

Communiqué

Fifth meeting of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia 15 November 2011

At its fifth meeting, held in Melbourne, the Board focused on its priorities in preparing for the profession to join the national registration and accreditation scheme and on preparatory work to enable it to fulfil its statutory functions from 1 July 2012.

Proposed registration standards

It is anticipated that the Board's proposed registration standards will soon be considered for approval by Health Ministers at the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council. The standards specify the Board's requirements for:

- Continuing professional development (CPD)
- Criminal history
- English language skills
- Professional indemnity insurance
- Recency of practice
- Grandparenting Registration Standard: Transitional Arrangements for Qualifications.

Once they have been approved by Ministers, the final standards will be published on the Board's website at <http://www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au/>.

Update on codes and guidelines

The Board has now released a draft consultation paper on three codes and guidelines that are common to other national boards. The consultation paper seeks feedback on:

- *A code of conduct for the profession*—addressing issues like providing good care, effective communication, confidentiality and privacy, informed consent, adverse events and open disclosure, maintaining professional boundaries, health records, conflicts of interest, and financial and commercial dealings.
- *Guidelines on mandatory reporting*—explaining the situations when a health practitioner or their employer must notify the Board through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) about a registered health practitioner's misconduct. There are four types of misconduct: intoxication, sexual misconduct, impairment, and significantly departing from accepted professional standards. These guidelines are common across all National Boards.
- *Guidelines on Advertising*—including what is acceptable advertising, such as factual statements about the services a profession provides. The Guidelines also define what is unacceptable, such as not disclosing risks associated with a treatment. The

Guidelines clarify the acceptable use in advertising of titles, warning statements, advertising of price and how to complain about a breach of the Guidelines. These guidelines are common across all National Boards.

The Board encourages all interested stakeholders to provide feedback on the proposed codes and guidelines. Comments are due by 9 January 2011. The consultation paper is available at: www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au/.

Registration Fees

The Board is in the process of setting registration fees. It is anticipated that the profession will be notified of fee levels in early 2012.

Accreditation

The Board gave further consideration to its accreditation arrangements and is working towards finalising details.

Registration Transition Arrangements

The Board considered what its communication requirements would be in the lead up to commencement of national registration for the profession. It will be working closely with State and Territory Boards during this period.

Those occupational therapists that are not currently required to be registered are being encouraged to apply for National Registration by **31 March 2012** to allow enough time for the large volume of applications to be processed. Application forms will be available from the Board's website in early 2012 via www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au.

All currently registered occupational therapists will receive a letter from AHPRA (the Agency supporting the Board) towards the end of April 2012, detailing the transition process, advising them of their personal registration status, and outlining what is required of them to ensure transition to the National Scheme. Individual registrants are encouraged to make sure that their contact details are correct and up to date with their existing registration board, to ensure correct information is transferred to the national scheme.

General matters

The Board considered a number of other administrative and financial matters, including proposed budgets and delegation of functions to working groups of the Board and AHPRA staff.

Dr Mary Russell

Chair

15 November 2011