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## Chair's message

Welcome to the November 2016 newsletter of the Podiatry Board of Australia (the Board). As November is the month that your registration renewal is due, it is a great time to reflect on the last 12 months and consider areas where you might need to carry out continuing professional development (CPD) in 2017 and to start planning for it.

The [Australasian Podiatry Conference 2017](#) is being held in Melbourne from 24 to 26 May 2017. This conference provides an opportunity for you to connect with your profession and learn about the latest evidence and research for podiatry.

The Board is currently consulting on a revised *Endorsement for scheduled medicine registration standard* and associated guidelines. More information about the consultation can be found later in this newsletter. If there's one key thing that I would like you to do from this newsletter

is to review the consultation paper and provide us with your feedback. This is your opportunity to contribute to the development of regulatory policy for the podiatry profession.

Last month the Board held its meeting in Adelaide to coincide with a stakeholder forum hosted by the Board. Representatives from the national and state podiatry associations, heads of podiatry schools, podiatric surgery programs of study, the Australian and New Zealand Podiatry Accreditation Council (ANZPAC), Chief Allied Health Officers, and the Podiatrists Board of New Zealand attended.

The forum provided an opportunity to discuss and explore ways that education providers can progress towards changing the podiatry curriculum so that students will acquire the necessary competencies to safely prescribe scheduled medicines and be qualified for endorsement for scheduled medicines on graduation. The forum was very successful thanks to the enthusiasm and participation of the attendees.

### Cathy Loughry

Chair, Podiatry Board of Australia

## Registration renewal for 2016/17 – apply online now

### Registration renewal is due soon – renew online, on time

Registration renewal for podiatrists and podiatric surgeons is due on 30 November 2016.

Under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law), registered health practitioners are responsible for renewing their registration on time each year.

Podiatrists and podiatric surgeons who are due to renew their general, specialist or non-practising registration by 30 November 2016 can apply online now. [Online renewal](#) is quick and easy.

A series of new-look reminders to [renew online](#) are being sent to practitioners by AHPRA on behalf of the Board. The email reminders include a helpful information box with links to the [password reset function](#) and to a [video](#) explaining how to renew online. More information is also available on the Board's [website](#).

If you have not already received an email reminder notice from AHPRA, please check that your contact details are up to date (see below [Are your contact details up to date?](#)). Remember to renew before 30 November. There is a late fee for renewal applications received in December, which reflects the cost of managing late renewals.

Under the National Law if you do not renew your registration within one month of your registration expiry date you must be removed from the [Register of Practitioners](#). Your registration will lapse and you will not be able to practise in Australia until a new application for registration is approved.



If you have provided an email address to the Board or AHPRA you will have been sent email reminders. Paper reminders have also been sent to practitioners who have not yet renewed.

For more information:

- visit [Registration renewal](#)
- lodge an online enquiry form, or
- for registration enquiries call 1300 419 495 (within Australia) or +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers).

### Are your contact details up to date?

It is important your contact details are up to date to receive renewal reminders from AHPRA and information from the Board. You can check your details via the [Login icon](#) at the top right of the AHPRA website. Email accounts need to be set to receive communications from AHPRA and the Board to avoid misdirection to an account junk box.

### Registration fees for 2016/17

The national registration fee for podiatrists and podiatric surgeons for 2016/17 will remain the same as in the previous year.

The Board has frozen the registration fee at \$378. It will cover the registration period for most practitioners of 1 December 2016 to 30 November 2017.

The fee for practitioners whose principal place of practice is New South Wales is \$430.<sup>1</sup>

A full fee schedule, including the fee arrangements for practitioners whose principal place of practice is NSW, is on the [Board's website](#).

### Reminder: revised registration standards for CPD and PII are now in effect

A revised registration standard for continuing professional development (CPD) took effect on 1 December 2015 and a revised registration standard for professional indemnity insurance (PII) arrangements took effect on 1 July 2016. They are published on the [Board's website](#).

Practitioners will need to meet the obligations of the new registration standards by the time they renew their registration this year, which is due by 30 November 2016.

More information about the new CPD registration standard is on the [Board's website](#). The Board has also published revised guidelines for CPD, a FAQ and templates to help practitioners plan and record their CPD activities. These can be found on the *Policies, Codes and Guidelines* section of the [Board's website](#).

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

## Graduate applications are now open online

Final-year students who will soon complete a Board-approved program of study can go online now to apply for registration before they graduate.

Graduates need to be registered as a podiatrist with the Board before they start practising and using the protected title 'podiatrist'. The use of this title means a practitioner is meeting the Board's registration requirements.

The [online graduate application service](#) on the AHPRA website helps to smooth the path from study to work by enabling students to apply for registration four to six weeks before completing their course. All applicants must send a number of [supporting documents](#) to AHPRA by mail to complete their application.

A short, animated [video for graduates](#) is published on the Board's website. It outlines the standards that must be met to become registered and also the professional standards expected of the profession in order to stay registered.

For more information, see the [news item](#) on the Board's website.

## Public consultation paper on endorsement for scheduled medicines – give us your feedback

The Board is currently consulting on a proposed revised *Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard* and related guidelines.

The Board wishes to hear what you think about the proposed revised standard and guidelines and encourages feedback.

The consultation paper is published under [Current consultations](#) on the Board's website. The consultation is open until **Friday 9 December 2016**.

## Registration and Notifications Committee - upcoming recruitment

The Board's Registration and Notifications Committee (RNC) makes decisions in relation to applications for registration and notifications about registered podiatrists, podiatric surgeons and students. The RNC has practitioner and community members and the Board has decided to appoint an additional practitioner member to the committee. Next year the Board will be calling for applications from experienced practitioners for appointment to the Board's RNC.

To register your interest in being informed when the application process opens, please contact Statutory Appointments by emailing [statutoryappointments@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:statutoryappointments@ahpra.gov.au) from your preferred email address.

## Revised registration standard for recency of practice comes into effect from 1 December

A revised registration standard for [recency of practice](#) will come in to effect on 1 December 2016.

This standard will apply to all registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons except those with non-practising registration. Practitioners will need to meet the obligations of the revised standard by the time they renew their registration in 2017.

<sup>1</sup> NSW is a [co-regulatory jurisdiction](#).

The Board published the revised standard in February 2016 to provide practitioners adequate time to prepare for the changes to the recency requirements.

The key change is that a requirement for minimum hours of practice has been introduced by the Board.

To meet the standard, practitioners must practise within their scope of practice for a minimum of:

- 450 hours in the previous three years (equivalent to about three months full-time), or
- 150 hours in the previous 12 months (equivalent to about 1 month full-time).

The Board expects that most practitioners who are currently practising will meet the revised standard.

However, the change may affect those podiatrists and podiatric surgeons who are currently practising infrequently, or who have had a recent absence from practice or who are currently taking a break from practice and wish to return to practice.

The Board encourages all practitioners to review the new registration standard to check whether they will be affected by the changes.

If a practitioner cannot meet the minimum hours of practice in the revised standard, this will not necessarily prevent them from returning to practice as a podiatrist or podiatric surgeon. The standard sets out the options for practitioners who don't meet the standard, including those who have non-practising registration or who are not registered and wish to return to practice after 1 December 2016.

The Board has also published [guidelines and FAQ](#) to help practitioners understand the requirements of the revised standard.

## Further guidance on your advertising obligations

National Boards across the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) continue to discuss issues about claims in advertising, in particular claims about benefits of treatments.

The Board would like to remind all podiatrists and podiatric surgeons that they must comply with the provisions of the National Law on the advertising of regulated health services, relevant national, state and territory consumer protection legislation and, if applicable, legislation regulating the advertising of therapeutic goods.

The Board has published further information on its [website](#) to help podiatrists and podiatric surgeons better understand their advertising obligations, including further information on advertising therapeutic claims.

This information does not replace the Board's [Guidelines for advertising regulated health services](#), which should be your first point of reference to understanding your obligations.

The burden is on you to substantiate any claim you make that your treatments benefit patients. If you do not understand whether the claims you have made can be substantiated based on acceptable evidence, then remove them from your advertising.

AHPRA is responsible for prosecuting breaches of the advertising requirements in the National Law. This means that AHPRA, with the Board, needs to decide whether there has been a breach of your advertising obligations.

These are serious matters that can have serious consequences for your professional standing and your criminal record: **if in doubt about a claim, leave it out of your advertising.**

## Board and AHPRA publish health profession agreement

The Board and AHPRA have published the health profession agreement (HPA) for 2016-20.

The HPA sets out the partnership between the Board and AHPRA, and the services AHPRA will provide in supporting the Board to carry out its functions.

The Board and AHPRA work together to implement the National Scheme, which regulates registered health practitioners in Australia, in the public interest.

The National Boards and AHPRA are committed to working together to ensure not only transparency and accountability in financial reporting, but also in the role both play in protecting the public through the regulation of the professions under the National Law.

The 2016-20 Podiatry Board of Australia and AHPRA Health Profession Agreement is available on the [Health Profession Agreements](#) page on the Board's website.

## National Scheme news

### Our recommendations to improve the health complaints management system in Queensland

AHPRA and the National Boards' joint submission to the Queensland Parliamentary Committee's inquiry into the performance of the Queensland Health Ombudsman's (OHO) functions has been [published](#).

The current health service complaints management system has now been in operation in Queensland for just over two years. It was intended to introduce a better system for health complaints management with greater transparency and accountability and improved timeliness in achieving an outcome.

While there are strengths to be found in the current model, there are significant areas that need urgent attention and improvements that cannot be achieved without change.

The Boards and AHPRA have identified key concerns supported by data and case studies:

- serious matters that pose a risk to the public are not being dealt with in a timely or appropriate way by the OHO

- matters that are considered minor by the OHO are closed or not accepted without any consideration by or referral to the Boards and AHPRA
- the current model and its implementation is costing more, using more resources, and is likely to result in increased registration fees for Queensland-based registered health practitioners, and
- the current model presents a conflict of interest for the OHO being both a partner in regulation and having oversight of AHPRA and Boards' performance.

Therefore, in our joint submission, AHPRA and the National Boards recommend that specific changes be made to the model in Queensland.

If our recommendations are acted on, Queenslanders, through the health minister and Queensland Parliament, would be assured that our regulatory expertise and that of the OHO as an ombudsman and health complaints authority, is applied in the best possible way to protect the Queensland public. Our respective resources would be used more effectively as the unnecessary delays and duplication in our roles would be addressed.

To read the full statement including the recommendations, visit AHPRA's [website](#), where you can also download it in PDF.

### AHPRA and National Boards host research summit

The 2016 Research Summit hosted by the 14 National Boards and AHPRA was attended by more than 220 delegates who gathered together to talk about the next frontier for developing our partnership's evidence base, in order to improve the way we regulate.

The theme of the summit was *patient safety through risk-based regulation*, and presenters discussed a range of topics. At the heart of the discussion was how to contribute to safer care for patients and health consumers. Also discussed, was how data collection and evaluation can help find new and innovative ways to improve regulatory processes for health practitioners and the public.

The inaugural summit provided an opportunity for the exchange of expertise and ideas between regulatory staff, experts in safety and quality in healthcare, health practitioners and leading health and medical researchers.

Read more in the [media release](#) about the summit, which was held in late August 2016.

### New Service charter published

An updated *Service charter* has been published by AHPRA on its website. The [charter](#) sets out the standard of service health practitioners, employers and the public can expect from the work of AHPRA in delivering the National Scheme.

Now a concise one-page document, the updated charter lists the 10 key objectives of AHPRA in providing a professional service while helping to regulate the health professions in the public interest.

## 2015/16 Annual Report now published

The AHPRA and National Boards' Annual Report covering the financial year to 30 June 2016 was tabled in Parliament on Friday 11 November.

The report provides a nationwide snapshot of the work of AHPRA and the National Boards, including the Podiatry Board of Australia, in implementing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme). It also includes Board-specific data and highlights a multi-profession approach to risk-based regulation with a clear focus on ensuring that Australians have a safe and competent health workforce.

Insights from the year include:

- **More practitioners:** There were almost 20,000 more registrants in 2015/16 than there were last year, totalling 657,621 health practitioners across the 14 regulated health professions. Student registrations increased by more than 11,000 registrants year-on-year, to 153,710.
- **Growth in notifications:** There were 10,082 notifications received during the year, an increase of 19.7% nationally (representing 1.5% of the registration base). The top three notifier complaints related to clinical care (41.8%), medication issues (11.5%) and health impairment (10.7%). This may be attributed to greater awareness of the National Scheme, due to a nationwide campaign aimed at employers, practitioners and the general public.
- **Improved monitoring and compliance to ensure public safety:** 2,532 practitioners were being monitored for health, performance and/or conduct in 2015/16. A National Restrictions Library was launched, which currently contains 73 restrictions (conditions and undertakings) to improve national consistency.

View the 2015/16 annual report in full [here](#), along with supplementary tables that break down data across categories such as registrations, notifications, statutory offences, tribunals and appeals, and monitoring and compliance.

## Keep in touch with the Board

- Visit [www.podiatryboard.gov.au](http://www.podiatryboard.gov.au) for the mandatory registration standards, codes, guidelines and FAQ. Visiting the website regularly is the best way to stay in touch with news and updates from the Board.
- Lodge an enquiry form via the website by following the [Enquiries](#) link on every web page under *Contact us*.
- For registration enquiries, call 1300 419 495 (from within Australia) or +61 3 9275 9009 (for overseas callers).
- To update your contact details for important registration renewal emails and other Board updates, go to the AHPRA website: [Update contact details](#).
- Address mail correspondence to: Cathy Loughry, Chair, Podiatry Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne VIC 3001.