



## Policy on Exemption from CPD requirements

### Background

The Podiatry Board of Australia (the Board) has a continuing professional development (CPD) registration standard approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council pursuant to the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act* as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

The registration standard states that the Board may grant an exemption or variation to the CPD requirements in exceptional circumstances and that criteria for exemption are set out in a policy published on the Board's website from time to time.

### Scope

This policy applies to registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons.

### General principles

- The types of exceptional circumstances that may justify the granting of an exemption or variation to the CPD requirements will be limited and would only be considered where there is compelling evidence that the circumstances have created a significant obstacle to the practitioner's ability to complete the Board's CPD requirements. Each case would be considered on its merits and depending on the particular circumstances, the Board may allow a full or partial exemption.
- A written request for exemption due to exceptional circumstances must explain the nature of those circumstances and the applicant would need to provide evidence that their personal circumstances prevented them from undertaking the required CPD. Depending on the particular circumstances, the type of supporting evidence that would be required would include: certified copies of medical reports; a letter from employer regarding the absence from practice.
- An application would need to be made as soon as possible and would not be considered during an audit process, for example, where it was revealed that the practitioner had not met the CPD requirements.
- An exemption or reduction in the CPD requirements would only be granted where the practitioner's practice has been significantly disrupted due to exceptional circumstances.
- As a general principle, financial hardship or remote location are not adequate grounds for a partial exemption as there are sufficient CPD opportunities available that are free of charge or low cost and/or available online or by correspondence.

## Examples of 'exceptional circumstances'

Consideration of partial or full exemptions from the Board's CPD requirements may include, but are not limited to, the following circumstances.

### Significant ill health of the practitioner

It is likely that most applications for an exemption due to significant ill health would occur in the context of a practitioner returning to practice after an absence.

An example of this particular exceptional circumstance might be when a practitioner stopped practice due to a serious illness and was unable to undertake any professional development during the period of absence due to their illness.

In this circumstance, when the practitioner returned to practice, the Board may grant an extension of time for the practitioner to complete the CPD requirements. The practitioner would be required to provide evidence of their serious illness, such as a report from their medical practitioner.

### Absence from practice due to parental (maternity/paternity/adoption) leave

An exemption or partial exemption may be granted for a practitioner who takes parental leave.

For example a practitioner who works (full time or part time) for six months of the year and takes maternity leave for six months of the year may apply for a CPD exemption for the part of the year she was not working. If the exemption was granted in this case, the practitioner would only have to complete six months worth of CPD. The same principle would apply for a practitioner applying for paternity or partner leave or adoption leave.

### Providing care or support to a member of their immediate family or household, because of a significant personal illness or injury affecting the member of their immediate family or household

An exemption or partial exemption may be granted in circumstances where a practitioner's practice has been significantly disrupted due to having to provide care or support to a member of their immediate family or household, because of a significant personal illness or injury to that person.

### Bereavement

An exemption or partial exemption may be granted in circumstances where a practitioner's practice has been significantly disrupted due to the death of a member of their immediate family or household.

### Exceptional circumstances relating to requirement to complete CPR training

An exemption from the requirement to successfully complete CPR training may be granted in circumstances where a practitioner is physically unable to perform CPR in accordance with the requirements of the approved training organisation. For example, the assessment requirements may be that the CPR must be performed on a manikin on the floor.

The Board expects that the practitioner would attend CPR training provided through an approved training organisation, but acknowledges that an approved training organisation may not issue a certificate of attainment if the practitioner is physically unable to perform CPR in accordance with the requirements of the approved training organisation. The approved training organisation may instead issue a certificate of attendance as evidence of participation in the training. It is the responsibility of the practitioner to check before attending the training that the approved training organisation will issue a certificate of attendance at the training course.

To apply for such an exemption the practitioner would be required to provide to the Board:

- evidence of the physical impairment which prevents them from performing CPR in accordance with the requirements of the approved training organisation , such as a report from their medical practitioner
- a certificate of attendance at the recommended CPR training course delivered by an approved training organisation

## Definitions

*Immediate family or household means:*

(a) a spouse (including former spouse), de facto partner (including former de facto partner), child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of the practitioner; or

(b) a child, parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling of a spouse or de facto partner of the practitioner.

*De facto partner means*

A person who, although not legally married to the practitioner, lives with the practitioner in a relationship as a couple on a genuine domestic basis (whether the practitioner and the person are of the same sex or different sexes).

**Adopted: 24 August 2011**

**Updated: 1 December 2015**