



SECOND MEETING OF THE PSYCHOLOGY BOARD OF AUSTRALIA 15 and 23 OCTOBER 2009

The second meeting of the Psychology Board of Australia was held on 15 October 2009 at the Hilton Melbourne Airport and was finalised by teleconference on 23 October 2009. The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*.

The main focus of the Board's second meeting was further discussion of the proposals that would be the subject of the consultation process to occur in late October and November around registration and related matters. Following the consultation period, the Board will finalise its position on registration proposals. At its December meeting the Board will complete this work in order to provide the proposals to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council for decision.

The Board acknowledges the tight timetable for completion of the initial part of its work. The timetable is necessary so that all registrants can have advice ahead of the commencement day on 1 July 2010 of the new registration standards and requirements.

The Board agreed that it would undertake consultation in late October on proposals on the following matters:

- the five mandatory registration standards, namely standards on requirements for professional indemnity insurance, matters about the criminal history of applicants for registration, requirements for continuing professional development, requirements for English language skills and requirements in relation to previous practice
- qualifications requirements for general registration as a psychologist
- specialist registration for the psychology profession, and
- endorsement of registration for psychology supervisors.

The Board finalised arrangements for publication of a consultation paper dealing with these proposals, and agreed on a process to notify key stakeholders. The consultation paper was posted on the Agency website (www.aphra.gov.au) on 27 October 2009. Comments on the consultation paper are due by 24 November 2009 and the Board urges stakeholders to meet this deadline so their comments can be properly considered.

To facilitate consultation with as wide a range of stakeholders as possible, the Board has organised a national forum to be held from 3pm to 5pm on 19 November 2009 in Melbourne. The forum will outline the proposals in the consultation paper and invite questions and comments from the floor. Interested stakeholders are encouraged to indicate their interest in attending. Places in the forum are limited so those interested in attending should RSVP by close of business on 10 November 2009 to: natboards@dhs.vic.gov.au.

As the Board recognises that it will not be practicable for some stakeholders to send a representative to this forum, it will be possible to submit brief questions, comments and requests for clarification to the above email address, by the RSVP date. During the forum, discussion will allow a response to as many of these queries as possible.

The Board further considered proposals for how individual registrants will transition from their current registration to the new registration types set out in the proposed National Law. The Board settled those matters which did not require Ministerial Council consideration. The Board noted that for the majority of registrants there was a clear type of registration to which they will transfer on 1 July 2010. Registrants will be advised by the Board of the type to which they will transfer well ahead of the commencement date.

The Board considered options for structuring State and Territory boards. The Board decided to establish four regional boards as follows:

- (a) a NSW board of nine members
- (b) a Victorian, Tasmanian and ACT board of nine members (five from Victoria, and two each from Tasmania and the ACT)
- (c) a Queensland and Northern Territory board of six members (four from Queensland and two from the Northern Territory), and
- (d) a South Australian and Western Australian board of six members (three members from each jurisdiction).

This decision recognises the different size and registrant numbers of the jurisdictions, and allows those from smaller States and Territories to participate fully in the workings of the whole regional board. The ACT will partner with Victoria and Tasmania because NSW is anticipated to have different arrangements for complaints handling. In considering options for State, Territory or regional boards, the Board was mindful of the need to maximise participation at the State and Territory level, and at the same time contain costs to individual registrants.

The Board considered a number of administrative and financial matters, including its budget in 2010–2011 and possible fee structures. The Board also considered remuneration for any State and Territory Board members and agreed that these should be set at \$406 a sitting day for Chairs and \$334 a sitting day for members. These costs are to be reflected in the Board's budget. The Board will give further consideration to these matters at its November meeting.

The Board acknowledged the further work done in preparation for implementation of the national scheme by the existing State and Territory boards, its accrediting authority, AHPRA and the National Registration and Accreditation Implementation Project team and looked forward to continuing to work with these groups over the coming months.

Associate Professor Brin Grenyer
Chair, Psychology Board of Australia

30 October 2009