



## Communiqué

### Twenty-seventh meeting of the Dental Board of Australia – 24 February 2012

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

The National Board's first meeting of 2012 was held at the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) office in Canberra. This communiqué highlights the key issues and a number of other matters the National Board would like to advise to dental practitioners from that meeting.

#### Health Ministers approved Registration Standards

In late December 2011, the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council approved the following Registration Standards:

- a. *General registration – overseas qualified dental practitioners*
- b. *Limited registration for supervised practice or postgraduate training (section 66) and*
- c. *Limited registration for teaching and research (section 69).*

The Registration Standards will be published on the Board's website in the near future, together with further explanatory information to help guide practitioners on the requirements under the National Law. The National Board has also developed draft *Guidelines for Limited registration for supervised practice or postgraduate training* which will be released for public consultation in March-April 2012 through the website.

#### DBA-ADC Joint Working Group

The National Board and Australian Dental Council's (ADC) Joint Working Group for overseas qualified dental practitioners met for the first time in January 2012. The purpose and function of the Joint Working Group is to consider a range of matters related to overseas qualified dental practitioners, make recommendations to the National Board and the ADC's Board and oversee the work required to implement recommendations that are accepted by both Boards. The Joint Working Group is looking at, for example, the overseas qualifications for general registration which are substantially equivalent or based on similar competencies to a National Board approved qualification, in accordance with the National Law.

#### Further clarification regarding Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The National Board has published an updated *Fact Sheet on Continuing Professional Development*, which can be found on the National Board's website under the *Codes and Guidelines* tab. Key areas that have been updated relate to the recognition of CPD credit for hours spent studying in either a postgraduate training or other programs/courses.

#### Expert Reference Group - Therapeutics

As advised in late 2011 the National Board has established an Expert Reference Group - Therapeutics (ERGT) which will meet for the first time in March 2012. The purpose and function of the ERGT is generally to advise and make recommendations to the National Board on matters relating to therapeutic agents. The following key matters will be considered by the ERGT; however the National Board may refer any therapeutic related matter to group for advice and recommendation:

- Botulinum Toxin and dermal fillers
- use of sedative agents by dental practitioners
- teeth whitening and
- differences in the administration, management and prescribing capacity under drugs and poisons legislation for dental practitioners.

## Review of the National Board's Scope of Practice Registration Standard

Health Workforce Australia (HWA) was requested by the Health Workforce Principal Committee (HWPC) through the Australian Health Minister's Advisory Council (AHMAC), to develop advice on the current scope of practice for dental hygienists, dental therapists and oral health therapists. The HWA 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), provides an update of the status of the HWA Report.

At the time that the scope of practice standard was approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (AHWMC), the National Board was also asked to review the approved standard, to formally assess whether the approved [Dental Board Registration Standard - Scope of Practice](#) has had any 'unintended or negative impacts on the scope of practice of oral health therapists, dental therapists, and dental hygienists.' The National Board's review is to be undertaken after the AHMAC review has been completed.

The AHWMC have extended the timeframe for the National Board's review until 31 December 2012. The National Board continues to be committed to working with governments and stakeholders in this review process.

Until the AHWMC and the National Board have agreed on the outcomes of this review process all dental practitioners are reminded that the National Board's *Scope of practice standard* was developed to encompass the variations of how 'scope of practice' was regulated in jurisdictions **prior** to the national scheme commencing. As advised in the National Board Communiqué from April 2010, the standard requires that a:

*...dental practitioner can only perform dental procedures for which they have been formally educated and trained in programs of study approved by the National Board and in which they are competent.*

*Therefore if a dental practitioner:*

- 1. has been formally educated/trained in a dental procedure through an approved (or previously approved) add-on program or through their original approved program which led to registration; and*
- 2. are competent to perform the dental procedure and meet the National Board's recency of practice requirements*

*then the dental procedure is within their scope of practice.*

Practitioners are encouraged to refer to the National Board's website at [www.dentalboard.gov.au](http://www.dentalboard.gov.au) for news and updates on Policy and Guidelines affecting their profession.

## Registration applications now open for four more professions

Registration applications are now open for practitioners in the four professions joining the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) in July.

From 1 July 2012, the following professions must be registered with their National Board to practise anywhere in Australia:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner

- Chinese medicine practitioner<sup>1</sup>
- Medical radiation practitioner and
- Occupational therapist.

Registration application forms for practitioners in these professions who intend to practise after 1 July are published on each National Board website through [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au).

The National Board encourages dental practitioners to help spread this important message and refer anyone with questions about this to the website.

John Lockwood  
Chair, Dental Board of Australia  
8 March 2012

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<sup>1</sup> Including Chinese medicine practitioners, acupuncturists, Chinese herbal medicine practitioners, oriental medicine practitioners and Chinese herbal dispensers