



Communiqué

Twenty-eighth meeting of the Dental Board of Australia – 23 March 2012

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.

This communiqué highlights key issues from the Board's meeting held in March 2012. This meeting was attended by the Chairs of the State and Territory Registration and Notification Committee or their nominees. At this meeting the Board considered a number of issues including a revised Supervision Guideline based on a template developed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) National Board Services area, a guideline *When it is necessary to be Registered* (in response to the consultation undertaken by a number of National Boards regarding the definition of practice), the finalised Conscious Sedation Guidelines on Conscious Sedation Area of Practice Endorsement and an Anxiolysis discussion paper.

Revised Supervision Guidelines

The Board currently has published on its website *Guidelines on Supervision Roles and Responsibilities of the Supervisor and requirements of a Supervision Plan and Supervision Report* (the Guidelines) dated 16 September 2011. More recently AHPRA's National Board services team have undertaken a project and developed a template for supervision guidelines for all National Boards (the Template) to utilise when considering supervision guidelines.

The Board agreed, in light of the development of the Template, to revisit the Guidelines and has developed a revised draft Supervision guidelines for dental practitioners (revised draft Guidelines). While the structure and some of the terminology of the revised draft Guideline has been aligned with the Template the key differences from the current Board Guideline and the revised draft Guidelines are:

- The scope of the Guidelines which not only includes dental practitioners with limited registration, but also dental practitioners with conditions or undertakings related to their registration requiring supervision and dental practitioners returning to practice after a prolonged absence which may be required to work under supervision. **To note** the revised draft Guidelines are not intended to cover the broader supervision requirements of dental practitioners as may be required by the Board's Scope of Practice Registration Standard.
- A four level approach to the requirements of supervision; and
- Additional definitions and clarification of Board processes e.g. reporting template.

The Board will undertake public consultation in accordance with the requirements of the National Law regarding the revised draft Guidelines in April-May 2012.

Endorsement in relation to Acupuncture

The Board is considering its options in relation to the management of the Endorsement in relation to Acupuncture for dental practitioners under the National Law. From 1 July 2012 the title *acupuncturist* will be a protected title in all states and territories; currently it is a protected title only in Victoria. The Board is considering options for a pathway for endorsement for those dental practitioners wishing to perform acupuncture and use the title *acupuncturist*.

When it is necessary to be Registered

In June 2011, seven of the ten National Boards (Chiropractic, Dental, Medical, Optometry, Osteopathy, Podiatry and Physiotherapy) agreed to participate in preliminary consultation on the definition of practice. Preliminary consultation occurred in July and August 2011 and public consultation was undertaken in late 2011.

A summary and analysis of the consultation feedback was provided to all National Boards at the February 2012 meetings. There was a wide range of views expressed in the consultation feedback and there was not a clear consensus about a way to resolve the issues raised in the consultation paper. However, it was evident from the consultation process that the definition of practice is being used to decide who should be registered and it was clear that there was a need to clarify the issue of when practitioners should be registered and when non-practising registration may be appropriate.

At its February 2012 meeting the Board approved the proposed approach to address issues with the definition of practice through publishing material to better explain who needs to be registered through guidelines. The Board will release the *When it is necessary to be Registered* guidelines in the upcoming weeks.

The Board's Interim Policy regarding Limited Registration in the Public Interest will not change at this time and the Board will now consider the further development of a Registration Standard regarding Limited registration in the public interest.

Conscious Sedation Area of Practice Endorsement Guidelines

The Board has approved the final version of the Guidelines on Conscious Sedation Area of Practice Endorsement (the Guidelines) which were circulated for a period of public consultation ending on 7 October 2011. The Guidelines will be published on the Board's website in the upcoming weeks. The currently published Transition Guideline Conscious Sedation Area of Practice Endorsement will be removed from the Board's website as the transition period ended last year.

In addition, the Board's Conscious Sedation Working Group in their consideration of matters relating to the endorsement in relation to conscious sedation noted that there were broader issues in relation to the use of sedation by dental practitioners. The Working Group noted that dental practitioners needed guidance in relation to the use of sedation in other forms, and recommended a discussion paper on Anxiolysis (the Discussion paper). The Discussion paper will be released in the upcoming weeks on the Board's website. Dental practitioners and the public are encouraged to comment.

Expert Reference Group - Therapeutics

The Board's newly established Expert Reference Group - Therapeutics met earlier in the year and has provided the Board with some recommendations on the matters reviewed. The Board is considering the recommendations.

Social Media Policy

The National Boards have agreed to the development of a Social Media Policy which will be based on the existing principles and expectations included in the Board's Code of Conduct, the Guidelines for the Advertising of Regulated Health Services and the provisions of section 133 of the National Law.

John Lockwood
Chair, Dental Board of Australia
2 April 2012