



To:
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject: Fw: Attent: Chair, Psychology Board of Australia

I wish to make comment on two issues raised in the Psychology Board of Australia Consultation Paper:

2.4 Continuing Professional Development

As a private clinical psychologist practicing in rural areas of South Australia, I am concerned about the proposed requirement for 10 hours of supervision/peer consultation per year. While I am fortunate enough to be currently working with other colleagues in one of my work settings, I am aware of many others who are sole providers of psychology services in their region. We are currently in the process of establishing more extensive networks with these psychologists, but the sheer difficulty in getting together cannot be overlooked. This proposal will severely disadvantage those who have made the decision to work in rural and remote areas and probably make it even more difficult to attract psychologists to these areas in the future.

4 Proposal for Specialist Registration

I am very concerned to see the proposal to make an APAC-accredited doctorate degree the requirement for eligibility for specialist registration, and therefore 'clinical psychologist' status with Medicare. As a former lecturer in an APAC-accredited clinical masters program, I am familiar with the extra work that doctoral students complete above the masters requirement. While on paper this might look like it provides the student with additional clinical skills, my experience in practice was very different. At the risk of sounding cynical, I am not sure how a longer thesis and a few extra courses (of varying content across the universities, in our case focusing on supervision) translates to superior clinical skills when working directly with clients. Providing more skilled services to clients is surely our aim and the concern of Medicare. If we are to move to a higher level of qualification, then we need to be sure that students actually gain additional clinical skills, not just another 'piece of paper'.

Yours Sincerely,
Denise Skinner