

## Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to the first Newsletter from the Dental Board of Australia (the Board). The Board has been established under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme). Dentistry and nine other professions became part of the National Scheme on 1 July 2010 with our colleagues in Western Australia joining on 18 October 2010. The objectives of the National Scheme and the Board are to protect the public by ensuring that only dental practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered and also to facilitate the provision of high quality education and training of dental practitioners. The *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (the National Law)* as in force in each state and territory is the legislation underpinning the work of the Board and you find a copy of this on the AHPRA website under the Legislation and Publications tab.

The Board's [website](#) is the main means of communication for the Board and we encourage you to visit the website regularly and become familiar with its contents. After each meeting the Board releases a *Communiqué* which outlines the key issues considered during the meeting. This is an easy way for you to stay up to date. These Communiqués can be found under the News tab on the website.

Dr John Lockwood  
Dentist  
Chair, Dental Board of Australia

## The Dental Board of Australia

Members of the Board were appointed in August 2009 for three years and the first meeting of the Board was held on 20 September 2009. The full Board meets regularly for one day each month (excluding January).

Members of the Board were appointed by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council) after a public call for applications. The 12 members of the Board (eight dental practitioners and four community members) are:

<b>Dr John Lockwood (AM)</b>	Chair Dentist from New South Wales
<b>Ms Susan Aldenhoven (AM)</b>	Dental hygienist from South Australia
<b>Mrs Jennifer Bishop</b>	Oral health therapist from Queensland
<b>Dr Carmelo Bonnano</b>	Dentist from the ACT
<b>Dr Gerard Condon</b>	Dentist from Victoria
<b>Mr Stephen Herrick</b>	Community member
<b>Mr Paul House</b>	Dental prosthetist from Tasmania
<b>Dr Mark Leedham</b>	Dentist from the Northern Territory
<b>Mr Peter Martin</b>	Community member
<b>Mr Michael Miceli</b>	Community member
<b>Dr John Owen (AM)</b>	Dentist from Western Australia
<b>Mrs Myra Pincott (AO)</b>	Community member

The Board is supported by its Executive Officer **Ms Tanya Vogt**.



## Why national registration?

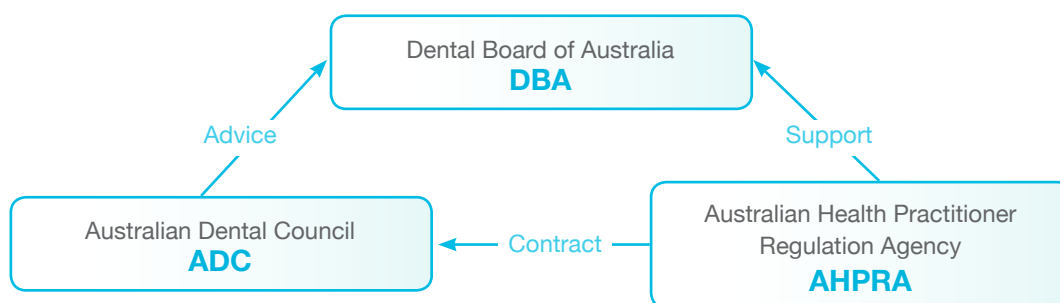
Before the introduction of the National Scheme dental practitioners were regulated in eight states and territories and covered by a range of laws. The National Scheme aims to deliver:

- ✓ *Mobility* – register once, practise across Australia
- ✓ *Uniformity* – consistent national standards for registration and professional conduct
- ✓ *Efficiency* – reduced red tape, streamlined processes
- ✓ *Collaboration* – sharing, learning and good regulatory practice between professions

- ✓ *Transparency* – national online register displaying any conditions on practice

The Board acknowledges there have been many challenges with the transition to the National Scheme, however for the first time dental practitioners are regulated by a consistent set of standards and guidelines and there is one national register of dental practitioners, which is publicly accessible. The National Scheme has also provided for the establishment of a new endorsement (conscious sedation), a new national division of dental practitioner (oral health therapist) and a standard group of specialist categories for dentists. Registration of dental practitioner students has also been implemented with all dental practitioner students being registered from the commencement of their clinical training.

## What's the connection between the Dental Board of Australia, AHPRA and the ADC?



### ADC

- appointed as accreditation authority for dentistry
- assesses programs of study against accreditation standards
- oversees assessment of the knowledge, clinical skills and professional attributes of overseas qualified dental practitioners who are seeking registration in Australia
- recommends accreditation standards to the DBA

Find out more  
[www.adc.org.au](http://www.adc.org.au)

### DBA

- primary role is to protect the public
- determines standards for registration of dental practitioners in Australia
- develops codes, guidelines and policies for the dental profession
- oversees registration of dental practitioners and students
- maintains a dental practitioner register (with AHPRA)
- oversees the management of notifications on health, performance and conduct made in relation to dental practitioners from members of the public and others
- approves accredited programs of study

Find out more  
[www.dentalboard.gov.au](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au)

### AHPRA

- supports the national Boards
- provides infrastructure and staff to manage all registrations, notifications and financial aspects on behalf of the Boards
- offices in every state and territory – these are the point of contact for your registration enquiries
- contact details are on the AHPRA website

Find out more  
[www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au)

The Board has continued to work with the ADC to establish nationally consistent accreditation standards and processes for dentistry and oral health including:

- the accreditation of existing programs of study and a number of new courses for dental practitioners
- the development of a national pathway for the assessment of overseas qualified dental hygienists and dental therapists and
- the development of accreditation standards and pathways for accreditation of programs for dental prosthetists.

## Registration

**Table: Registered dental practitioners by division and state or territory**

Profession	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	No PPP <sup>2</sup>	Grand total
Dental practitioner										
Dental hygienist	36	337	6	118	203	12	161	251	24	1,148
Dental hygienist and dental prosthetist <sup>1</sup>				1						1
Dental hygienist and dental prosthetist and dental therapist <sup>1</sup>		1					1			2
Dental hygienist and dental therapist <sup>1</sup>	7	56	7	273	88		127	49	3	610
Dental prosthetist	18	351	4	212	46	48	323	76	82	1,160
Dental therapist	15	259	18	215	116	56	183	340	4	1,206
Dentist	245	4,507	77	2,580	1,071	198	3,231	1,360	561	13,830
Oral health therapist	5	108	1	143	37	1	66		1	362
Dental practitioner sub total	326	5,619	113	3,542	1,561	315	4,092	2,076	675	18,319

## Notifications or Complaints

**Table: Notifications received in 2010-2011 by state or territory**

Profession	ACT	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA <sup>2</sup>	Sub total	NSW	Grand total
Dental practitioner	12	6	230	69	12	285	39	653	669	1,322

## Committees & Working Groups

### National Committees

- Accreditation Committee
- Administration & Finance Committee
- Registration & Notifications Committees

### State & Territory Committees

- 7 state & territory Registration & Notifications Committees (4 or 6 members)
- New South Wales Registration Committee
- 6 Immediate Action Committees (3 members)  
(combined committee operates for South Australia/Northern Territory)

### Working Groups

- Oral Medicine & Oral Pathology
- Conscious Sedation
- Oral Health Therapists, Dental Therapists & Dental Hygienists
- Recency of practice/return to practice
- Others on an *ad hoc* basis



The Board is helped in its work by its Committees and expert Working Groups. Practitioners and non-practitioners make up the membership of these bodies. The Board has established state and territory committees to enable registrations and notifications matters related to individual registrants to be managed locally and to ensure that processes are timely and responsive. The Board has adopted flexible terms of reference for the Registration and Notification Committees to allow additional members to be included in the committee meetings to address division specific matters on an as-needs basis.

The co-regulatory arrangement in New South Wales (NSW) – which sees the Dental Council of NSW and the Health Care Complaints Commission sharing responsibility for complaints handling for registered practitioners working in NSW – means there is no Immediate Action Committee and the Registrations Committee does not handle notifications in NSW.

The Board sets up Working Groups on an *ad hoc* basis to investigate issues and advise it on a range of matters, as they arise.

## What has the Board been doing since the new scheme commenced?

The Board has been working hard to establish a nationally consistent approach to the regulation of practitioners. The Board has developed a number of **registration standards** which define the requirements that applicants, registrants and students need to meet to be registered. These are published on the Board's [website](#) under the Registration Standards tab, and relate to:

- [Continuing Professional Development](#)
- [Criminal History](#)
- [Endorsement Conscious sedation](#)
- [English Language Skills](#)
- [Professional Indemnity Insurance](#)
- [Recency of Practice](#)
- [Scope of Practice](#)
- [Dental Specialist](#)
- [List of specialties](#)

The Board has also consulted on and approved a number of **codes, guidelines and policies** which provide guidance to the profession and help communicate the Board's views and expectations on a range of issues. These are published on the Board's [website](#) under the Policies, Codes, Guidelines and FAQ tab.

The **codes and guidelines** cover the following:

*Common across all Boards*

- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Guidelines for Mandatory Notifications](#)
- [Guidelines for Advertising of Regulated Health Services](#)

*Specific to the Dental Board*

- [Guidelines on Continuing Professional Development](#)
- [Guidelines on Dental Records](#)
- [Guidelines on Infection Control](#)
- [Guidelines on Supervision](#) (limited registration)

There are **policies** on the following:

- [Interim Policy - Registration of overseas speakers](#)
- [Dental Interim Policy - Botulinum Toxin](#)
- [Interim Policy - Teeth Whitening/Bleaching](#)
- [Policy - Cone Beam Computed Tomography](#)

## Consultations – have your say

In developing its standards, codes, guidelines and policies the Board consults with key stakeholders. The details of the consultations that occurred at the end of 2010 and in 2011 are on the website at [www.dentalboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx). These related to limited registration standards, the associated supervision guidelines for limited registrants as well as qualifications for overseas qualified practitioners and conscious sedation area of practice endorsement.

The Board publishes its consultation papers on the website and encourages anyone who has an interest in the issues being consulted about to provide their feedback. Please monitor the website at [www.dentalboard.gov.au/News/Current-Consultations.aspx](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/News/Current-Consultations.aspx) to read about any current consultations.

## Board's work program in the next few months

In the upcoming months the Board's key areas of focus will be to:

- ✓ finalise the transition process
- ✓ continue the work of achieving national consistency across both registration and notification management of dental practitioners. Specifically, the Board will work on nationally consistent approaches to limited registration, recency of practice/ return to practice

after a period of absence and the recognition and assessment of overseas educated dental practitioners and

- ✓ review of the scope of practice registration standard.

## What's happening with the review of the scope of practice registration standard?

The Board's Scope of Practice Registration Standard was approved by the Ministerial Council in July 2010 subject to it being reviewed within 18 months to assess whether the implementation of the standard has had any **unintended and negative impacts** on the scope of practice of dental hygienists, dental therapists and oral health therapists. The Board will be reviewing the operation of this Registration Standard. This review however cannot take place until the work of Health Workforce Australia (HWA) has been completed. HWA is carrying out a project to review the roles and scope of practice of therapists and hygienists and will report to Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council (AHMAC) so that they can consider the future scope of practice for dental hygienists, dental therapists and oral health therapists. HWA's report is due soon. You can read more about this work on HWA's website at [www.hwa.gov.au/work-programs/workforce-innovation-and-reform/oral-health](http://www.hwa.gov.au/work-programs/workforce-innovation-and-reform/oral-health)

## Transitional arrangements at an end

The Board would also like to remind you that the following transitional arrangements are no longer available:

- **Oral Health Therapist:** the transitional arrangement under which dual registered dental hygienists and dental therapists could apply to register in the division of oral health therapist expired on **31 October 2011**. To be eligible for registration as an oral health therapist, practitioners must have successfully completed a currently accredited three year bachelor level program of study in the dual streams of dental hygiene and dental therapy. The list of approved programs of study for registration in the division of OHT can be found on the Board's website at [www.dentalboard.gov.au/Accreditation.aspx](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/Accreditation.aspx).
- **Specialist Forensic Odontologist:** the 12 month transitional period for dentists to apply for registration as forensic odontology specialists expired on **30 September 2011**. The transitional arrangement applied to dentists who had qualifications in forensic odontology equivalent to those of New South Wales and Tasmanian dentists who were recognised as

forensic odontology specialists under legislation that applied in those jurisdictions. Currently there are no accredited programs for this specialty and the Board will evaluate applications for registration in the specialty on a case by case basis

- **Endorsement for Conscious Sedation:** dentists had **12 months** (after the date that the state or territory became a participating jurisdiction) to comply with all requirements of the Board's *Registration Standard for Endorsement in Relation to Conscious Sedation* which included attending an approved refresher course and being assisted by an appropriately trained practitioner when administering sedation via the intravenous route. Endorsement of registration identifies practitioners with additional qualifications and specific expertise. The Board expects that all endorsed practitioners will now be compliant with the requirements.

## Supervision for limited registrants – new guidelines

The Board recently finalised its *Guidelines on Supervision* that apply to those with Limited registration eg to work in the public sector dental workforce scheme, or fill a teaching or research position etc. Limited registration is available for appropriately qualified overseas trained practitioners who do not qualify for general registration. You can download a copy of these guidelines from [www.dentalboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines/Policies-Codes-Guidelines.aspx](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines/Policies-Codes-Guidelines.aspx). The *Guidelines on Supervision* were developed in consultation with stakeholders and include a template Supervision Plan and Supervision Report. They have been developed to assist Limited registrants understand the requirements of a supervisor and the reporting obligations. They do not apply to those with general registration. Limited registrants will be expected to comply with the *Guidelines on Supervision* (particularly in relation to annual reporting) when they renew in 2012. For the current renewal period it is expected that practitioners are working towards compliance with the *Guidelines on Supervision*.

## Conscious Sedation endorsement – proposed guidelines

The Board has recently consulted about proposed Guidelines on Conscious Sedation Area of Practice Endorsement which were drafted to supplement the requirements set out in the Board's Registration standard for endorsement in relation to conscious sedation (the Standard). The Board was assisted in drafting the

guidelines by its expert Working Group which has been established to advise the Board on a range of matters relating to the education, qualifications, assessment, pathways to registration and ongoing requirements for endorsement for the conscious sedation area of practice. You can find out more about this consultation at [www.dentalboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/News/Past-Consultations.aspx)

## Advertising

The National Law includes new obligations in relation to advertising by registered health practitioners. The Board, along with the other nine National Boards, has developed advertising guidelines that clarify its expectations of practitioners in this area. The guidelines are published on the Board's website at [www.dentalboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines/Policies-Codes-Guidelines.aspx](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines/Policies-Codes-Guidelines.aspx)

The Board expects practitioners to ensure that any advertising they undertake complies with the guidelines.

This being the first year of the National Scheme, the Board has taken a largely educative approach to help practitioners understand the law and the new requirements set down in its advertising guidelines.

The coming year will see a more structured approach to addressing concerns about advertising. This will include an escalating series of warnings to practitioners, initially reminding them of their obligations about advertising and ultimately, possible prosecution for non-compliance with the board's standards. If a National Board deems that a practitioner's failure to comply with a board's request warrants it, matters related to advertising can also be progressed through the conduct, health and performance pathways.

AHPRA will also be working with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to ensure the most appropriate investigation and prosecution of false and misleading advertising.

The role of the National Board is to protect the public. Anyone with concerns about their health practitioner, or advertising by health practitioners that does not appear to be in the public interest, should contact AHPRA. The Board relies on the public and members of the profession to bring their concerns to its attention, as advertising, particularly through web-based media, is growing and can be difficult to monitor.

It is important to note that neither boards nor AHPRA review or vet specific advertising proposed by practitioners for compliance with advertising guidelines.

## New graduates

AHPRA is geared up to register new graduates who will be completing their courses at the end of the year, ready to join Australia's health workforce. To smooth the path from study to work, AHPRA is encouraging graduating students to apply for registration early. Students enrolled in board-approved programs of study are encouraged to apply for registration four to six weeks before completing their course. Details about graduate registration can be found on the website at [www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Graduate-Applications.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Graduate-Applications.aspx).

There is a wealth of useful information for new graduates on the Board's website (see [Registration Standards, Policies, Code, Guidelines and FAQ](#)) as well as information about registered practitioners which may be of assistance when making decisions about prospective employment.

- ✓ Register of practitioners: [www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registers-of-Practitioners.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registers-of-Practitioners.aspx)
- ✓ Hearing decisions: [www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications-and-Outcomes/Hearing-Decisions.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications-and-Outcomes/Hearing-Decisions.aspx)
- ✓ Notification outcomes: [www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications-and-Outcomes/Notification-Outcomes.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications-and-Outcomes/Notification-Outcomes.aspx)

## Renew on time, online!

**Due by:** 30 November 2011

**Online at:** [www.dentalboard.gov.au](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au) (Renew your registration online)

Approximately 18,000 dental practitioners are due to renew their registration by 30 November 2011. If you haven't done so already you should renew your registration now for the year ending 30 November 2012. To renew online go to the Board's home page and select **Renew your registration online**.

At the completion of this registration renewal cycle all dental practitioners in Australia will be aligned and annual registration renewal will be due by 30 November each year.

To date, AHPRA has email addresses for more than 91% of registered practitioners, which enables direct and effective communication about important issues. When you renew your registration, please make sure to update your contact details, including your current email address.

## Registration renewal: what happens if you miss the date?

<p><b>At or before 30 November</b> <i>Renewing on time:</i></p> <p>You can keep practising as long as AHPRA has received your application by 30 Nov. You can check your application has been received at <a href="http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Renewal-Received-Confirmation.aspx">www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Renewal-Received-Confirmation.aspx</a></p>	<p>You pay the renewal fee only</p>
<p><b>1 to 31 December</b> <i>Renewing during the late period:</i></p> <p>You can renew your registration during the late period but a late fee applies. You can keep practising as long as AHPRA has received your application by 31 December 2011. Please note that all State and Territory offices will be closed on Monday 26 December, Tuesday 27 December 2011 and Monday 2 January 2012 for public holidays.</p>	<p>You pay the renewal fee + the late fee</p>
<p><b>1 to 31 January</b> <i>Lapsed registration, Fast Track application:</i></p> <p>Once the late period has expired (that is, one month from the registration expiry date), your name will be removed from the register and you will no longer be able to practise. To keep practising, you must lodge a new application for registration. A Fast Track application process is available for four weeks after expiry of the late period, but additional fees apply. The fast-track process is a streamlined process of re-registration, which takes approximately two weeks. You will not be able to practise until your registration has been successfully processed</p>	<p>You pay the registration fee + the Fast Track fee</p>
<p><b>1 February onwards</b> <i>Registering from scratch:</i></p> <p>From 1 February onwards you will need to lodge a new application for registration. <u>Processing</u> time for new applications depends on many factors, including whether the documentation submitted by the applicant is complete and whether the applicant makes disclosures relating to health or criminal history. You may not practise in Australia until your registration has been successfully processed, and your name has been published on the National Register of Practitioners at <a href="http://www.ahpra.gov.au/">www.ahpra.gov.au/</a></p>	<p>You pay the application fee + registration fee</p>

For more information, please refer to the [Registration Renewal FAQ](#), which is published on the website under the Registration Standards tab.

### Keep informed – how to find out more

For more information about anything in this Newsletter visit the Board's website at [www.dentalboard.gov.au](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au)

Read the Board's Communiqués [www.dentalboard.gov.au/News.aspx](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au/News.aspx)

Let AHPRA know your current email address so we can communicate with you via email – you can do this by filling in this form [www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Process/Common-Application-Forms.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Process/Common-Application-Forms.aspx)

### Contacting the Board

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**Email** online enquiry form is available on the website  
under *Contact us*

Locations of AHPRA offices in the states and territories are listed on the AHPRA website at [www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/Contact-Us.aspx](http://www.ahpra.gov.au/About-AHPRA/Contact-Us.aspx)

**Don't forget to renew your registration on time, online – you have until 30 November 2011**