

Communiqué

16th meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia - 23 February 2011

This Communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the decisions of the Board.

Guidelines for endorsement for Scheduled Medicines

The Board approved the new *Guidelines for Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines* (the Guidelines). The Guidelines, which will take effect on 15 March 2011, will be disseminated to key stakeholders and published on the Board's website.

The Guidelines will assist podiatrists applying for or renewing an endorsement for scheduled medicines. They provide information about the requirements of the Board's Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines Registration Standard and set out the pathways to applying for an endorsement. Included in the Appendix to the Guidelines are *Clinical Practice Guidelines* and the *National Podiatry Scheduled Medicines List*.

The Board has also reviewed the Information Package to assist podiatrists to apply for the Endorsement for Scheduled Medicines. As well as providing information for the applicant, including instructions on completing log sheets, together with templates for log sheets and prescription pads, there is also information for clinicians who are providing references and information for practitioners who will be supervising applicants. A proforma supervisory agreement is included in the Information Package.

The Board will continue to work towards a nationally consistent approach to ESM. The Board, whilst acknowledging that jurisdictions have their own Drugs and Poisons legislation, seeks to provide greater safety to the public and clarity of the functions of podiatrists through a nationally consistent approach to drugs and poisons via the robust assessment and ongoing requirements of podiatrists endorsed for scheduled medicines by the Podiatry Board of Australia. To achieve this goal, the Board will work with the appropriate State and Territory Health Departments to encourage appropriate amendments to the relevant Drugs and Poisons legislation so that all podiatrists with an endorsement for scheduled medicines may have access to the *National Podiatry Scheduled Medicines List*. Currently, endorsed podiatrists **must** adhere to the local Drugs and Poisons legislation in the jurisdiction in which they are practising, despite the national registration and accreditation scheme.

Draft guidelines for Clinical Records

The Board has developed draft *Guidelines for Clinical Records* to provide guidance to podiatrists on recording and maintaining clinical records related to their practise of the profession. The draft Guidelines will be released for consultation on 15 March 2011 and will be open for consultation for a period of eight weeks, with the consultation closing on 10 May 2011.

Renewals

There are currently 3421 podiatrists with general registration on the public register.

The Board reminds registered podiatrists that it is their responsibility to ensure that their registration is current and to apply to renew their registration before it expires. A report to this meeting demonstrated that of the podiatrists required to renew registrations after 1 July 2010, only 63.0% have renewed online. This is the lowest ranking of all the ten Boards. The Board encourages podiatrists to renew online, as has been done by the vast majority of health practitioners under the new scheme. There is a new facility for renewing health practitioners to check online whether their application has been accepted by AHPRA. Such acceptance means that you can continue to practise even though your application may not have been finalised. This is an important improvement to AHPRA services, particularly since the National Law requires that practitioners who do not renew within the one month grace period be removed from the National Register.

AHPRA manages the renewal process on behalf of the Board and sends renewal notices to registrants. A reminder will be sent when renewals are due. Those practitioners who have provided AHPRA with an email address will also receive reminders by email. If an email address is provided and the renewal has not been received by the due date, the podiatrist will be advised promptly by email as well as by mail. Email provides a quick and efficient way for AHPRA and the Board to communicate with registrants.

Email address

The Board urges all registered podiatrists to provide their email address to AHPRA. If you haven't already done so, you can use your user ID and password to log in to the AHPRA website and add your email address to your contact details.

Advertising Guidelines

Under section 133 of the National Law, it is an offence for a person to 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.

On 1 July 2010, the Board issued *Guidelines for Advertising Regulated Health Services* (advertising guidelines) to provide guidance about the interpretation of the provisions of the National Law that apply to advertising of regulated health services.

The Board encourages practitioners to familiarise themselves with the provisions of the advertising guidelines and ensure that their advertising complies with the National Law and the advertising guidelines. Failure to adhere to the advertising guidelines may constitute unprofessional conduct and/or professional misconduct and may be investigated by the Board.

Australasian Podiatry Council Conference

Members of the Board will be attending the Australasian Podiatry Conference 2011 to be held at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre from 26-29 April 2011. The Board will have a stand in the Exhibition Hall and looks forward to the opportunity to engage with podiatrists from around Australia.

The Podiatry Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (the National Law) as in force in each state and territory.

Meetings with Key Stakeholders

Since the commencement of the national registration and accreditation scheme on 1 July 2010, members of the Board have met with a number of key stakeholders to discuss current issues and made more than 20 presentations to a variety of audiences.

The Board currently meets in Melbourne every month and has decided to hold two board meetings per year in other states and territories. The Board will hold a stakeholder forum to coincide with these meetings to enable registrants and other stakeholders to meet board members.

The Board plans to hold the first of these interstate meetings in the second half of 2011 in either Western Australia or Tasmania. The second interstate meeting is likely to be held in NSW to coincide with the Australian Podiatry Association (NSW) conference in early 2012. Further information will be provided about the meetings closer to the time.

Website

Further information about the Board can be found on the Board's website at: www.podiatryboard.gov.au.

Jason Warnock
Chair
Podiatry Board of Australia
February 2011.