



## **FIRST MEETING OF THE PODIATRY BOARD OF AUSTRALIA, 20 SEPTEMBER 2009**

The first meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia was held on 20 September 2009 at the Aitken Hill conference and events venue near Melbourne. The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*. Appointments under this Act were announced by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 31 August 2009.

The nine members of the Board are Mr Jason Warnock (Chair), Ms Catherine Loughry (Deputy Chair), Mr Ebenezer Banful, Associate Professor Laurie Foley, Mr Mark Gilheany, Mrs Anne-Marie Hunter, Ms Helen Matthews, Ms Joan Russell and Dr Paul Tinley.

Ahead of their Sunday meeting, members of the Podiatry Board of Australia met with members of the other nine boards for a full-day induction program on Saturday, 19 September. The Honourable Daniel Andrews MP, Minister for Health, Victoria, spoke to board members at the induction program on behalf of all Ministers on the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council.

The members of the Podiatry Board of Australia acknowledged the responsibility that has been given to them by the Ministerial Council. They committed themselves to building a world-class system of health practitioner regulation which protects the community and the profession and guarantees the maintenance of a high quality national health workforce.

The Board agrees that a key part of its work program will be consultation with the community, the profession and the existing State and Territory boards on matters on which they or the Ministerial Council must make decisions. The Board agrees that it needs the wisdom and experience of many people outside the Board to do this job effectively.

The Board also notes the importance of communication with the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council and government authorities, the Board's accrediting authority (the Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council), the other nine national boards, health complaints entities in the States and Territories and tribunals in each State and Territory.

The Board notes that the Chairs of all the national boards have issued a statement on 17 September providing early advice of a consultation process in late October and November around registration and related matters. Consultation papers will be posted on the Board's website.

The main focus of the Board's first meeting was discussion of the proposals that would be the subject of this consultation. The Board agreed to have a further three meetings before Christmas 2009. Following the consultation period, the Board will finalise its position on registration proposals. At its December meeting the Board will complete this work in order to provide the proposals to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council for decision.

The Board acknowledges the tight timetable for completion of the initial part of its work. The timetable is necessary so that all registrants can have advice ahead of the commencement day on 1 July 2010 of the new registration standards and requirements.

At its first meeting, the Board agreed to prepare for consultation in late October proposals on the following matters:

- the five mandatory registration standards, namely standards on requirements for professional indemnity insurance, matters about the criminal history of applicants for registration, requirements for continuing professional development, requirements for English language skills and requirements in relation to previous practice, and
- one optional registration standard, namely: CPR

Specialist registration and endorsements were also discussed. Further work will progress these issues and they will be considered at the Board's October meeting.

The Board considered detailed proposals for how individual registrants will transition from their current registration to the new registration categories set out in the proposed National Law. The Board commissioned further work on this with a view to being able to settle those matters which did not require Ministerial Council consideration at its next meeting in October 2009.

The Board considered a number of administrative and financial matters. The Board was mindful of the need to ensure the scheme ran efficiently for registrants. In light of this, the Board agreed to commence work on a target budget for 2010-11 which was based on the existing fee revenue available to current boards increased by a factor to reflect increases in the cost of living. Further work is required on how this would translate into fees for registrants.

The Board agreed to work through a number of matters over the next two meetings in order to try to reach agreement on the services it requires, the total budget and the fees to be charged to registrants for inclusion in its Health Profession Agreement with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

At this meeting, the Board considered options for structuring State and Territory boards. The Board agreed that at this stage, the Podiatry Board of Australia will not establish State and Territory boards. However, the Board noted that there will be State and Territory offices of AHPRA where podiatrists will be able to renew registration and seek information.

The Board adopted the logo as shown at the head of this statement, and noted that a website to be set up in the near future will have the domain name [www.podiatryboard.gov.au](http://www.podiatryboard.gov.au).

The Board acknowledged the very considerable amount of support which had been given for its first meeting. It acknowledged the work done by the existing State and Territory boards, its accrediting authority, AHPRA and the National Registration and Accreditation Implementation Project team and looked forward to working with these groups in the next stages of its work.

Jason Warnock  
Chair, Podiatry Board of Australia

22 September 2009