



Communiqué

Sixteenth meeting of the Dental Board of Australia – 25 February 2011

The Dental Board of Australia (the Board) is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act* (National Law) as in force in each state and territory.

The Board would like to take this opportunity to remind key stakeholders and dental practitioners that the best method of contacting the Board in relation to policy or regulatory matters is via the Chair, Dr John Lockwood, at the following email address chair@dentalboard.gov.au. Other general registration or notification matters should be directed through the AHPRA enquiry processes.

Processing of renewals of registration and update on AHPRA processes

There is a **fast track** re-registration process in place for any practitioner who does not apply to renew their general or specialist registration by the end of the 'late period' (one month after the expiry of their previous registration) which can be found on the AHPRA website.

The Fast Track process is only available for one month after your registration has lapsed. Once the completed application has been received AHPRA processes most applications within 48 hours.

There have also been recent improvements to the AHPRA call centre process, which should assist dental practitioners attempting to contact AHPRA for assistance or advice.

Consultation on Limited Registration categories and Supervision Guidelines

The Board would like to remind all key stakeholders and dental practitioners that its consultation on draft Supervision and Limited Registration categories will close on **18 March 2011**. All groups and dental practitioners are welcome to respond to the consultation process.

Approval of programs accredited by the Australian Dental Council (ADC)

The Board considered and approved a number of ADC accredited programs over December 2010 and January 2011. The Board looks forward to further strengthening its relationship with the ADC.

State and Regional boards

The Board agreed to advise Ministerial Council it will not have State and Regional Boards from 1 July 2011. The Board made this decision based on the reduced workload, since transition, of the State and Regional Boards. The Board's national Registration and Notification Committee and the Registration and Notification Committees in each state and territory are currently managing the large majority of registration and notification matters. The Board intends that these bodies continue to do this in the future. The Board agreed to this approach as it believes it will maintain a local state and territory focus and experience, decrease duplication and complexity and increase efficiency, timeliness and national consistency. The Ministerial Council will be advised of the decision made by the Board. The current members of the State and Regional Boards will be advised and thanked for their commitment and contribution to regulation.

Health Workforce Australia (HWA)

Representatives of the Board met with members of HWA to discuss the upcoming Scope of Practice Registration Standard reviews.

Working Group meetings

The following Working Groups of the Board met in February 2011:

- Conscious Sedation;
- Oral Medicine and Oral Pathology; and
- Oral Health Therapists, Dental Hygienists, Dental Therapists.

These Working Groups are established by the Board under Schedule 4 clause 11 of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (the National Law). The purpose and function of the Working Groups is to advise and make recommendations to the National Board on matters relating to the education, qualifications, assessment, pathways to registration and ongoing requirements in the relevant division, registration category or area of practise. The Working Groups do not have any delegations under the National Law and all decisions remain with the Board.

Conscious Sedation Area of Practice endorsement

The Board will update its *Registration Guideline for Conscious Sedation Area of Practice Endorsement* (the Guideline), which can be found on the Board's website at www.dentalboard.gov.au, to provide more clarity for dentists in the Category 5 transition group in the Guideline. These dentists are:

- Validly registered as dentist by the Board;
- Transitioned to the national scheme from a jurisdiction where there was no requirement to be recognised or endorsed by the previous state or territory board in order to practise conscious sedation; and
- Do not hold an approved qualification or any qualification for conscious sedation.

Further detail will be provided in the updated Guideline for these dentists.

Cone Beam Tomography (CBCT)

The Board has received correspondence raising possible concern regarding the use of CBCT in dental practices.

The Board will release a policy statement in relation to the use of CBCT in dental practices. Dental practitioners and in particular dentists must ensure ownership, licensing and operation of CBCT equipment complies with the legislation of the relevant state, territory and commonwealth jurisdiction. The Board's expectation is that dentists using CBCT have adequate training in the use and dangers of CBCT. Dental practitioners are expected to be aware of and abide by the Code of Practice and Safety Guide for Radiation Protection in Dentistry (2005) produced and published by the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency.

Continuing Professional Development Guideline (the Guideline)

The Board agreed to amend the wording at section 1.2 of the Guideline to now reflect a clearer intent of the statement which is "*CPD activities alone cannot be used to increase scope of practice*".

Board's next meeting

The Board has agreed to meet in Brisbane for its March 2011 meeting in order to coincide with the Australian Dental Association Congress.

John Lockwood
Chair, Dental Board of Australia
7 March 2011