

## Message from the Chair

I am grateful to everyone who has made the two new members of the Osteopathy Board of Australia (the National Board) welcome, and also welcomed me as incoming Chair. The work of the Board continues at a steady pace through the current review period of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

We aim to continue the regular newsletters to registrants as an important way of explaining the Board's requirements, and who does what in the regulatory environment. It is easy to assume that this is becoming more familiar because we on the Board are so close to it, but we recognise that regulation may be complex for registrants. Please give us feedback on what you would like to know more about and how we present it to you.

I look forward to working directly with the Board and the other Chairs in improving the regulation of professions in Australia in the year ahead.

**Dr Nikole Grbin**

Osteopath

Chair, Osteopathy Board of Australia

## Osteopathy Board news

### Dry needling risks

A few National Boards and insurers have noted an increase in the incidence of pneumothorax arising from the use of dry needling or acupuncture needles around the thoracic and cervicothoracic areas. While the incidence of such events is still rare, practitioners who are using such needle-based therapies should be:

- aware of this risk and take appropriate steps to both prevent its occurrence in the first instance,
- able to identify and refer patients with this adverse event for urgent medical care
- trained, educated, and competent to perform needle-based therapies, and
- covered by adequate insurance (as required for all aspects of a registered practitioner's practice).

The Board will continue to monitor and assess the risks of needle-based therapies, and may provide further advice to practitioners based on the information it receives.

The professional associations have resources on needling practices, and information on courses and insurance for practitioners.

### Competent authority pathway evaluation

The competent authority pathway has seen a steady flow of osteopaths from the UK registered and able to work in Australia in the past year. As the number approaches 20, the Board will now evaluate the pathway and, in particular, the supervision requirements.

The Board's accreditation council, the Australasian Osteopathic Accreditation Council (AOAC), has been tasked by the Board to carry out the evaluation. AOAC's independent consultant is keen to survey and speak to the UK-trained osteopaths and also their supervisors. It would be extremely helpful for the Board's planning if you could find time to participate in the evaluation. Participating in evaluations such as these involves reflecting on the Board's requirements and the extra time required to be surveyed and/or interviewed can be counted towards the mandatory topics of your continuing professional development (CPD).

The invitation to participate in the evaluation will be sent to individual practitioners by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). Practitioners' details will not be provided to any third party for this purpose. The surveys will only be used for the purpose of evaluating the Board's competent authority pathway and will not be used to assess the performance of supervisors or those under supervision.

The online survey can be found here: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/AOAC\\_CAP\\_Survey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/AOAC_CAP_Survey). The survey closes on 31 May 2015.

**Privacy:** When you click on this link, you will be taken to a survey on a third party website, hosted by SurveyMonkey. The information you provide will be handled in accordance with the privacy policies of Survey Monkey accessible [here](#).

### Board publishes 2013/14 profession profile online

The Board has published a report of its work in regulating the osteopathic profession in the National Scheme during 2013/14.

The [report](#) provides a profession-specific view of the Board's work to manage risk to the public and regulate the profession in the public interest. It is a profile of osteopathy regulation at work in Australia for the 12 months ending 30 June 2014.

The data in this report are drawn from data published in the [2013/14 annual report](#) of AHPRA and the National Boards, reporting on the National Scheme.

## National Scheme news

### Audit of osteopaths – 2014 results

Each time a registered health practitioner applies to renew their registration, they make a declaration that they have (or have not) met some or all of the registration standards for their

profession. During audit practitioners are requested to provide information that supports their declarations, which may include an explanation about why some requirements have not been met.

AHPRA has finalised the 2014 audit of osteopaths and all were found to be compliant with the registration standards.

### Forthcoming audit of osteopaths

In May 2015, AHPRA, on behalf of the Board, will carry out audits of compliance with the Board's registration standards including criminal history, CPD, professional indemnity insurance (PII) and recency of practice. We urge all osteopaths to be aware of the requirements of these [registration standards](#). For more information please refer to the Board's [Audit page](#).

#### What is the process?

- Registrants are randomly selected for audit and receive an audit notice in the mail.
- Registrants have four weeks to provide the requested documentation to AHPRA. Along with the notice, participants will receive a checklist to assist in preparing the required documentation as evidence of the activities which meet the requirements of the standard.
- Once AHPRA has received the completed checklist and supporting documentation, the submission will be compared against the declarations the registrant made in their last renewal application.
- AHPRA may request that further documentation be provided and/or refer cases to the National Board or delegated committee for further investigation.
- Registrants will be advised of the outcome of the audit.

### Criminal history checks

#### Strengthening international criminal history checks

From early 2015, National Boards and AHPRA have implemented a new procedure for checking the criminal history of international applicants for registration. The new approach aims to protect the public without unnecessarily delaying the registration process for applicants.

For more information, please read the [media release](#) on our website.

#### Criminal history – your requirement to tell us

We would like to remind all osteopaths that you have an obligation under the National Law<sup>1</sup> to not only disclose criminal history when applying for registration or to renew registration, but also, at any time, you are required to provide notice **within 7 days**:

- if you are charged with an offence punishable by 12 months imprisonment or more, or
- if you are convicted of, or the subject of, a finding of guilt for an offence punishable by imprisonment.

Section 79 of the National Law requires a National Board to check for criminal history before deciding an application for registration.

The National Law defines criminal history as:

- (a) every conviction of the person for an offence, in a participating jurisdiction or elsewhere, and whether before or after the commencement of this Law;
- (b) every plea of guilty or finding of guilt by a court of the person for an offence, in a participating jurisdiction or elsewhere, and whether before or after the commencement of this Law and whether or not a conviction is recorded for the offence;
- (c) every charge made against the person for an offence, in a participating jurisdiction or elsewhere, and whether before or after the commencement of this Law.

While every case is decided on an individual basis, the National Board considers a number of factors when determining how the criminal history may affect your eligibility for registration.

The *Criminal history registration standard* is available under [Registration standards](#) on our website.

Failing to notify us of your criminal history may constitute behaviour for which health, conduct or performance action may be undertaken.

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## Contact the Board

- Visit [www.osteopathyboard.gov.au](http://www.osteopathyboard.gov.au) for the mandatory registration standards, codes, guidelines and FAQ. Visiting the website regularly is the best way to stay in touch with news and updates from the Board.
- Lodge an enquiry form via the website by following the [Enquiries](#) link on every web page under *Contact us*.
- For registration enquiries, call the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) on 1300 419 495 (from within Australia) or +61 3 8708 9001 (for overseas callers).
- To update your contact details for important registration renewal emails and other Board updates, go to the AHPRA website: [Update contact details](#).
- Address mail correspondence to: Dr Nikole Grbin, Chair, Osteopathy Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne, VIC 3001.

<sup>1</sup> Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.