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Chair's message

Welcome to the February 2018 issue of the Osteopathy Board of Australia's newsletter.

I am pleased to announce that the successful bidder for the recent Request for quotation (RFQ) to develop revised *Capabilities for osteopathic practice* was Southern Cross University. This is a major regulatory initiative for the Board for the next year and we will be conducting public consultations as part of the project in 2018. Thank you to all the bidders who took the time to submit an expression of interest in this project and congratulations to Southern Cross University, the Board looks forward to working with you. We have an article in this newsletter which explains how the Capabilities are used in a range of osteopathic settings.

I urge you to refresh your knowledge of the **Code of conduct** as your resolution for the new year. In 2018 we will conduct joint consultation with 11 other Boards on the *Code of conduct* and look forward to feedback from a wide range of users.

I welcome the recent announcement by the COAG Health Council that Dr Paul Orrock (osteopath) from New South Wales has been appointed by health ministers to the Board for a period of three years. The Board farewells Dr Anne Cooper (osteopath) and we have appreciated her insights, enthusiasm and professionalism over the past three years, and look forward to continuing to work with her in her role as President of the Osteopathy Council of NSW. Dr Andrew Yaksich (osteopath) from Western Australia has been reappointed to the Board for a further three years.

Further to the alert in the last newsletter, **expressions of interest** have now been advertised to fill six scheduled Board vacancies for practitioner members from Victoria, Queensland and South Australia and three for community members. The Board Chair position is also advertised and current or prospective practitioner members can apply. These are advertised on the Australian

Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's (AHPRA) website, and the closing date is Monday 19 February 2018, 5pm AEST.

Dr Nikole Grbin (osteopath)

Chair, Osteopathy Board of Australia

Osteopathy Board vacancies — express your interest

The Osteopathy Board is advertising **scheduled vacancies** for practitioner members from Victoria, Queensland and South Australia, and three community members.

All National Board appointments are made by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council. If you are interested, please visit the **AHPRA National Boards recruitment page** to download the information guide and application form. More information is provided about eligibility requirements specific to these advertised vacancies, National Board member roles, and the application process.

For enquiries, please contact statutoryappointments@ahpra.gov.au. The closing date is Monday 19 February 2018, 5pm AEST.

Capabilities for osteopathic practice — essential in a range of settings

The *Capabilities for osteopathic practice* (2009) are the core competency standards by which the osteopath's performance is assessed to obtain and retain registration to practise in Australia.



The Capabilities provide a framework for assessing competence and are used:

- in the development of osteopathy curricula by universities
- to assess osteopathy student and new graduate performance
- as part of the annual renewal of registration process
- to assess osteopaths educated overseas seeking employment in Australia
- to assess osteopaths returning to work after breaks in service
- as part of professional conduct matters, and
- to communicate to consumers the standards that they can expect from osteopaths.

Osteopaths involved in education, accreditation and regulation are often those most familiar with this document. However, it has a much wider use as a resource for all osteopaths in adhering to and communicating the professional standards expected from osteopaths. In particular, it is closely followed by osteopaths who are involved in supervising and assessing students or experienced practitioners.

Code of conduct review

All osteopaths are legally obliged to adhere to the Board's Code of conduct and significant divergence from it can have implications for registration. This document is designed to provide a framework for ethical and professional behaviour and osteopaths can be held to account against it if a notification (complaint) is made about them, or through audit. As a registered health practitioner, it is important that you are familiar with the Code and work within it at all times. The Code and the Capabilities documents are the road maps to follow for lifelong ethical and professional practice.

The Board joins 11 other professions in reviewing the *Code of conduct*. We recently conducted a benchmarking survey, and will be consulting with the profession in 2018. We look forward to your feedback on the proposed changes as you will help ensure it is fit for purpose.

Advertising update: more clarification on claims

We have previously advised osteopaths to take care when advertising a list of conditions that you can assist with:

- Avoid using lists of conditions with only a qualifier at the top [a qualifier for each is safer].
- If you advertise a list of conditions with only a qualifier at the top this may be confusing or misleading for consumers, as many consumers will search for a specific condition online (e.g. asthma). Consumers may only read that single condition in the list without reading the qualifier or the rest of the information on the website.

We have now provided further clarification by updating our osteopathy advertising messages regarding claims about treating associated aspects or symptoms of a condition.

The further clarification is that: 'Claims by osteopaths about treating non-musculoskeletal conditions can be misleading and this is an area that has attracted many complaints. If advertising refers to a specific non-musculoskeletal condition, it should be clear that the practitioner is treating the aspects of the condition relevant to their practice of osteopathy (i.e. for osteopaths, there should be a specific reference to what musculoskeletal aspect of the condition is being treated). The role of the treatment should not be overstated and should be supported by acceptable evidence'.

National Scheme news

Self-assessment tool launched to help health practitioners and advertisers

AHPRA and the National Boards have launched a self-assessment tool to help health practitioners, including osteopaths and other advertisers, check and correct their advertising.

All registered osteopaths need to make sure they meet their professional and legal obligations when advertising osteopathic services. The tool was developed in consultation with National Boards and with feedback from AHPRA's Professions Reference Group.

The tool is easy to use and asks users to consider a number of questions about their advertising which can help them understand if it is in breach of the Guidelines for advertising regulated health services, and in turn the National Law.¹

The self-assessment tool is the latest of a series of advertising resources for practitioners, healthcare providers and other advertisers of regulated health services to use to help them stay in line with the law.

This work is part of a broader strategy — the Advertising compliance and enforcement strategy for the National Scheme — which started last year. The strategy has met a number of its targets since its launch including clear, concise and helpful correspondence for when AHPRA receives a complaint about advertising and new resources such as:

- a summary of advertising obligations
- frequently asked questions
- tips on words to be wary about
- all-professions examples of compliant and non-compliant advertising, and
- specific examples for osteopaths.

The self-assessment tool is now available to use on the check, correct and comply section of the AHPRA website.

¹ Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

National Law update: South Australia adopts legislative amendments

AHPRA and National Boards welcome further progress in the adoption of amendments to the National Law in South Australia. The legislative reforms include the establishment of the Paramedicine Board of Australia and additional measures to protect the public.

Previously, on **6 September 2017**, the Queensland Parliament passed a bill containing amendments to the National Law that applied in all states and territories, with the exception of Western Australia (WA) and South Australia (SA). In WA there is a corresponding amendment bill (the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (WA) Amendment Bill 2017) which is currently before their Legislative Council.

The South Australian Governor has made the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (South Australia) (Amendment of Law) Regulations 2017 which were published in the Government Gazette on 19 December 2017. These regulations cover those amendments that came into effect on the assent of the Queensland Act and also those that came into effect 28 days after assent.

AHPRA will work with the Board, other National Boards and state and territory boards and/or committees, governments, health departments, professions and consumer representatives to support the implementation of these changes into our day to day work in the coming months.

Further amendments to the National Law are likely to be rolled out through a staggered process during 2018.

The *Health Practitioner Regulation and National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2017* as passed by the Queensland Parliament can be accessed on the Queensland Parliament website.

Keep in touch with the Board

- Visit 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.

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