



Communiqué

Seventh meeting of the Dental Board of Australia 30 April 2010

The Dental Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*. At the seventh meeting, on 30 April 2010, the Board made decisions about a range of matters that will impact on the transition to the national registration and accreditation scheme.

April Mail-Out

The Board has sent a letter and a two-part form to all registrants which should be received in the next week. The Board urges all dental practitioners to read this carefully. It will explain each practitioner's registration from 1 July 2010 and will detail the information that will appear on the online national Register of Dental Practitioners. The letter will ask practitioners to do three things:

- Read Part 1 of the form to make sure their contact details with their current Board are up to date. Update these as necessary with existing State and Territory Boards
- Read Part 2 of the form to make sure there are no errors in the registration information proposed for each practitioner from 1 July and provide feedback as detailed on the form
- Go to www.dentalboard.gov.au to become familiar with the new obligations for all practitioners from 1 July 2010.

Registration transition

The Board noted that dental practitioners with registration ending on 30 June 2010 will have to re-register under the national scheme, meeting the requirements of the Board's Registration Standards, if they have not renewed their registration before 30 June 2010 with their State and Territory Board.

The Board encourages all registrants, with a **registration period end date of 30 June 2010, to renew their registration (when possible) before 30 June 2010** with their State or Territory Board. This will allow a smooth transition to the national scheme.

The Board will initiate a fast track re-registration process from 1 July 2010 for those registrants due to, but unable to complete re-registration before 30 June 2010 and whose State or Territory legislation allows a grace period for renewal of registration. This will ensure these registrants are not disadvantaged. The fast track re-registration process will only be in place for a limited time.

Registration Standards

The Board noted that the Ministerial Council has approved the Registration Standards submitted by the Board, including the Scope of Practice Registration Standard. These Registration Standards are now published on the Board's website at www.dentalboard.gov.au

The Ministerial Council decision in relation to the Scope of Practice Registration Standard can be found at: http://www.ahpra.gov.au/ahpra_page.php?page=statements. Key points from the Ministerial Council decision are that:

- Ministers noted the publication of the Dental Board's 26 March 2010 Communiqué which clarified that the Standard is drafted to reflect the current scope of practice which exists in Australia
- Oral health therapists, dental therapists, and dental hygienists will be able to meet the supervision requirements of the standard through ensuring that a structured professional relationship exists with a dentist who can be consulted as necessary and via any means
- Ministers have asked the Board to review the approved standard 12 to 18 months after it commences on 1 July 2010, to formally assess whether the approved standard has had any unintended or negative impacts on the scope of practice of oral health therapists, dental therapists, and dental hygienists and
- Ministers have also agreed that an AHMAC working party will be established to review the roles and scope of practice of therapists and hygienists before the Board's review of the scope of practice standard.

The Board is committed to working with governments and other stakeholders in this review process.

Conditions, undertakings and reprimands on the Register

The National Law requires the Board to publish conditions imposed and undertakings accepted from practitioners on the Register of Dental Practitioners. It also allows the Board to decide to not record a condition imposed or an undertaking accepted when the practitioner has an impairment, if it is necessary to protect the practitioner's privacy and there is not an overriding public interest for the condition or the details of the undertaking to be recorded. The Board has adopted a policy approach to this issue, consistent with the National Law. If a dental therapist has health conditions recorded on their registration, the following wording will appear: "This practitioner's registration is subject to conditions that relate to his/her personal health. These conditions are not publicly available due to privacy considerations."

Codes and guidelines

The Board received a number of submissions about the draft Codes and Guidelines circulated for consultation in March 2010. The Board thanks everyone who provided comment for participating in this important process.

The Board has now considered the feedback and the draft Codes and Guidelines will be revised as necessary, approved and published on the Board's website by early June.

State and Territory Board structures and delegations

The Board continues to be grateful to existing State and Territory Board members for their hard work and support in preparing for the transition to national registration. The Board hopes that existing State and Territory Board members will express their interest in an ongoing role on the State and Regional boards or in participating on panels which the National Board may establish under the National Law. Interested current Board members are encouraged to forward an expression of interest to the Dental Board of Australia's Executive Officer, Tanya Vogt, at tanya.vogt@ahpra.gov.au

John Lockwood
Chair, Dental Board of Australia
12 May 2010