

Communique

Twelfth meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia 22 September 2010

Registered Podiatrists

AHPRA has commenced its reporting to the National Boards. At the September meeting, the Board was advised that there are 2,899 generally registered podiatrists in Australia, excluding those in Western Australia who cannot be reported until that jurisdiction joins the National Scheme, expected on October 18. The Board is pleased to announce that there are nine podiatrists with a principle place of practice in the Northern Territory.

Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines

Review of Guideline for Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines - Update

In its previous communiqué, the Board reported that stakeholder consultation would be sought by the Board for a series of suggested amendments to the Guideline for Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines. The review of the Guideline has occurred and stakeholders will be contacted in October. The consultation process and the reviewed document will be available on the website. All interested parties are invited to provide submissions. The current Guideline remains in force until the consultation process has been completed.

A suite of informative documents to assist the application process will also be published on the website.

List of Scheduled Medicines Approved by the Podiatry Board of Australia (The National Drugs List) - Update

Similarly with the review of the Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines Guidelines, the National Drugs List has also been amended and consultation will be conducted in the coming weeks. The amended list incorporates all contemporary and relevant drugs and poisons previously approved under various Drugs and Poisons legislations in Australia. Not all of these drugs and poisons are currently available to podiatrists in all Australian jurisdictions. The Board seeks to facilitate the standardisation of the scheduled medicines for podiatrists with an Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines which would also include podiatric surgeons. The desired result would be that the public would have a consistent expectation of the range of scheduled medicines that could be administered or prescribed by an endorsed podiatrist irrespective of the State or Territory that the person sought such a service.

Governments and the public can be assured that a podiatrist, having met the Board's Standards for General Registration, Endorsement for Scheduled medicines and Specialist Registration for podiatric surgery, have the appropriate knowledge, skills and attributes to safely prescribe and use the drugs and poisons listed on the National Drugs List, as limited by his/her registration category. Lifelong learning via mandatory Continuing Professional Development in the area of scheduled medicines will ensure that contemporary practise is maintained and improved.

Please note that all podiatrists must ensure they are familiar with their jurisdiction's Drugs and Poisons legislation to ensure that they are practising within the law.

Foot Health Week

The new requirements of the National Law need to be considered at all times and particularly when podiatrists are undertaking or promoting Foot Health Week/Month activities.

The Podiatry Board of Australia, in conjunction with some other regulated health professions, has developed Guidelines for Advertising Regulated Health Services.

It is not possible to précis the document here but it covers issues such as unacceptable advertising, use of graphic or visual representations, substantiation of claims, use of comparative advertising, advertising of price information, use of warning statements for invasive procedures amongst many others.

The document's contents are enforceable and in many cases the rules are different from what they were prior to the National Law coming into being in July this year.

It is vital that all registered podiatrists review and understand the content of these Guidelines. They are available on this website at <http://www.podiatryboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx>

Section 133 of the National Law states that:

'a person must not advertise a regulated health service, or a business that provides a regulated health service, in a way that —

- (a) is false, misleading or deceptive or is likely to be misleading or deceptive; or
- (b) offers a gift, discount, or other inducement to attract a person to use the service or the business, unless the advertisement also sets out the terms and conditions of the offer; or
- (c) uses testimonials or purported testimonials about the service or business; or
- (d) creates an unreasonable expectation of beneficial treatment; or
- (e) directly or indirectly encourages the indiscriminate or unnecessary use of regulated health services.'

Assessment of Overseas Trained Podiatrists

All overseas trained podiatrists wishing to practise podiatry in Australia must first apply to the Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council (www.anzpac.org.au) prior to applying for registration.

Registration Certificates

All podiatrists who transitioned into the national scheme on 1st July 2010 were posted a certificate of registration in September. Other important information regarding renewal of registration was included in a letter in the mailout. It is essential that registrants maintain a current postal address with the Board for correspondence. Any registrant who has not received his/her certificate should contact AHPRA immediately, phone 1 300 088 590.

Podiatry Board Website

All podiatrists are encouraged to check the Board's website regularly for updates and more useful information and links.

As always, the Board is keen to receive feedback from interested stakeholders - for instance, information you may wish to see included on the website. Feedback may be emailed to natboards@ahpra.gov.au.

Still have questions?

If you are unable to find answer in the frequently asked questions section at the website (www.podiatryboard.gov.au) the AHPRA call centre number is: **1300 088 590**.

The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*. This Communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the decisions of the Board.