiatrists. Some registrants who may be registered in more than one jurisdiction may only be receiving their letters now. If a registered podiatrist has not yet received a letter, they should contact AHPRA on 1300 088 590 as soon as possible.

National Call Centre

Since the mailout to registrants a call centre has been answering questions about the national scheme. The call centre will continue after 1 July to ensure that registrants have access to information about the scheme and can ask questions about any changes that will affect them under the National Law. The call centre number is 1300 088 590.

There is a range of detailed information on the Board's website published at www.podiatryboard.gov.au. Registrants are encouraged to become familiar with the registration standards set by the Board and the expectations the Board has of registrants.

Operational readiness

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is working hard to ensure on the systems and processes necessary to support national registration are in place on 1 July 2010. New offices have now been established in each State and Territory and staff training is now underway.

Codes and Guidelines

The Board has finalised its Codes and Guidelines, which will be published on the website by 1 July 2010. The Board thanks all the individuals and organisations who provided comment for their carefully considered submissions, which have shaped the final documents.

The national scheme will enable podiatrists to register once and be able to practise across Australia. However, nationally registered podiatrists must be aware of local legal requirements. For instance, in Victoria, podiatrists can apply to have their registration endorsed for scheduled medicines [currently, this endorsement only applies in Victoria]. This enables those podiatrists with an endorsement for scheduled medicines in Victoria to supply or prescribe a list of medicines. However, in other States and Territories, Drugs and Poisons legislation provides this authority and details the list of scheduled medicines a podiatrist or podiatric surgeon may supply, administer or use.

The Board reminds all practising podiatrists that the endorsement for scheduled medicines is not required for the podiatrist to use local anaesthetics for general podiatric procedures. For the podiatrist who currently uses local anaesthetics in their practice they must still ensure they use restricted medicines as determined by the State or Territory Drugs and Poisons legislation.

It is important for podiatrists to make sure they are familiar with the Codes and Guidelines issued by the Board, which detail the Board's expectations of podiatrists' professional standards.

Codes and Guidelines soon to be available on the website are:

- A code of conduct for the podiatry profession
- Guidelines on mandatory reporting
- Guidelines on advertising
- Guidelines on continuing professional development
- Guidelines for podiatrists working with podiatric assistants in podiatry practice
- Guidelines for podiatrists with blood-borne viruses
- Guidelines for infection control
- Guidelines for endorsement for scheduled medicines

The Guidelines for Professional Indemnity Insurance are supported by FAQs, also published on the website.

Registration Fees

The Board will advise registrants of the national registration fees set by the Board for 2010- 2011 later in June.

Regular updates and FAQs will be published on the National Board website (www.podiatryboard.gov.au).