



Communiqué

Meeting of the Podiatry Board of Australia held on 27 June 2012

This communiqué highlights key issues from the Board's last meeting. At each meeting, the Board considers a wide range of issues, many of which are routine and are not included in this communiqué.

Registration fees for 2012/13

The Board's registration fee for 2012-13 has been set at \$368 (with a rebate for practitioners whose principal place of practice is NSW). The new fee represents an increase of less than the current CPI of 1.6%. The annual renewal fee will apply from 1 July 2012 and cover the 1 December 2012 to 30 November 2013 registration period for most practitioners.

NSW is a co-regulatory jurisdiction. The Podiatry Council of New South Wales and the Health Care Complaints Commission work in tandem to assess and manage concerns about practitioners' conduct, health and performance. In other states and territories, this is done by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the Board.

The 2012-13 fee schedule will be published soon on the Board's website at:
www.podiatryboard.gov.au/Registration-Endorsement/Fees.aspx

Management of practitioners with blood-borne viruses

The Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) has developed the Australian *National Guidelines for the Management of Health Care Workers known to be infected with blood-borne viruses* (guidelines) which were endorsed by the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council (AHMAC) on 28 February 2012.

The guidelines are published at:

[www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/E28B5CC8872BE9C5CA2572EC000829EE/\\$File/Guidelines-BBV-feb12.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/E28B5CC8872BE9C5CA2572EC000829EE/$File/Guidelines-BBV-feb12.pdf)

The guidelines contain useful guidance regarding safe scope of practice for health care workers (HCW) who are infected with a blood-borne virus (BBV) and for their treating clinicians; define the circumstances when HCWs should not be performing exposure prone procedures; and are explicit that HCWs infected with BBVs can continue to practise their profession if they do not perform exposure prone procedures and if they have no other co-morbidities that may affect safe practice.

The Board has decided to develop guidelines on the management of podiatrists and podiatric surgeons with BBVs, based on the CDNA guidelines but tailored to meet the Board's requirements as a regulator. The Board will consult on these guidelines when they are developed.

Newsletter

The Board recently emailed a newsletter to all podiatrists who have provided their email address to AHPRA. A hardcopy of the newsletter will be posted to the remainder. The newsletter is available on the Board's website at www.podiatryboard.gov.au/News/Newsletters.aspx. The Board encourages all podiatrists to read this newsletter, to keep themselves updated on the work of the Board.

Four new health professions join the national scheme

On 1 July 2012, practitioners in the following health professions joined Australia's National Registration and Accreditation Scheme:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practice
- Chinese medicine
- Medical radiation practice, and
- Occupational therapy.

Over 16,000 practitioners transitioned into the National Scheme from local state or territory boards, while nearly 14,000 additional practitioners have applied to be registered for the first time.

Under the National Scheme, established by the Council of Australian Governments in 2010, there is a National Board for each profession, which is supported by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). These boards set the professional standards that each practitioner must meet to be registered.

The four professions join those of: chiropractic, dental, medical, nursing and midwifery, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry and psychology in the national scheme.

The purpose of health practitioner regulation is to protect the public by ensuring that only health practitioners who have the skills, qualifications and knowledge to provide safe care are registered.

National Boards consult on international criminal history checks

The National Boards have released consultation paper seeking feedback on options for refining international criminal history checks used by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in assessing applications for registration for the 14 health professions regulated under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (National Law) as in force in each state and territory.

The consultation paper is published on the Board's website at www.podiatryboard.gov.au/News/Current-Consultations.aspx and feedback can be provided by email to criminalhistoryconsult@ahpra.gov.au by close of business on 17 August 2012.

Further information

Further information about the Board can be found on the Board's website at www.podiatryboard.gov.au and practitioners are encouraged to refer to the site for news and updates on Policy and Guidelines affecting their profession.

Jason Warnock
Chair
Podiatry Board of Australia

9 July 2012