

Communiqué

Eighth meeting of the Osteopathy Board of Australia 27 May 2010

The Osteopathy Board of Australia (Board) is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*.

At its eighth meeting on 27 May 2010, the Board made further decisions to prepare for the commencement of the national registration and accreditation scheme. This Communiqué aims to inform stakeholders of the decisions of the Board.

Currency of registration

The Board again encourages osteopaths to ensure they hold current registration on 30 June 2010 so that they will transition safely to the national scheme and be included on the Register of Osteopaths. Please register early if renewal is due near mid-year to ensure safe transition to the national scheme.

An osteopath who does not hold current registration on 30 June 2010 will not transition automatically to the national scheme. These individuals will be required to re-apply for registration and meet the requirements of the National Law and approved registration standards. While applications for registration will be processed as quickly as possible, there is no guarantee that there will not be a gap in your registration if you wait to renew under the National Law.

Final Continuing Professional Development (CPD) guidelines

The Board has finalised its CPD guidelines. These will be published on the Board's website shortly.

The Board recognises that mandatory CPD requirements are new for many osteopaths. Accordingly, the CPD requirements will be phased in gradually. Applicants who apply for registration or renewal of registration between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011 will have until 30 June 2012 to achieve compliance with the Board's CPD Registration Standard. Any applications for renewal of registration received after 1 July 2012 will need to sign a declaration that the applicant has complied with the CPD requirements in the twelve months preceding the renewal application. From 2012, the Board will audit a proportion of the total number of registered osteopaths each year for compliance with the CPD registration standard. The Board considers that CPD is a fundamental component of good practice and expects all osteopaths to prepare for the introduction of mandatory requirements by participating in CPD from 1 July 2010. Ideally this would involve undertaking CPD that complies with the requirements set out in the Board's CPD Registration Standard and Guidelines.

Acupuncture endorsement

The Board agreed to work with other interested National Boards to explore a cross-profession approach to developing draft Accreditation Standards for courses that would lead to an acupuncture endorsement.

Memorandum of Understanding with UK and NZ osteopathic regulatory authorities

The Board is pleased to announce it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with osteopathic regulatory authorities in New Zealand and the United Kingdom. This aims to simplify the registration process for osteopaths moving between Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Currently, osteopaths with a qualification from Australia, New Zealand or the UK who seek registration in one of these countries other than their own country, are subject to lengthy and costly assessment processes.

While these processes are aimed at ensuring the public is protected, there is a risk that the processes may pose unnecessarily high barriers to professional mobility. This would not only disadvantage individuals interested in practising in other countries, but may inhibit the international flow of research and teaching expertise critical to the development of osteopathy.

The Board considers that a streamlined registration process for osteopaths from other countries which offer a similarly high standard of education and training, such as the UK, could have benefits for Australia. The MOU commits the Board to working towards an agreement with the regulatory authorities in the United Kingdom and New Zealand to achieve a streamlined registration process. The Board will be consulting stakeholders about this proposal and the Board's final decision will reflect this consultation process. Protection of the public and maintaining the standards of the osteopathy profession in Australia will inform the Board's decision.

Conclusion

The Board continues to work collaboratively with stakeholders including the State and Territory Boards and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). It is grateful for the assistance that is being provided to support the safe transition of osteopaths to the National Scheme.

Robert Fendall
Chair, Osteopathy Board of Australia
1 June 2010