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Chair's message

Welcome to the June edition of our newsletter. Much of this year has been spent on reviewing and consulting on revised standards, codes and guidelines that have been in force since July 2010. The consultation phase enables the broader profession and interested stakeholders to provide input into the standards that underpin the regulation of podiatry in Australia. I encourage all registrants to take an active interest in this process as your participation is greatly valued.

In May, the Podiatry Board of Australia (the Board) held its board meeting in Hobart as part of our strategy to meet with key stakeholders in different jurisdictions and, where possible, present to podiatrists at local professional events.

In March this year the Board hosted a well-attended breakfast forum in Melbourne which coincided with the

local association conference. These meetings enable an information exchange on the Board's expectations with respect to professional conduct and practice, and alert practitioners to upcoming consultations and the release of new standards, codes and guidelines for the profession. The Board thanks the state associations for the opportunity to participate in these worthwhile events

Cathy Loughry

Chair, Podiatry Board of Australia

Give us your feedback on core registration standards and related guidelines

The Podiatry Board is consulting on the following revised draft registration standards and related guidelines that set requirements for:

- **professional indemnity insurance** arrangements for registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons
- **continuing professional development** for registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons, and
- **recency of practice** – the nature, extent, period and recency of any previous practice of the profession by applicants for registration or renewal of registration.

The Board has not proposed major changes and the draft standards are broadly similar to the current registration standards. The proposed changes reflect feedback from registrants and other stakeholders and the Board has also considered its experience with the standards over the past four years of operating in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (National Scheme). The language in the revised registration standards has been simplified and the standards restructured to make them clearer.

The consultation paper can be found on the [Current consultations](#) page on the Board's website.

Written submissions are required by **close of business on Monday, 14 July 2014**. We encourage you to provide feedback on the proposed standards and guidelines.

Give us your feedback on guidelines for infection control

The Podiatry Board is consulting on revised draft guidelines for infection control.

The Board has not proposed major changes and the revised guidelines are broadly similar to the current guidelines. The



review has given the Board the opportunity to improve the guidelines by revising the language and structure to make them clearer and easier to understand.

The consultation paper can be found on the [Current consultations](#) page on the Board's website.

Written submissions are required by **close of business on Monday, 14 July 2014**. We encourage you to provide feedback on the proposed guidelines.

Revised code of conduct, advertising and mandatory notifications guidelines and new social media policy

The Board has published four new documents. These are the:

- revised *Code of conduct for registered health practitioners*
- revised *Guidelines for mandatory notifications*
- revised *Guidelines for advertising regulated health services*, and
- a new *Social media policy*.

View the new documents on the Board's website under [Policies, codes and guidelines](#).

The Board reviewed the code, the advertising guidelines and the mandatory notifications guidelines as part of a scheduled review three years into the National Scheme. The *Social media policy* is new. It does not change the basic obligations that practitioners must meet, but explains how the obligations that already exist in the National Law¹ and the *Code of conduct* apply to social media. The basic principle is that the same expectations apply to your behaviour wherever it occurs – online or in person.

The guidelines and the *Social media policy* are common across all the 14 professions regulated in the National Scheme and apply to all registered health practitioners. The shared *Code of conduct* is common to most National Boards.

The Board encourages you to make sure you are familiar with these documents. They are the standards the Board uses to assess concerns about the professional conduct, performance or health of registered podiatrists. You should also be aware of your legal obligations under the National Law, in relation to mandatory reporting and advertising.

Code of conduct

The *Code of conduct* contains important standards in relation to:

- providing good care, including shared decision-making
- working with patients or clients

- working with other practitioners
- working within the healthcare system
- minimising risk
- maintaining professional performance
- professional behaviour and ethical conduct
- ensuring practitioner health, and
- teaching, supervising and assessing.

Advertising

The requirements about advertising are set out in the National Law. The *Guidelines for advertising regulated health services* explain these legal requirements and do **not** add new obligations. The guidelines have been reorganised to make them clearer and easier to understand. The basic obligations that practitioners must meet have not changed.

Since publishing the revised *advertising guidelines* in March 2014 the Podiatry Board and other National Boards have acted on the feedback they received about the guidelines and an updated version has been published on the Board's website. The guidelines were edited to make them clearer, particularly that:

- under the National Law, testimonials are not allowed when advertising a regulated health service
- the obligations of the National Law about advertising only apply when a regulated health service is being advertised, and
- the National Law is not intended to stop members of the community and patients from discussing their experiences online or in person.

Mandatory notifications

The *Guidelines for mandatory notifications* explain the mandatory notifications requirements of the National Law. Most of the guidelines have not changed. Some words have been refined or added to make the meaning clearer. The content has not changed significantly and there are no new obligations in the guidelines.

More information about the new documents is available on the Board's [website](#).

Review of entry-level accreditation standards and competency standards for the podiatry profession

Have your say on accreditation and competency standards for the podiatry profession.

The Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council (ANZPAC) has begun its scheduled review of the [Accreditation Standards for Podiatry Programs for Australia and New Zealand](#) and the [Podiatry Competency Standards for Australia and New Zealand](#).

1. The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

ANZPAC is the independent accreditation authority for the podiatry profession and undertakes the accreditation functions under the National Law, which includes accrediting education providers and programs of study for the podiatry profession in Australia and New Zealand. Entry-level podiatry programs are accredited using the entry-level program accreditation standards, which specify the criteria against which podiatry programs are evaluated. The ANZPAC podiatry competency standards are used for a range of purposes, including program accreditation, and describe the professional attributes and core competencies of entry-level podiatrists.

This review is being conducted to ensure that both sets of standards continue to represent contemporary best practice, benchmark well against other health profession standards nationally and internationally and remain relevant and effective over time. Throughout the review, ANZPAC is undertaking wide-ranging consultation and invites comment from all interested parties including registered podiatrists.

Details of the review are available from the [ANZPAC standards review webpage](#), along with an initial consultation survey where you can tell ANZPAC your views on a range of important issues relating to these standards.

CPR – changes to training requirements

The Board's *Continuing professional development (CPD) registration standard* requires podiatrists to complete training through a registered training organisation (RTO) that includes cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), management of anaphylaxis and use of an automated external defibrillator. The CPR component must be updated every 12 months. Podiatrists must have a current Certificate of Attainment issued by an RTO as evidence that they have successfully completed the training.

The Board is aware that revised assessment requirements for recognised CPR training packages include the requirement for CPR to be performed on a resuscitation manikin placed on the floor.

The Board has agreed that as a matter of policy, an exemption may be granted from the requirement to successfully complete CPR training for podiatrists who are physically unable to perform CPR on a manikin placed on the floor.

The Board still expects practitioners to undertake the CPR training delivered by an RTO and understands that if a candidate is unable to complete the resuscitation manikin part of the assessment, an RTO may issue a certificate of attendance as an indication of participation in the course. However, the issuing of such a certificate is up to the individual RTO.

An application to the Board for such an exemption would need to be accompanied by:

- a certificate of attendance at the recommended CPR training course delivered by an RTO, and

- evidence of the physical impairment which prevents the practitioner performing CPR on a manikin on the floor, such as a report from their medical practitioner.

It is the responsibility of the practitioner to check with the RTO before attending the training whether the RTO will issue a certificate of attendance if the practitioner cannot perform CPR on a manikin on the floor.

The *Policy on exemption from CPD requirements* is published on the Board's website under [Policies, codes and guidelines](#). The Board is updating this document to reflect this new policy.

Three-year review of the National Scheme

In March 2008, when Commonwealth and state and territory governments all signed the agreement which underpins the National Scheme, they agreed that it should be reviewed after three years of operation.

The review of the National Scheme will examine whether the scheme is meeting the objectives set out in the National Law and will consider benefits and costs. The Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) has now published the [terms of reference](#) for the review.

It will be conducted independently of National Boards and AHPRA and former director of WA Health Kim Snowball has been appointed to independently lead the review. Kim has held a variety of senior leadership roles in both the public and private health sectors, and was previously director general of WA health. Kim has also served as chair of AHMAC.

National Boards and AHPRA will be participating in the review and making submissions in the months ahead.

Amendments to the Queensland Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996

The Board has received correspondence from the Queensland Minister for Health, the Hon. Lawrence Springborg, advising that he has approved amendments to the Queensland Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996 (regulations) to enable suitably qualified podiatrists holding an endorsement for scheduled medicines to prescribe medicines from the National Podiatry Scheduled Medicines List.

The proposed amendments have not been enacted as yet and podiatrists must ensure that they continue to comply with the current regulations until such time as the amended regulations come into force.

Practitioner audit has begun

As mentioned in our recent communiqués and news items, practitioner audit has commenced to assess compliance with the registration standards for the profession. A new [Audit page](#) has been published on the Board’s website: this provides comprehensive information about the audit process including guidance on the audit notice, what is being audited, what it means for you and contact details for the audit team and AHPRA customer service team that can assist you with any queries.

Contacting the Board

- The Podiatry Board of Australia and AHPRA can be contacted by telephone on 1300 419 495.
- More information on the Board is available at www.podiatryboard.gov.au and more information on AHPRA is available at www.ahpra.gov.au. Ensure you keep your email contact details up to date with AHPRA in order to receive Board communiqués, newsletters and registration renewal reminders.
- An online enquiry form is available on both websites under *Contact us*.
- Mail correspondence can be addressed to: Cathy Loughry, Chair, Podiatry Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne VIC 3001.

Practitioner audit – what is the process?

Audits of random samples of practitioners from all professions will occur periodically throughout the year. If you are selected for audit you will be required to provide further information to support your registration declarations.

- You will receive an audit notice in the post, and a checklist that outlines what documentation you need to provide to demonstrate that you meet the standard(s) being audited. The notice will identify which standards are being audited – these may be for recency of practice, CPD, professional indemnity insurance and/or criminal history.
- You will have four weeks to provide the requested documentation to AHPRA.
- AHPRA will review your supporting documentation against the declarations you made in your last renewal application.
- AHPRA may request further information and/or refer cases of non-compliance to the National Board or its delegated committee for decision.
- You will be advised by letter of the outcome of the audit.

Snapshot of the registered podiatry workforce

In early May the Board published its March 2014 data summary profiling Australia’s podiatry workforce, including a number of statistical breakdowns about registrants. These include state/territory, age and gender by registration type, principal place of practice (PPP), specialties and endorsements.

The new data show there are 4,108 podiatrists registered in Australia, an increase of 111 practitioners since the previous quarterly update [December 2013]. Of this total, 4,003 hold general registration as a podiatrist, 78 hold non-practising registration and 27 hold both general and specialist registration as a podiatric surgeon. There are 60 practitioners endorsed for scheduled medicines. See the tables below for further details.

Table 1 – Podiatrists: state and territory by registration type (March 2014)

Podiatry Practitioner	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	No PPP	Total
General	53	1,053	16	673	381	98	1,285	408	36	4,003
General & Specialist	–	5	–	1	4	–	3	13	1	27
Non-Practising	–	12	–	14	8	2	32	4	6	78
Total Practitioners	53	1,070	16	688	393	100	1,320	425	43	4,108

Table 2 – Podiatrists: endorsements by state and territory (March 2014)

Podiatry Practitioner	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	No PPP	Total
Scheduled Medicines	1	3	–	1	7	–	20	27	–	60

Table 3 – Podiatrists: specialty by state and territory (March 2014)

Podiatry Practitioner	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	No PPP	Total
Podiatric Surgeon	–	5	–	1	4	–	3	13	1	27

Find the Podiatry Board of Australia’s registration statistics in the [About](#) section of our website.