

## Communiqué

### Meeting of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia

**26 February 2013**

The Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

#### Panel list appointments

Under the National Law, health panels and performance and professional standards panels are convened by a National Board when required to hold hearings into specific health, performance or conduct matters for individual registered occupational therapists. Such panels consist of members chosen from a list of persons approved by National Boards.

Recruitment in accordance with s. 183(2) of the National Law, to the extent practicable, will exclude individuals whose residence or principle place of practice is in a co-regulatory jurisdiction (i.e. NSW).

The timeline for submitting expressions of interest for panel list appointments was extended to 31 January 2013. A shortlist is now being developed from the large range of applicants received and further work is being undertaken to finalise matters.

Appointments to the approved persons list are for up to three years, with eligibility for reappointment. The final panel list will provide the pool from which members are selected should a panel need to be convened. Panels, over time, will not always be required to be convened.

#### Review of registration standards, codes and guidelines

The first 10 National Boards to enter the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) developed standards, guidelines and codes for its commencement on 1 July 2010. These standards, guidelines and codes were scheduled for review at least every three years.

The National Boards will shortly be publicly consulting on these reviews. This will provide an opportunity for practitioners, the public and other stakeholders to provide feedback. When registration standards, guidelines and codes are common to all or most of the National Boards, the consultation will be coordinated across National Boards to make providing feedback easier.

Whilst the timeframe for the 2012 Boards differs (this includes Occupational Therapy) members consider that there are benefits in participating in the current reviews to identify further opportunities to improve the registration standards; to maintain consistency of common documents and to give stakeholders a further opportunity to input.

Information about the consultations will be published at the Board's website. The Board encourages practitioners and the community to have their say.

## Accreditation decisions

The Board decided to approve accreditation standards (Nov 2012) as an interim strategy until the Board's accreditation authority (the Occupational Therapy Council) as required under s. 46 of the National Law, completes wide-ranging consultation on accreditation standards.

With interim accreditation standards in place the Board under s. 49 of the National Law has been able to consider accreditation reports of programs of study to decide to approve, refuse or approve with conditions. Accordingly, the Board has since been able to consider accreditation reports from the OTC and has decided to approve full accreditation for the following programs:

- Southern Cross University – Bachelor of Occupational Therapy (Gold Coast/Tweed Heads campus)
- University of Sydney (NSW)
  - Bachelor of Applied Science (Occupational Therapy)
  - Bachelor of Applied Science (Occupational Therapy) (Honours)
  - Master of Occupational Therapy.
- Curtin University (WA)
  - Bachelor of Science (Occupational Therapy)
  - Bachelor of Science (Occupational Therapy) (Honours)
  - Master of Occupational Therapy

No conditions have been imposed on the above programs.

The Board has given written notice in accordance with s. 49(3) of the National Law to its accreditation authority. Approved programs of study as providing qualifications for registration are included in the approved courses list as published at the Board's website:

[www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au/Accreditation.aspx](http://www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au/Accreditation.aspx)

## Budget and workplan 2013-14

The Board's finance and governance committee met in early February to develop a draft budget 2013-14 in the context of operational requirements and the Board's workplan. This approach follows on from the Board's strategic planning day held mid December.

Indicative workplan strategies for budget consideration are being considered to include:

- stakeholder engagement
- accreditation functions
- international regulatory engagement
- education on OT and professional standards / guidelines
- research
- financial reserves
- Board efficiency and effectiveness

## First Newsletter

The Board has agreed to publish a newsletter approximately 6-monthly (eg March and September). All registered practitioners will receive the newsletter via email. HTML and PDF versions will also be available for download from the Board's website. The newsletter is a valuable opportunity for the Board to address key regulatory matters and to encourage practitioners to engage with the National Scheme.

### **Breakfast forums for registered occupational therapists**

Practitioners will have an opportunity to meet the National Board at a number of scheduled breakfast forums to discuss regulation and to hear how the integration of registration standards, codes and guidelines can be incorporated into daily practice.

Breakfast forums for 2013 are currently scheduled for:

- 26 March – Brisbane, Hillstone St Lucia, St Lucia 7.30am – 9.00am (please see the Board's website for full details. For catering purposes please RSVP via [www.research.net/s/RSVP\\_Brisbane\\_Breakfast\\_Forum\\_Mar\\_2013](http://www.research.net/s/RSVP_Brisbane_Breakfast_Forum_Mar_2013))

Save the date for:

- 27 May – Perth
- 23 July – Adelaide
- 22 October – Sydney

### **Chairperson**

Dr Mary Russell  
26 February 2013