

## Communique

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### **Fifth meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia 24 February 2010**

The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*. At its fifth meeting, held in Melbourne, the Board focused on its priorities in preparing for the introduction of the national registration and accreditation scheme and on preparatory work to enable it to fulfil its statutory functions from 1 July 2010.

#### **Proposed registration standards**

The registration standards proposed by the Board will soon be considered for approval by Health Ministers at Ministerial Council. The standards specify the Board's requirements for:

- English language skills, specifying the English language skills that are required for initial registration (these are common across most of the 10 registered health professions)
- Criminal history, explaining the factors that the Board will take into account when it considers an applicant's criminal history (common across all the 10 registered health professions)
- Professional indemnity insurance, setting the requirements for the insurance that a registered podiatrist must have in place before he or she practices podiatry
- Continuing professional development (CPD), with general requirements and additional requirements for podiatrists with endorsements and podiatric surgeons.
- Recency of practice, specifying requirements registered podiatrists must satisfy for recency of practice.

The final standards and information about specialist registration will be published on the Board's website at [www.podiatryboard.gov.au](http://www.podiatryboard.gov.au) soon after Ministers' consideration. .

#### **Codes and guidelines**

In March 2010, the Board will consult on a range of codes and guidelines that will provide additional advice for podiatrists about professional conduct and requirements under the national law. The Board will release a consultation paper that sets out all its proposed codes and guidelines early in March and welcomes feedback.

Issues for consultation:

- A code of conduct for the podiatry profession, addressing issues like providing good care, working with patients, effective communication, confidentiality and privacy, informed consent, patients with additional needs, adverse events and open disclosure, delegation referral and handover, teamwork, minimising risk, maintaining professional boundaries, health records, conflicts of interest, financial and commercial dealings
- Guidelines on mandatory reporting, explaining the situations when a health practitioner or their employer must notify the Board through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency about a registered health

practitioner's misconduct. There are four types of misconduct: intoxication, sexual misconduct, impairment and significantly departing from accepted professional standards. These guidelines are expected to be common across all National Boards

- Guidelines on Advertising, including what is acceptable advertising, such as factual statements about the services a podiatrist provides. The Guidelines also define what is unacceptable, such as not disclosing risks associated with a treatment. The Guidelines clarify the acceptable use in advertising of titles, warning statements, advertising of price and how to complain about a breach of the Guidelines. These guidelines are likely to be common across all National Boards
- Guidelines on CPD, which explain what activities count as CPD and how to keep records of your CPD. The Guidelines contain a template for a CPD portfolio which podiatrists may wish to use
- Guidelines for podiatry assistants, providing direction for podiatrists delegating treatment of low risk patients/clients to a podiatric assistant
- Guidelines for podiatrists with blood-borne viruses providing direction for podiatrists with blood-borne infections, including periods for regular testing and circumstances when podiatrists should not perform exposure prone procedures
- Guidelines for infection control, proposing that the Board adopts the National Health and Medical Research Council. *Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare* [draft currently out for consultation, but final version will be adopted by the Board]
- Guidelines for scheduled medicines endorsements, which provide more detail about the requirements relating to scheduled medicines endorsements and information about courses and the scheduled medicines to be covered by the proposed endorsement.

The Board's registration standards, codes and guidelines are intended to set clear requirements for the profession. They can also be admissible as evidence of appropriate professional conduct or practice for the podiatry profession. The Board encourages all interested podiatrists to provide feedback on the proposed codes and guidelines which will be published on the Board's website in March 2010.

### **Communication**

The Board considered its communication needs in the lead up to the introduction of the national scheme and will be working very closely with State and Territory Boards during this period.

### **Registration Fees**

The Board will be setting the 2010-2011 registration fees at its meeting in March and this will be communicated to the profession in April.

### **Registration Transition Arrangements**

The Board considered its communication needs in the lead up to commencement of the national scheme. It will be working very closely with State and Territory Boards during this period. Every registrant will receive a letter from AHPRA (the Agency supporting the Board) towards the end of April, detailing the transition process, advising them of their personal registration status and outlining what is required of them to ensure a safe transition to the National Scheme. Individual registrants are also encouraged to make sure that their contact details are up to date with their existing registration board, as this information will be transferred to the national scheme.

Regular updates and FAQs will be published on the National Board website ([www.podiatryboard.gov.au](http://www.podiatryboard.gov.au)).