



Communiqué

Meeting of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia December 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).

The Board meets face to face each month to consider and decide on any matters related to its regulatory function within the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

This communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the work of the Board.

Board Committees

In addition to regular Board meetings the work of the Board continues across a number of its committees, which have delegated functions under the National Law to progress matters around specific issues.

Usually at the end of each year the Terms of Reference for the Board's committees have been reviewed to refresh membership and address any new areas of focus.

The Board's Registration and Notifications Committee (RNC) for example, handles most of the decision-making in relation to registration, notification and compliance matters pertaining to registered practitioners. This national committee reviews matters from all state and territories in Australia¹ and meets regularly to make decisions in a timely and efficient manner. The opportunity to review membership of the Board's RNC with a formal appointment of non-Board members will be investigated in 2014. This will enable new practitioner members to gain valuable insight around registration and notification matters affecting the profession, and build experience in regulatory matters.

Call for applications for appointment to National Boards

National Board appointments are made by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (Ministerial Council), under the National Law. Terms are expected to commence on 1 July 2014. Appointments and reappointments are for up to three years as decided by the Ministerial Council.

For practitioners who are interested in seeking appointment to the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia it is not too late to reply. The call for applications has been extended to allow more time in this busy lead-up to the holiday period.

For more information on the role and the application process, please download the application guide and application forms from the [Board member recruitment](#) page on the AHPRA website, or for general enquiries please contact boardappoint@ahpra.gov.au.

¹ NSW notification matters are handled by the NSW Occupational Therapy Council

Common guidelines and Code of conduct

The Board has concluded its public consultation and review of common codes and guidelines. New documents will be published online in February and will include:

- revised *Advertising guidelines*
- *Social media policy*
- revised *Mandatory reporting guidelines*, and a
- revised *Code of conduct*

These guidelines, policy and code will come into effect in March 2014, and all registered health practitioners will need to meet these new standards.

The Board consulted widely this year on the draft versions of these documents (and continues to consult on other important documents - see the *Consultations* page on the Board website).

Much work has also gone into making sure that the format and language used in the documents meet plain language requirements, to make it easier to access and understand the important information in them. To inform practitioners of the new requirements detailed information will be published at the Board's website, including a series of forums where possible to inform and assist.

Occupational Therapy registration renewal - now in late period

Occupational therapists across Australia were reminded by AHPRA and the Board that their registration was due for renewal by **30 November**. By Monday 16 December 94% of occupational therapists had renewed with applications not yet received from 3% of registered OTs. Of those renewing 96% have done so online.

AHPRA and the Board want to make sure that occupational therapists who wish to renew their registration do so before they risk it lapsing. Renewal reminders will continue to be sent throughout the late period. Using the 'opt out' service and registering your decision to not renew registration puts a stop to renewal reminders.

Under the National Law, if you did not renew by 31 December 2013 your registration will have lapsed. Your name will be removed from the online public register and you must cease to practise immediately. To resume practising, you must make a new application for registration.

Fast track application forms will be available on the Board website under Forms or by phoning the AHPRA Customer Service Team on 1300 419 495 during January. If submitting a fast track application, you cannot practise until your application is processed and your registration details are updated on the national register.

An FAQ about renewal is available on the Occupational Therapy Board website:

www.occupationaltherapyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines/FAQ.aspx

Chair



Dr Mary Russell
Occupational Therapy Board of Australia