

Communiqué

First Meeting of the Occupational Therapy Board

26 July 2011

The first meeting of the Occupational Therapy Board

The Occupational Therapy Board of Australia met for the first time on Tuesday 26 July 2011 in Melbourne. The nine members of the Occupational Therapy Board (the Board) are Mary Russell (Chair) Julie Brayshaw, Amanda Bladen, Katherine Moore, James Carmichael, Terina Saunders, Catherine Gauthier, Andrew Taylor and Louisa O'Grady.

The chair and members thanked the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council for welcoming them to their new roles and for their ongoing support of national registration and accreditation of the occupational therapy profession.

The Board acknowledged the challenges and opportunities it will face over the next 11 months as important work is undertaken to prepare the profession for national registration. Members are confident in the capacity of the Board to see the vision through to 1 July 2012 when occupational therapy practitioners will be registered under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

The Board looks forward to engaging occupational therapy stakeholders across all states and territories over the coming months. In particular, the Board welcomes the opportunity to work with the existing state and territory registration boards during the transition to national registration of the profession.

The Board encourages all interested parties to have their say on proposals relating to registration, during the public consultation that will occur over the coming months. More information about how to access and comment on proposals and draft standards will be provided in the coming months.

Communication

The Board recognised the importance of communicating with the profession as it prepares for national registration. In the next couple of months, the Board will establish its own website to provide information to the profession about its activities and important updates about national registration. In the meantime, information will be available on the NRAS2012 Project website (www.nras2012.ahpra.gov.au) (also accessible through a link on the National Boards page on the AHPRA website www.ahpra.gov.au).

Registration Standards

At its first meeting, the Board agreed to prepare for consultation in August 2011, proposals on five mandatory registration standards related to:

- professional indemnity insurance
- criminal history
- continuing professional development
- English language skills
- recency of practice.

The Board will provide more information as it is available.

Transition and grand-parenting of occupational therapists

The Board considered strategies to support the automatic transition of current registrants as well as the entry of new practitioners to the national in July 2012. Further work will be progressed on the assessment and processing of registration applications from practitioners who have not previously been registered over the coming months. The Board looks forward to working with all stakeholders as this work progresses.

Registration Period

The Board agreed that the registration period for occupational therapists will be from 1 December to 30 November each year.

Accreditation

The Board noted that the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (AHWMC) decided to leave the decision on accreditation arrangements to the Board and agreed to enter into discussions with the Occupational Therapy Council (Australia and New Zealand) about the exercise of accreditation functions for the occupational therapy profession.

Mary Russell

Chair

4 August 2011