



# **SCOPE OF PRACTICE REGISTRATION STANDARD**

June 2014

# SCOPE OF PRACTICE REGISTRATION STANDARD

This registration standard sets out the National Board's requirements for the scope of practice for dental practitioners.

## Does this standard apply to me?

This registration standard applies to all registered dental practitioners except those with student or non-practising registration.

## What must I do?

1. All dental practitioners are members of the dental team who exercise autonomous decision making within their particular areas of education, training and competence, to provide the best possible care for their patients.
2. Dental practitioners must only perform dental treatment:
  - a) for which they have been educated and trained in programs of study approved by the National Board, and
  - b) in which they are competent.
3. Dentists<sup>1</sup> are independent practitioners who may practise all parts of dentistry included in the definition of dentistry<sup>2</sup>. Where there is a structured professional relationship or referral relationship then the dentist is the clinical team leader.
4. Dental prosthetists are members of the dental team. They work as independent practitioners in a range of activities included in the definition of dentistry.
5. Dental hygienists, dental therapists and oral health therapists are members of the dental team. They practise in a range of activities included in the definition of dentistry. They may only practice within a structured professional relationship with a dentist. They must not practise as independent practitioners.
6. A dental practitioner must not direct any person whether a registered dental practitioner or not to undertake dental treatment or give advice outside that person's education or competence.

<sup>1</sup> The term dentist refers to dentists, dental specialists and / or a group of dentists

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the Definitions section of this standard

## Guidelines for scope of practice

The *Guidelines for scope of practice* provide guidance about the expectations and how to meet the requirements of this registration standard. Dental practitioners are expected to understand how to apply these guidelines together with this registration standard.

## What happens if I don't meet this standard?

The National Law establishes possible consequences if you don't meet this standard, including that registration standards, codes or guidelines may be used in disciplinary proceedings against health practitioners as evidence of what constitutes appropriate practice or conduct for the health profession (section 41 of the National Law).

## Authority

This registration standard was approved by Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council on 11 April 2014.

Registration standards are developed under section 38 of the National Law and are subject to wide ranging consultation.

## Definitions

**Definition of dentistry** and practitioner descriptions are included in the *Guidelines for scope of practice*. Restricted dental acts (section 121 of the National Law) also apply to this definition.

**Independent practitioner** means a practitioner who may practise without a structured professional relationship.

**National Law** means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory.

**Programs of study approved by the National Board** for the purpose of this standard include:

- **approved programs of study** are programs accredited by the accreditation authority for the profession and approved by the National Board under the National Law. The approved programs are those which, upon successful completion lead to registration or endorsement as a dental practitioner in the division or specialty in which study was completed

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- **other assessment, examination or qualification** that qualifies a practitioner for general registration (section 53 of the National Law), specialist registration (section 57) limited registration with the Board (section 65) or endorsement (section 99), or
- **programs to extend scope (formerly known as add-on programs)** are programs which can extend a dental practitioner's scope of practice by undertaking educational programs that the National Board has reviewed and approved. The programs to extend scope cover a range of skills which allow dental practitioners to extend their education, training and competence in certain areas and within the division in which they are registered.

**Structured professional relationship** means the framework for referral and management to the dentist when the care required falls outside of the scope of practice of the dental hygienist, dental therapist, oral health therapist and/or dental prosthetist and the referral of patients from a dentist to a dental hygienist, dental therapist, oral health therapist and/or dental prosthetist.

## References

Dental Board of Australia, *Specialist registration standard*  
Dental Board of Australia, *Guidelines for scope of practice*.

## Review

This registration standard will be reviewed at least every three years.

**Effective from:** 30 June 2014

**Review date:** 30 June 2017

This registration standard replaces the previously published registration standard from 30 June 2014.